

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

THIS second epistle to the Thessalonians is thought, by the best critics and chronologers, to have been written from Corinth, soon after the former, chiefly on account of some things therein which had been misunderstood. This appears probable for this reason, among others, that Timothy and Silvanus, who joined him in his first letter, were still with him, and joined him in this second. And, seeing in this epistle he desired the brethren to pray that he might be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, (chap. iii. 2.) it is probable he wrote it soon after the insurrection of the Jews at Corinth, in which they dragged him before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, and accused him of persuading men "to worship God contrary to the law," Acts xviii. 13; we cannot therefore be much mistaken, in supposing that it was dated in or about the year of our Lord 55.

The epistle begins with a devout acknowledgment to God for the eminent attainments which the Thessalonians had made in faith and other Christian graces, and especially for the zeal and fidelity with which they adhered to the gospel in the midst of persecution, chap. i. 1-4. II. To support and animate them under their trials, he reminds them of the distinguished honour that would be conferred on all the saints at the coming of Christ, and the vengeance that would at the same time overtake all the enemies of the gospel; assuring them of his constant prayers for their further improvement in true religion, verses 5-12. III. Lest, by mistaking the meaning of what he had said or wrote to them at any time upon that subject, or by any other means, they should be deceived into an opinion that the day of final judgment was near at hand, he informs them, that before that awful time there would be a grand apostacy in the church, and an antichristian power, which he calls the man of sin, would arise, and greatly obstruct the progress of the gospel, arrogantly assuming to itself the divine authority, and, by pretending miracles, leading multitudes into the most fatal delusions. Some beginnings of this power, he signifies, were already discoverable; and as soon as those restraints which then lay upon it were removed, it would break out in all its force, and continue to spread, till it should be finally destroyed by the coming of Christ, chap. ii. 1-12. IV. By these views, he is led to express his thankfulness to God that the Thessalonians had escaped this corruption which had begun so early to prevail in the church, and had given such convincing proofs of their entering into the true spirit of Christianity, in which he exhorts them to persevere with steadfastness and constancy, adding his earnest supplications for their increasing comfort and establishment, verses 13-17. V. He desires their prayers that his labours might be attended with the same success among others as they had been among them; and that he might be delivered from the opposition of unreasonable men, expressing withal his confidence in their continued regards to the instructions he had given them, chap. iii. 1-5. VI. He gives directions for their conduct toward some disorderly members of the church, who, neglecting their proper business, meddled in the concerns of others. These he exhorts to attend to their own affairs, and to provide carefully for their own subsistence, that they might not be a burden to others; reminding them of the example he had set, while at Thessalonica, in maintaining himself by the labour of his own hands, verses 6-12. VII. If any one, notwithstanding, should refuse to comply with this exhortation, he directs the other members of the church to exclude him from their company and friendship, that he might be made sensible of his fault; concluding with his usual salutation, verses 13-18. It is justly observed by Dr. Doddridge, from whose Introduction

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to this epistle the above analysis of its contents is extracted, that "though this is the shortest of all St. Paul's epistles, it is not inferior to any of them in the sublimity of the sentiments which it contains, and the excellent spirit which it breathes. And besides those marks of its genuineness and divine authority which it bears in common with the rest of these epistles, it has one peculiar to itself, from the exact representation it contains of the Papal power, under the characters of the 'man of sin' and the 'mystery of iniquity.' For, considering how directly opposite the principles here described were to the genius of Christianity, it must have appeared, at the time when this epistle was written, highly improbable to all human apprehension that they should ever have prevailed in the Christian Church; and, consequently, a prediction like this, which answers so exactly, in every particular, to the event, must be allowed to carry its own evidence along with it, and to prove that the author of it wrote under a divine influence."

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THE
SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
THESSALONIANS.

CHAPTER I.

After the introductory salutation and benediction, the apostle, (1,) Expresses his gratitude to God for the constancy with which the Thessalonians adhered to the cause of Christ, 3, 4. (2,) He encourages and animates them under the persecutions to which they were still exposed, by the prospect of that glory that would be conferred upon them at the coming of Christ, 5-10. (3,) He prays that God would finish his work in and upon them, and make them meet for the felicity of heaven by his grace, for the manifestation of the glory of the Father and of Christ, 11, 12.

A. M. 4058. A. D. 54. **PAUL**, ^a and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians ^b in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 ^c Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 ^d We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity

of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; A. M. 4058. A. D. 54.

4 So that ^e we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, ^f for your patience and faith ^g in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure :

5 *Which is* ^h a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, ⁱ for which ye also suffer :

^a 2 Cor. i. 19.—^b 1 Thessalonians i. 1.—^c 1 Cor. i. 3. ^d 1 Thess. i. 2, 3; iii. 6, 9; Chap. ii. 13.—^e 2 Cor. vii. 14; ix. 2;

1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.—^f 1 Thess. i. 3.—^g 1 Thess. ii. 14. ^h Phil. i. 28.—ⁱ 1 Thess. ii. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 3-5. *We are bound to thank God*—It is highly observable that the apostle here wraps up his praise of men in praise to God, giving him the glory of the increase of grace which was manifest in the Thessalonian believers. *That your faith groweth exceedingly*—Notwithstanding all that is done by your enemies to prevent its increase, and even to destroy it. Probably he had heard from them since he sent them the former letter. *And the charity*—Or love rather, of every one of you aboundeth—Like water that overflows its banks, and yet increases still more. Their faith, it appears, derived new confirmation from their sufferings, and their sense of them engaged them tenderly to pity, and do their utmost for the relief of, those who shared in those sufferings, and at the same time endeared to them that one body, that church of Christ, which the carnal world so cruelly hated, and so maliciously endeavoured to destroy. *So that we ourselves glory in you*—Or boast of you; *in the churches of God*—“This passage shows us what is a principal occasion

of joy to faithful ministers; it is the faith and love, patience and constancy, of the people to whom they minister. The apostle's address here is admirable. He excited the emulation of other churches by boasting of the Thessalonians to them. And he quickened the Thessalonians by telling them how much he had praised them in the hearing of the churches.”—Macknight. *In all your persecutions and tribulations*—Arising probably both from the Jews and their own countrymen. Concerning the particulars of these persecutions we have no information. *Which is*—Or shall be; *a manifest token*—*Ενδειγμα, proof, or demonstration, of the righteous judgment of God*—Of the equity of the divine judgment, which shall be fully manifested in due time by God's amply rewarding you, and punishing your enemies; *that ye may be counted worthy*—That it may appear by the integrity, faith, and patience, the meekness and superiority to this transitory world, which you manifest under these severe trials, that you are fit to be admitted into that glorious kingdom of God for which you suffer.

A. M. 4058. 6 ^k Seeing *it is* a righteous thing
A. D. 54. with God to recompense tribulation
to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled, ^l rest
with us, when ^m the Lord Jesus shall be
revealed from heaven with ⁿ his mighty
angels,

8 ^a In flaming fire ² taking vengeance on
them ^o that know not God, and ^p that obey

^k Rev. vi. 10.—^l Rev. xiv. 13.—^m 1 Thess. iv. 16; Jude
14.—ⁿ Gr. *the angels of his power*.—^o Heb. x. 27; xii. 29; 2
Pet. iii. 7; Rev. xxi. 8.—^p Or, *yielding*.

Verses 6-8. *Seeing it is a righteous thing*—How-
ever men may judge of it; *with God*—To whom be-
longeth vengeance, (Rom. xii. 19,) and who *will*
avenge his elect that cry unto him day and night;
to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you
—To remove the pressure from you to them. And
it is remarkable that about this time, at the passover,
the Jews raising a tumult, a great number, some
say thirty thousand of them, were slain. St. Paul
seems to allude to this beginning of sorrows 1
Thess. ii. 16, which did not end but with their de-
struction. *And to you that are troubled*—That suffer
persecution; *rest with us*—If not in the present
world, where we do not ourselves expect it, yet at
last, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from*
heaven. By the word *avenge*, here rendered *rest*,
or, as it more properly means, *relaxation*, the apos-
tle does not mean deliverance from persecution.
The believing Jews, with whom St. Paul here ranks
himself, had no relaxation in that sense any more
than the believing Gentiles. But he meant deliv-
erance from the troubles of this life at death, and the
enjoyment of eternal rest, the rest of God, partly
entered into then, and more especially after the
coming of Christ here spoken of. *With his mighty*
angels—Who shall be the ministers of his power in
the execution of this great and awful judgment.
In flaming fire—To which the aerial heavens and
the earth are reserved, (2 Pet. iii. 7, 10,) and by which
they shall be destroyed; *taking vengeance*—Or *in-*
flicting punishment, as *διδόντος εκδίκησιν* also signi-
fies; see 1 Pet. ii. 14, where the same word is trans-
lated *punishment*. Does God, as some say, barely
permit this punishment to come upon his enemies?
or, as the Lord once *rained brimstone and fire from*
the Lord out of heaven, (Gen. xix. 24,) does a fiery
stream go forth from him? *Who know not God*—
By an experimental and practical knowledge; who
know him not so as, 1st, To be humbled before
him, Job xl. 4, 5; xlii. 5, 6; 2d, To trust in him,
(Psa. ix. 10,) namely, for pardon, holiness, and eter-
nal life, being first truly penitent; 3d, To love him
with a love shed abroad in their hearts, John iv. 7;
4th, To keep his commandments, 1 John ii. 3, 4;
and, 5th, To be transformed into his image, 2 Cor.
iii. 18. In which passages the fruits of the saving
knowledge of God are designedly specified, and two
of them at least, namely, love and obedience to

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not the gospel of our Lord Jesus A. M. 4058.
Christ: A. D. 54.

9 ^a Who shall be punished with everlasting
destruction from the presence of the Lord, and
^b from the glory of his power;

10 ^a When he shall come to be glorified in
his saints, ^c and to be admired in all them that
believe (because our testimony among you was
believed) in that day.

^a Psa. lxxix. 6; 1 Thess. iv. 5.—^b Rom. ii. 8.—^c Phil. iii
19; 2 Pet. iii. 7.—^d Deut. xxxiii. 2; Isa. ii. 19; Chap. ii. 8
^e Psa. lxxxix. 7.—^f Psa. lxxviii. 35.

God, declared to be absolutely essential to the true
knowledge of him. Reader, examine thyself! Does
thy knowledge of the one living and true God pro-
duce these fruits? Surely it cannot, unless *he that*
commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath
shined into thy heart, to give thee the knowledge of
his glory in and by Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6; un-
less the Son of God hath *given thee an understand-*
ing to know him, 1 John v. 20. *And who obey not*
the gospel—Who do not receive its truths and pro-
mises with a lively faith, productive of love and
obedience, Christ being the author of eternal salva-
tion only to those that love and obey him, 1 Cor.
xvi. 22; Heb. v. 9. *Believing the gospel* is often
termed by St. Paul *the obedience of faith*, both be-
cause God hath commanded men to believe it, and
because it contains not only doctrines to be credited,
threatenings to be revered, and promises to be
trusted, but also a variety of precepts necessary to
be obeyed. Probably in the former clause, *who*
know not God, the apostle had chiefly the unbeliev-
ing Gentiles in view, and in this latter the unbeliev-
ing Jews.

Verses 9, 10. *Who shall be punished with ever-*
lasting destruction—Not the annihilation, but the
perversion and utter ruin of all their powers of
body and mind, so that those powers become instru-
ments of torment and sources of misery to them in
all possible ways. As there can be no end of their
sins, (the same enmity against God continuing,) so
neither of their punishment: sin and its punishment
running parallel through eternity itself. They must
of necessity therefore be cut off from all good, and
all possibility of it. *From the presence of the Lord*
—Wherein chiefly consists the salvation and felicity
of the righteous. What unspeakable punishment is
implied even in falling short of this, supposing that
nothing more were implied in the punishment here
spoken of! But this phrase, *destruction from the*
presence, or face, of the Lord, as Bishop Hopkins
justly observes, expresses not only that they shall
be expelled from that joy and glory which reigns in
the presence of God and of Christ, but that his pre-
sence shall appear active in the infliction of their
punishment, so that they shall find his wrath issuing
forth like lightning to appal and torment their
spirits, while his power glorifies itself in their ruin
and misery. *When he shall come to be glorified in*

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A. M. 4058. 11 Wherefore also we pray always
A. D. 54. for you, that our God would ³count
^a you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the
good pleasure of *his* goodness, and ²the work
of faith with power :

³ Or, *vouchsafe*.—^a Verse 5.

his saints—For his wonderful glory shall shine forth in them, and he will manifest the greatness of his power in rendering them glorious; *and to be admired in all them that believe*—With respect to the efforts of his almighty power and love for their complete salvation. Or, they shall be filled with wonder at what is done by Christ for and upon them, so far exceeding their most sanguine expectation. *Because our testimony, &c.*—As if he had said, I reckon you of this number because of the credit which you gave to our preaching.

Verses 11, 12. *Wherefore*—In regard of which, as we rejoice in what is already done, and have the most earnest concern that the precious seed we have sown may answer the hope with which we see it springing up, and may at length advance to full maturity; *we pray always for you*—We are incessant in our supplications to God; *that he would account you worthy of this calling*—That is, would make you meet for the glory to which you are called; see Eph. iv. 4; *and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness*—Which is no less than perfect holiness: that he would produce in you all those amiable and happy affections and tempers, which his paternal regard for our happiness engages him

12 ¹ That the name of our Lord A. M. 4058.
Jesus Christ may be glorified in A. D. 54.
you, and ye in him, according to the
grace of our God and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

¹ 1 Thess. i. 3.—¹ 1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 14.

to recommend and require. "This," observes Mr. Blackwall, (*Sac. Class.*, vol. i. p. 184,) "is the shortest and the most charming emphatical representation that is anywhere to be found, of that immense graciousness and admirable benignity of God, which no words can fully express, but was never so happily and so fully expressed as here." *And the work of faith with power*—That faith which is his work, wrought by his almighty power, Eph. i. 19, 20; that is, that he would perfect your faith in Christ and in his gospel, and by it your holiness in all its branches. *That the name*—The love and power; *of our Lord Jesus Christ*—While you act in a manner so suitable to the relation in which you stand to him; *may be glorified*—Gloriously displayed; *in you*—That is, in these works of his grace and power wrought in and by you; *and ye in him*—May also be glorified, may have the honour of approving yourselves his true, faithful, obedient servants, the excellent of the earth, and may for ever share in the glory he hath prepared for such in heaven; *according to the grace*—The free, unmerited favour and love; *of our merciful God and the Lord Jesus Christ*—By whom that grace is so fully manifested to, and so plentifully bestowed upon us.

CHAPTER II.

Here the apostle (1.) Cautions the Thessalonians against expecting the day of judgment immediately, 1, 2. (2.) Assures them there would be first a general apostacy, and the appearance of Antichrist, whose rise and reign, with the ruin of his subjects, he describes, 3-12. (3.) He thanks God for his mercy to the believing Thessalonians, manifested in his calling, accepting, and saving them, 13, 14. (4.) He exhorts them to be steadfast, and prays that God would comfort and establish them, 15-17.

A. M. 4058. NOW we beseech you, brethren,
A. D. 54. ^a by the coming of our Lord

Jesus Christ, ^b and by our gathering A. M. 4058.
together unto him, A. D. 54.

^a 1 Thess. iv. 16.

^b Matt. xxiv. 31; Mark xiii. 27; 1 Thess. iv. 17.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *We beseech you, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*—As you look for Christ's second coming, and expect comfort from it; or rather *concerning his coming*, as the preposition *υπερ* is understood to signify in other places of Scripture, and in other authors. For he does not beseech *by* the coming of Christ, but his coming is the subject of which he is treating; and it is in relation to this subject that he desires them not to be disturbed. *And by*—Concerning; *our gathering together to him*—Namely, in the clouds. The phrases, *the coming*

of Christ, and *the day of Christ*, may be understood either figuratively of his coming in judgment upon the Jews, or literally of his coming in glory to judge the world; the latter is the proper signification in this place, as the context will evince beyond contradiction. St. Paul himself had planted the church in Thessalonica, and it consisted principally of converts from among the Gentile idolaters, who had *turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God*, 1 Thess. i. 9. What occasion was there, therefore, to admonish them particularly of the destruction of Jerusalem? or why should they be

A. M. 4058. 2 ° That ye be not soon shaken in
A. D. 54. mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit,
nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that
the day of Christ is at hand.

3 ° Let no man deceive you by any means:
for that day shall not come, ° except there come

° Matthew xxiv. 4; Eph. v. 6; 1 John iv. 1.—^d Matthew
xxiv. 4; Ephesians v. 6.—^e 1 Timothy iv. 1.—^f Daniel vii.
25; 1 John ii. 18; Revelation xiii. 11, &c.—^g John

under any agitations or terrors of mind upon that account? What connection had Macedonia with Judea, or Thessalonica with Jerusalem? What share were the Christian converts to have in the calamities of the rebellious and unbelieving Jews, and why should they not rather have been comforted than troubled at the punishment of their inveterate enemies? Besides, how could the apostle deny that the destruction of the Jews was at hand, when it really was at hand, as he himself says, (1 Thess. ii. 16,) and the wrath of God was already beginning to come upon them? He knew, and doubtless they knew, (our Lord having declared it,) that the destruction of Jerusalem would come to pass in that generation. The phrase, therefore, must necessarily be taken in a more general acceptation, of his coming to judge the world, as it is constantly used in the former epistle. *That ye be not soon shaken in mind*—*Απο το νοος*, from the mind, or judgment, you have formerly held: or from the true meaning of my former letter, as Chandler interprets the clause. *Or be troubled*—*Perplexed*, or put into confusion. The original word, *θροισθαι*, signifies to be agitated with the surprise and trouble which is occasioned by any unexpected rumour or bad news, Matt. xxiv. 6. *Neither by spirit*—By pretence of some revelation from the Spirit of God; *nor by words*—Some declaration pretended to have been uttered by me; *nor by letter*—Some counterfeit writing, or some passage in the former epistle; *as from us*—As written by me, or by my appointment; *as that the day of Christ*—That is, the coming of Christ to judge mankind; *is at hand*—It was a point of great importance for the Thessalonians not to be mistaken concerning the time of Christ's second coming; for if they had inferred from the apostle's doctrine that it was at hand, and it had not taken place according to their expectation, they would probably have been staggered in their faith, and finding part of their creed to be false, they might have been brought hastily to conclude that the whole was so.

Verses 3, 4. *Let no man deceive you by any means*—By any of these ways fore-mentioned, or any other; *for that day shall not come, unless a falling away*, *η αποστασια*, the apostacy, come first—The article here is emphatical, denoting both that this was to be a great apostacy, the apostacy, by way of eminence, (the general, grand departure of the whole visible church into idolatrous worship,) and that the Thessalonians had been already apprized of its coming. Although the Greek word here used often signifies the rebellion of subjects against the supreme

a falling away first, and ° that man of A. M. 4058.
sin be revealed, ° the son of perdition; A. D. 54.

4 Who opposeth and ° exalteth himself ° above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

xvii. 12.—^b Isaiah xiv. 13; Ezekiel xxviii. 2, 6, 9; Daniel vii. 25; xi. 36; Revelation xiii. 6.—^c 1 Corinthians viii. 5.

power of the country where they live, or the revolt of soldiers against their general, or the hostile separation of one part of a nation from another; yet in Scripture it commonly signifies a departure, either in whole or in part, from a religious faith or obedience formerly professed, Acts xxi. 21; Heb. iii. 12. Here it denotes the defection of the disciples of Christ from the true faith and worship of God, enjoined in the gospel. Accordingly, the apostle, foretelling this very defection, (1 Tim. iv. 1,) says, *αποησονται τινες*, some shall apostatize from the faith. See the note on that verse. *And that man of sin*—The head of this apostacy, given up to all sin himself, (Rev. xiii. 5, 6,) and a ringleader of others unto sin, verses 12, 14. If this idea be derived from any ancient prophet, it must be from Daniel, who hath described the like arrogant and tyrannical power, chap. vii. 25; *He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws*. See also chap. xi. 26. Any man may be satisfied that St. Paul alluded to this description by Daniel, because he hath not only borrowed the ideas, but hath even adopted some of the phrases and expressions. The *man of sin* may signify either a single man, or a succession of men; the latter being meant in Daniel, it is probable that the same is intended here also. Indeed, a single man appears hardly sufficient for the work here assigned; and it is agreeable to the phraseology of Scripture to speak of a body, or a number of men, under the character of one. Thus a king (Dan. vii., viii.; Rev. xvii.) is often used for a succession of kings, and the high-priest, (Heb. ix. 7, 25,) for the series and order of high-priests. A single beast, (Dan. vii., viii.; Rev. xiii.) often represents a whole empire or kingdom, in all its changes and revolutions. The *woman clothed with the sun*, (Rev. xii. 1,) is designed as an emblem of the true church, as the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, (Rev. xvii. 4,) is the portrait of a corrupt communion. This *man of sin* is said to be revealed when he enters on the stage, and acts as he is described. *The son of perdition*—One who brings destruction upon others, both spiritual and temporal, (Rev. xvii. 2, 6,) and is devoted to destruction himself, verse 8. Thus the Papacy has caused the death of numberless multitudes both of opposers and followers, has destroyed innumerable souls, and will itself go to destruction. *The son of perdition* is also the denomination of the traitor Judas, (John xvii. 12,) which implies that the man of sin should, like Judas, be a false prophet, should betray Christ, and be devoted to destruction.

A. M. 4058. 5 Remember ye not, that when I
A. D. 54. was yet with you, I told you these
things?

¹ Or, holdeth.

Who opposeth—Or shall oppose, (the prophets speaking of things future as present,) and exalt himself above all—Greek, *ἐν παντί*, above every one, that is called God—This is manifestly copied from Daniel; He shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, and speak marvellous things against the God of gods. Or that is worshipped—*Ἐβραῖα*, alluding to the title of the Roman emperors, *αὐγούστος*, august, or venerable. He shall oppose and exalt himself, not only above inferior magistrates, who are sometimes called gods in holy writ, but even above the greatest emperors, and shall arrogate to himself divine honours; so that he, as God—Assuming the authority of Christ; sitteth in the temple of God—Exercises supreme and sovereign power over the visible church, as head thereof, even over all that profess Christianity. By the temple of God, the apostle could not well mean the temple of Jerusalem, because he knew very well that would be totally destroyed within a few years. It is an observation of the learned Borchart, that after the death of Christ the temple at Jerusalem is never called by the apostles the temple of God; and that when they mention the house or temple of God, they mean the Christian Church in general, or every particular believer; which indeed is very evident from many passages in their epistles: see 1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Cor. vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. ii. 19-24; 1 Pet. ii. 5. Besides, in the Revelation by St. John, which was written some years after the destruction of Jerusalem, there is mention made of men's becoming pillars in the temple of God, (Rev. iii. 12.) which is a further proof that the sitting of the man of sin in the temple of God, by no means implies that he was to appear in the temple of Jerusalem. In short, the meaning of the verse is, that the wicked teachers, of whom the apostle speaks, would first oppose Christ by corrupting the doctrine of the gospel concerning him, and after that they would make void the government of God and of Christ in the Christian Church, and the government of the civil magistrate in the state, by arrogating to themselves the whole spiritual authority which belongs to Christ, and all the temporal authority belonging to princes and magistrates; showing himself that he is God—Exercising all the prerogatives of God, accepting such titles, and doing such things, as, if they indeed belonged to him, would show him to be God: an exact description certainly of the Papal power.

Verses 5, 6. *Remember ye not, &c.*—These things were not asserted now merely to serve the present occasion: the apostle had spoken, yea, and borne a faithful testimony concerning them while he was at Thessalonica. Indeed, the rise and progress of this apostacy, with the various heresies connected with it, and the evils which were about to be occasioned by it, were matters of such offence and scandal, that

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6 And now ye know what ¹ withhold- A. M. 4058.
eth that he might be revealed in his time. A. D. 54.

7 For ² the mystery of iniquity doth already

¹ 1 John ii. 18; iv. 3.

unless the disciples had been forewarned concerning them, their happening might have led the weak to fancy that God had cast away all care of his church. The apostle, knowing this, made the prediction of these events the subject even of his first sermons to the Thessalonians, after they had embraced the gospel; and doubtless he followed the same course in all other places where he preached with any degree of success. See 1 Tim. iv. 6. Beza observes that this prophecy was often repeated and earnestly inculcated in the first age, but is overlooked and neglected in modern times. *And now ye know*—By what I told you when I was with you; *what withholdeth*—Restraineth the man of sin from exercising his impious tyranny. It seems the apostle, when at Thessalonica, besides speaking of the apostacy and of the man of sin, had told them what it was that hindered his appearance. But as he has not thought fit to commit that discovery to writing, we cannot determine with absolute certainty what it was; but if we may rely upon the concurrent testimonies of the Christian fathers, it was the Roman empire. Indeed, the caution which the apostle observes with respect to speaking of it, renders it highly probable that it was somewhat relating to the higher powers. He mentioned it in discourse, but would not commit it to writing. As he afterward exhorts the Thessalonians to hold the traditions which had been taught them, whether by word or his epistle, it is likely this was one of the traditions which he thought it proper to teach them. The apostle's manner of speaking here, (*that he might be revealed in his time, or in his own season, as ἐν τῷ καιρῷ καίρῳ* properly signifies,) seems to imply that there were reasons for permitting the corruptions of Christianity to proceed to a certain length. "Now what could these reasons be, unless to show mankind the danger of admitting any thing in religion but what is of divine appointment? For one error productive of superstition admitted, naturally leads to others, till at length religion is utterly deformed. Perhaps also these evils were permitted, that in the natural course of human affairs, Christianity being first corrupted and then purged, the truth might be so clearly established, as to be in no danger of any corruption in time to come."—Macnigh.

Verse 7. *For the mystery of iniquity*—There is a mystery of iniquity as well as of godliness, the one in direct opposition to the other. The expression, *a mystery*, in the Scripture sense of it, is something secret or undiscovered. See note on Eph. i. 9. *The mystery of iniquity*, therefore, is a scheme of error, not openly discovered, whose influence is to encourage iniquity. *Doth already work*—*Ἐργεῖται*, worketh inwardly, in men's minds, or in the church, and perhaps also secretly. The seeds of corruption were sown, but they were not yet grown up to any

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A. M. 4058. work : only he who now letteth will
A. D. 54. let, until he be taken out of the way.
8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed,

¹ Dan. vii. 10, 11.—² Job iv. 9 ; Isa. xi. 4 ; Hos. vi. 5 ;

maturity: the leaven was fermenting in some parts, but it was far from having yet infected the whole mass. To speak without a figure, the apostle means that the false doctrines and bad practices, which he foresaw in after times would be carried to a great height by the power which he denominates the *man of sin*, were already operating in the false teachers, who then infested the church. Accordingly, in his speech to the elders of the church at Ephesus, not long after this epistle was written, he told them, (Acts xx. 29,) that *grievous wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the flock*; and that of themselves men would arise speaking perverse things, &c. And before he wrote his epistle to the Colossians, false teachers had actually arisen in Phrygia, who earnestly recommended the worship of angels, (Col. ii. 18,) abstinence from certain meats, and various bodily mortifications, (Col. ii. 21, 22,) according to the traditions and doctrines of men. For the apostle wrote that epistle expressly for the purpose of condemning these idolatries and superstitious practices. To these things may be added an excess of reverence for pastors, and setting them up as heads of factions, 1 Cor. i. 12; iii. 22; the ambition of pastors themselves, and contending for rule and precedence, 3 John 9; errors in point of doctrine already promulgated, as justification by the merit of works, Gal. ii. 16; external performances put in the room of faith and love; the having recourse to other mediators besides Christ Jesus, and various human inventions added to the written word. Only he who now letteth—That is, restraineth, will restrain, &c. Chandler thinks this verse should be translated thus: *The mystery of iniquity already worketh, only until he who restrains it be taken out of the way*; that is, it works in a concealed manner only until then. The restraining here spoken of refers to the mystery of iniquity, as the restraining, mentioned verse 6, refers to the man of sin. These were connected together, and were restrained by something which the apostle had mentioned to the Thessalonians, in his sermons and conversations, but which he did not choose to express in writing. This, as was observed on verse 6, was generally understood by the fathers to be the Roman emperors and empire, as it is plain from Tertullian, who says, (*Apol.*, p. 31.) “We Christians are under a particular necessity of praying for the emperors, and for the continued state of the empire; because we know that dreadful power which hangs over the whole world, is retarded by the continuance of the time appointed for the Roman empire.” “To this conjecture,” says Macknight, “the fathers may have been led by tradition, or they may have formed it upon Daniel’s prophecies. But, in whatever way they obtained the notion, it seems to have been the truth. For the power of the emperors and of

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¹ whom the Lord shall consume ² with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy ³ with the brightness of his coming :
A. M. 4058. A. D. 54.

Rev. ii. 16; xix. 15, 20, 21.—³ Chap. i. 8, 9; Heb. x. 27.

the magistrates under them, first in the heathen state of the empire, and afterward when the empire became Christian, was that which restrained the man of sin, or corrupt clergy, from exalting themselves above all that is called God, or an object of worship civil and religious.” The reader must observe, the Roman empire, united under one powerful head, was extremely jealous of every other authority and power, and therefore was watchful to prevent the establishment of every such spiritual tyranny and usurpation as that by which Satan was attempting to make his grand effort against Christianity. It must be observed, however, that though the Roman empire, for several ages, restrained the progress of the mystery of iniquity, and the increase of the power of the corrupt clergy, by keeping the church under persecution, and curbing all authority but its own, and thereby retarded the establishment of the ecclesiastical tyranny here spoken of; yet, as Mr. Scott remarks, “the conversion of the Roman emperors to Christianity, in the beginning of the fourth century, tended greatly to prepare things for this apostacy, by giving scope to the ambition and avarice of the ecclesiastics, and by multiplying exceedingly merely nominal Christians; but it was not till the subversion of the western empire by the northern nations, and the division of it into ten kingdoms, that way was made for the full establishment of the Papal usurpation at Rome, the capital city of the empire.”

Verse 8. *And then*—When every prince and power that restrains is taken away; *that wicked*—ὁ ἀνομος, *that lawless one*, who boasts himself to be above all laws, and the infallible judge, dispensing with, and interpreting the laws of God, according to his pleasure. Nothing can be more plain than that this *wicked* or *lawless one*, and the *man of sin*, must be one and the same person: *shall be revealed*—This revelation must mean that he would then no longer work secretly, but would openly show himself, possessing the character, and performing the actions ascribed to the man of sin. *Whom the Lord shall consume*—The apostle does not mean that he should be consumed immediately after he was revealed; but, to comfort the Thessalonians, he no sooner mentions his revelation, than he foretels also his destruction, even before he describes his other qualifications; which qualifications should have been described first in order of time, but the apostle hastens to what was first and warmest in his thoughts and wishes. The word ἀναλωσει, here rendered to *consume*, Chandler observes, is used to denote a lingering, gradual consumption; being applied to the waste of time, to the dissipation of an estate, and the slow death of being eaten up of worms. He supposes it has the same meaning here, importing that the *man of sin* is to be gradually destroyed by the *spirit*—Or *breath* rather, as it seems πνευμα should have

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A. M. 4059. 9 *Even him, whose coming is*
 A. D. 54. ° after the working of Satan, with
 all power, and ^p signs, and lying wonders,
 10 And with all deceivableness of un-

° John viii. 41; Eph. ii. 2; Rev. xviii. 23.—→ Deut. xiii. 1;

been here translated; of *Christ's mouth*—By which expression the preaching of true doctrine, and its efficacy in destroying the man of sin, are predicted. For the mouth being the instrument by which speech is formed of breath, or air from the lungs, the *breath of his mouth* is a proper figurative expression to denote the speaking or preaching of true doctrine. Accordingly, the preaching of the gospel is termed, (Rev. xix. 15,) *a sharp sword proceeding out of the mouth of Christ*; and (Hos. vi. 5) God says, *I have hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the word of my mouth*. See also Isa. xi. 4. Or, the expression may include both the preaching of the gospel and the power of the Spirit accompanying it; and *shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*—By clear, convincing reasons and arguments contained in the doctrine of those that shall speak or write by the Spirit of Christ, or by God's manifest judgments against him in the pouring out of the several vials, Rev. xvi. The original expression, *επιφανεια της παροσιας αυτου*, is, literally, *the bright shining of his coming*, and means that, as darkness is dispelled by the rising of the sun, so the mystery of iniquity shall be destroyed by the lustre with which Christ will cause the true doctrine of the gospel to shine. "If," says Dr. Benson, "St. John and St. Paul have prophesied of the same corruptions, it should seem that the head of the apostacy will be destroyed by some signal judgment, after its influence or dominion hath, in a gradual manner, been destroyed by the force of truth." According to Daniel, (chap. vii. 27,) after the little horn is *consumed and destroyed, the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High*; a prediction which undoubtedly signifies the general conversion of both Gentiles and Jews to the Christian faith, and the universal reign of righteousness and peace through all the earth.

Verses 9, 10. *Him whose coming*—The apostle, in his eagerness to foretel the destruction of the man of sin, having broken in upon his subject, now returns to it again, and describes the other qualifications by which this wicked one should advance and establish himself in the world. He should rise, the apostle signifies, to credit and authority by the most diabolical methods; should pretend to supernatural powers, and boast of revelations, visions, and miracles, false in themselves, and applied to promote false doctrines. The expression, *whose coming*, here signifies the first appearance of this lawless one in an open manner. The *mystery of iniquity* wrought covertly in the apostles' days; and the *man of sin* was not to show himself openly, till that which restrained was taken out of the way. His coming,

righteousness in ^a them that pe- A. M. 4059.
 A. D. 54. rish; because they received not ^a
 the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Matt. xxiv. 24; Rev. xiii. 13; xix. 21.—→ 2 Cor. ii. 15; iv. 3.

therefore, or his beginning to reveal himself, was to happen after the empire became Christian, and to take place in the manner described in the following clause. *After the working of Satan*—Whose first setting up, and further increasing of his power, is by Satan's influence; or with such a kind of working as Satan is wont to use wherewith to seduce persons; *with all power*—Pretended power from God; and *signs*—Fictitious or false signs, namely, not such as are fit to prove the truth of the doctrines which they are brought to confirm, but are mere impostures and forgeries; and *lying wonders*—Such illusions and deceptions as were effected by the power of Satan, to confirm the doctrines and dominion of Antichrist, and were calculated to cause wonder in the beholders. Macknight reads this clause, *with all power, and signs, and miracles of falsehood*, judging the structure of the sentence requires that *ψευδες, of falsehood*, be joined not only with *wonders*, or *miracles*, but with *power and signs*. And in explanation of the terms he observes, that they are either signs, miracles, and exertions of power, performed in appearance only; mere impositions upon the senses of mankind; or they are real signs and miracles performed for the establishment of error; and consequently they are the works of evil spirits. Of this sort the miracles performed by Pharaoh's magicians may have been; also some of the miracles related by heathen historians. For the apostle intimates that by some kind of miracle, or strong working, which had the appearance of miracles in the eyes of the vulgar, Satan established idolatry in the heathen world. Nay, our Lord himself foretels that *false Christs and false prophets would show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect*. Wherefore, seeing the coming of the man of sin was to be *after the working of Satan, with all power, &c.*, it is not improbable that some of the miracles, by which the corruptions of Christianity were introduced, may have been real miracles performed by evil spirits, called here miracles of falsehood, because they were done for the establishment of error: see Rev. xiii. 13, 14, where the same events seem to be foretold. This description of the wicked or lawless one, plainly evinces that Mohammed cannot be the *man of sin*, as some pretend. For, instead of working miracles, he utterly disclaimed all pretensions of that sort. In like manner, and for the same reason, the *man of sin* cannot be the factious leaders of the Jews in their revolt from the Romans, as Le Clerc and Whitby have affirmed; nor any of the heathen Roman emperors, as others have imagined. Besides, although these emperors exalted themselves above all other kings and princes, and opposed Christ very much, they did not apostatize from the Christian faith, nor sit in

A. M. 4058. 11 And ^r for this cause God shall
A. D. 54. send them strong delusion, ^r that they
should believe a lie :

^r Rom. i. 24, &c. ; 1 Kings xxiii. 23 ; Ezek. xiv. 9.

the temple of God. *With all deceivableness of unrighteousness*—Or every unrighteous deceit, (the phrase being a Hebraism.) The apostle means those feigned visions and revelations, and other pious frauds, by which the corrupt clergy gained credit to their impious doctrines and practices. *In them that perish*—Who are in the highway to eternal destruction ; because they received not the love of the truth—The cause this why God suffered them to fall into such destructive errors.

Verses 11, 12. *For this cause God shall send them*—That is, shall judicially permit to come upon them ; *strong delusion*—The strong working of error in their hearts. From this we learn that, as a punishment of their sins, God suffers wicked men to fall into greater sins ; and as the sin of the persons described in this passage consisted in their not loving the truth, what could be more just or proper than to punish them, by suffering them to fall into the belief of the greatest errors and lies ? Thus the heathen, mentioned Rom. i. 24, were punished by God's giving them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts ; that they should believe a lie—Or, as the words εἰς τὸ πρῆσεσθαι αὐτοὺς τῷ ψεῦδει may be translated, so that they will believe a lie. The lie here intended by the Spirit of God, Macknight thinks, "is the monstrous lie of transubstantiation, or of the conversion of the bread and wine in the Lord's supper into the real identical body and blood of Christ, through the will of the priest accompanying his pronouncing the words of institution ; notwithstanding there is no change whatever produced in the accidents or sensible qualities of these substances. This impudent fiction is not only a palpable contradiction to the senses and reason of mankind, but a most pernicious falsehood, being the chief foundation of that fictitious power of pardoning sin, and of saving or damning men according to their own pleasure, which the Romish ecclesiastics have blasphemously arrogated to themselves, and by which they make men utterly negligent of holiness, and of all the ordinary duties of life." *That they all might be damned*—ἵνα κριθῶσι, might be judged, or condemned ; that is, the consequence of which will be, that, having filled up the measure of their iniquity, they will at length fall into just condemnation ; who believed not the truth—Received not the gospel in faith, love, and obedience ; but had pleasure in unrighteousness—In corrupt passions and vicious practices. The original expression, εὐδοκῆσαντες signifies both to take pleasure in a thing, and to approve of it. "From this we learn that it is not the simple ignorance of truth which exposes men to damnation. In many cases this may be no fault in the ignorant. But it is men's refusing to believe, through their taking pleasure in unrighteousness, which will prove fatal to them ; for a disposition of

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12 That they all might be damned A. M. 4058.
who believed not the truth, but ^r had A. D. 54.
pleasure in unrighteousness.

^r Matt. xxiv. 5, 11 ; 1 Tim. iv. 1.—^r Rom. i. 23.

that sort renders the wicked altogether incurable." Such is the interpretation which Bishop Newton, in his admirable work on the Prophecies, Dr. Macknight, and many other approved commentators, have given of this famous prophecy ; an interpretation which applies with great ease to all the facts and circumstances mentioned in it, and is perfectly consistent in all its parts, which no other interpretation invented by learned men can be shown to be. The passage is evidently a prediction, as the above-mentioned divines have fully proved, of the corruptions of Christianity, "which began to be introduced into the church in the apostle's days, and wrought secretly all the time the heathen magistrates persecuted the Christians, but which showed themselves more openly after the empire received the faith of Christ, A. D. 312, and by a gradual progress ended in the monstrous errors and usurpations of the bishops of Rome, when the restraining power of the emperors was taken out of the way, by the incursions of the barbarous nations, and the breaking of the empire into the ten kingdoms prefigured by the ten horns of Daniel's fourth beast." To be convinced of this, the reader need only compare the rise and progress of the Papal tyranny with the descriptions of the man of sin, and of the mystery of iniquity here given, and with the prophecies of Daniel. In the bishops of Rome all the characters and actions ascribed by Daniel to the little horn, and by Paul to the lawless one, are clearly united. "For, according to the strong working of Satan, with all power and signs, and miracles of falsehood, they have opposed Christ, and exalted themselves above all that is called God, or an object of worship ; and have long sat in the temple of God as God, showing themselves that they are God ; that is, they exercise the power and prerogatives of God. And seeing, in the acquisition and exercise of their spiritual tyranny, they have trampled upon all laws, human and divine, and have encouraged their votaries in the most enormous acts of wickedness, the Spirit of God hath, with the greatest propriety, given them the appellations of the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the lawless one. Further, as it is said that the man of sin was to be revealed in his season, there can be little doubt that the dark ages, in which all learning was overturned by the irruption of the northern barbarians, were the season allotted to the man of sin for revealing himself. Accordingly we know that in these ages the corruptions of Christianity, and the usurpations of the clergy, were carried to the greatest height. In short, the annals of the world cannot produce persons and events, to which the things written in this passage can be applied with so much fitness, as to the bishops of Rome. Why then should we be in any doubt concerning the interpretation and application of this famous prophecy ?"—Macknight.

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A. M. 4058. 13 But ^a we are bound to give
A. D. 54. thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God ^z hath ^y from the beginning chosen you to salvation, ^x through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth :

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to ^a the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

^a Chap. i. 3.—^x 1 Thess. i. 4.—^y Eph. i. 4.—^z Luke i. 75; 1 Pet. i. 2.—¹ John xvii. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 1 Pet. v. 10.—¹ Cor. xvi. 13; Phil. iv. 1.

Verses 13, 14. *But, &c.*—Here he proceeds to comfort them against the terrors of the preceding prophecy; *we are bound to give thanks always for you*—As if he had said, I do not mean that ye believers at Thessalonica will be concerned either in this revolt against God, or in the punishment thereof; *brethren, beloved of the Lord*—Brethren in Christ through your believing in him, and therefore peculiarly beloved of God; *because God hath from the beginning*—Of your hearing and obeying the gospel; *chosen you to salvation*—Hath pardoned, accepted, and made you his chosen people and dear children, as he hath all who, hearkening to the call of his word, truly turn to him in repentance, faith, and new obedience; *through sanctification of the Spirit*—Through that renovation of mind and heart, and reformation of life, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit's influences; *and belief of the truth*—By the instrumentality of which the Spirit works that important change in mankind. *Whereunto*—To which belief of the truth, and sanctification of the Spirit, or to which faith and holiness; *he called you by our gospel*—And inclined and enabled you to obey the call; *to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*—The glory which he hath, 1st, Purchased, Eph. i. 14; 2d, Promised, John x. 28; 3d, Prayed for, John xvii. 14; 4th, Prepared, and will bestow, John xiv. 2, 3: the very same glory which Christ himself now possesses, Rom. viii. 17; Rev. iii. 21.

Verses 15–17. *Therefore, brethren, stand fast*—In your adherence to the truth and possession of the grace of the gospel; *and hold*—Without adding to or diminishing from them; *the traditions which ye have been taught*—The instructions which have been delivered to you; *whether by word*—When we were present with you; *or our former epistle*—He preached to them before he wrote, and he had written concerning the things which he wished them to hold

15 Therefore, brethren, ^b stand fast, A. M. 4058.
and hold ^c the traditions which ye have A. D. 54.
been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

16 ^d Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, ^e which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and ^f good hope through grace,

17 Comfort your hearts, ^g and stablish you in every good word and work.

^c 1 Cor. xi. 2; Chap. iii. 6.—^d Chap. i. 1, 2.—^e 1 John iv. 10; Rev. i. 5.—^f 1 Pet. i. 3.—^g 1 Cor. i. 8; 1 Thess. iii. 13; 1 Pet. v. 10.

fast in his former epistle. The name *traditions* is here given by the apostle “to the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, on a double account; first, because they were delivered by Christ and by the Spirit to the apostles, merely on the authority of revelation; and, secondly, because the apostles delivered them to the world on the same authority, without attempting to prove them by any other argument. And this precept, *hold the traditions*, applies to no instructions or directions but those which the apostles and other inspired teachers delivered to the world as revelations from God. And though the inspired teachers, to whom these doctrines were revealed, communicated them to the world first of all by word of mouth, they cannot now be known to be theirs, but by their holding a place in those writings which are allowed to be the genuine productions of these inspired teachers. The traditions, therefore, on which the Church of Rome lays so great a stress, are of no manner of value.” *Now our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father*—Here again, as in 1 Epist. iii. 11, prayer is addressed by the apostle to Christ as well as to the Father, and in the same words; *who hath loved us*—As a father loves his children; *and hath given us everlasting consolation*—Hath opened to us the sources thereof in his gospel, or furnished us with the means of it; and of *good hope*—That is, a well-grounded hope, namely, of the glorification of both our bodies and souls; *through grace*—1st, Justifying us, and entitling us to that felicity; 2d, Sanctifying us, and preparing us for it; and, 3d, Strengthening us, and enabling us to withstand our spiritual enemies, and do and suffer the will of God to the end, and thereby bringing us to it. *Comfort your hearts*—Under all the afflictions you endure for the gospel; *and establish you in every good word and work*—That is, in every good doctrine and practice, in opposition to all the efforts of your enemies to seduce you, whether visible or invisible.

CHAPTER III.

Here the apostle, (1,) Requests the prayers of the Thessalonian believers for himself and fellow-ministers, amid their various labours and dangers, and prays for them, 1-5. (2,) Charges them to withdraw from, and duly censure, disorderly walkers; particularly such as, contrary to his command and example, were indolent, and busy bodies, 6-15. (3,) Concludes with a prayer, salutation, and benediction, 16-18.

A. M. 4058. **FINALLY**, brethren, ^a pray for us, that the word of the Lord ¹ may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you;

2 And ^b that we may be delivered from ² unreasonable and wicked men: ^c for all men have not faith.

3 But ^d the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and ^e keep you from evil.

4 And ^f we have confidence in the Lord touch-

^a Eph. vi. 19; Col. iv. 3; 1 Thess. v. 25.—¹ Gr. may run. Rom. xv. 31.—² Gr. absurd.—^c Acts xxviii. 24; Rom. x. 16.—^d 1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Thess. v. 24.—^e John xvii. 15; 2 Pet. ii. 9.—^f 2 Cor. vii. 16; Gal. v. 10.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1-4. *Finally, brethren, pray for us*—See on Col. iv. 3; that the word of the Lord may have free course—Greek, *ῥεχθη*, may run, go on swiftly without any interruption; and be glorified—Acknowledged as divine, and bring forth much fruit; even as it is with you—This is a very high commendation of the Thessalonian brethren, and was designed to encourage them in their attachment to the gospel. *And that we may be delivered*—Rescued and preserved; from unreasonable and wicked men—The word *ἀνομιῶν*, rendered unreasonable, properly signifies men who have, or ought to have, no place, namely, in society. Bishop Wilkins thinks that *absurd, contumacious* persons are intended; such as are not to be fixed by any principles, and whom no topics can work upon. Doubtless the apostle had in his eye chiefly, if not only, the unbelieving Jewish zealots, who were so exceedingly enraged against him for preaching salvation to the Gentiles, without requiring them to obey the law of Moses, that they followed him from place to place, and raised a furious storm of persecution against him wherever they found him, by inflaming both the rulers and the people against him; and they had lately made an insurrection at Corinth, with an intention to have him put to death. *For all men have not faith*—And all who have not are, more or less, unreasonable and wicked men. By *faith*, in this passage, it seems we are not to understand the actual belief of the gospel, (for that all men had not that faith was a fact too obvious to be thus noticed by the apostle,) but such a desire to know and do the will of God as would dispose a person to believe and obey the gospel when fairly proposed to him. And it seems, in making this observation, the apostle glances not only at the Jews, who boasted of their faith in the true God, and in the revelation of his will which he had made to them, but at the Greek philosophers likewise, who had assumed to themselves the pompous appellation

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ing you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. A. M. 4058. A. D. 54.

5 And ^a the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and ^b into the patient waiting for Christ.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^c that ye withdraw yourselves ^d from every brother that walketh ^e disorderly, and not after ^f the tradition which he received of us.

^a 1 Chron. xxix. 18.—^b Or, the patience of Christ, 1 Thess. i. 3.—^c Rom. xvi. 17; Verse 14: 1 Tim. vi. 5; 2 John 10. ^d 1 Cor. v. 11, 13.—^e 1 Thess. iv. 11; v. 14; Verses 11, 12, 14.—^f Chap. ii. 15.

of lovers of wisdom, or truth. *But the Lord is faithful*—And will not deceive the confidence, or disappoint the hopes of any that trust in him, and expect the accomplishment of his promises; *who shall stablish you*—Even all that cleave to him by faith and love; and keep you from evil—From all the mischievous devices of Satan and his instruments, 2 Tim. iv. 18. The Greek, *ἀπο τοῦ πονηροῦ*, is literally, from the evil one; the name given in other passages of Scripture to the devil, Matt. vi. 13, 19; Eph. vi. 16. *And we have confidence in the Lord*—Or we trust in the Lord concerning you, that he will not withhold from you the aids of his grace; that ye both do already, and will do, in future, the things which we command—In thus speaking, the apostle expresses his good opinion of the greater part of the Thessalonian brethren, but not of every one of them without exception, as is plain from verses 11-14.

Verse 5. *And the Lord*—By his Holy Spirit, whose proper work this is; *direct*—Powerfully incline; *your hearts unto the love of God*—That is, into the exercise of love to God, in return for his love to you; and into the patient waiting for Christ—Namely, the patient waiting for his second coming, or for his coming to call you hence by death, 1 Thess. i. 10. Macknight, however, interprets the verse rather differently, thus: “May the Lord direct your heart to imitate the love which God hath showed to mankind, and the patience which Christ exercised under sufferings.” The patience of Christ has this sense Rev. i. 9: *A partaker in the kingdom and patience of Jesus*. As the patience of Job means the patience of which Job was so great an example, so the patience of Christ may signify the patience which he exercised in his sufferings.

Verses 6-12. *We command you, brethren*—We solemnly charge you; in the name of the Lord, (see on 1 Cor. v. 4,) the credit and progress of whose religion are so nearly concerned in the matter; that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother—What-

A. M. 4058. 7 For yourselves know ^a how ye
A. D. 54. ought to follow us: for ^a we behaved
not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for
naught; but ^o wrought with labour and tra-
vail night and day, that we might not be
chargeable to any of you:

9 ^p Not because we have not power, but to
make ^q ourselves an ensample unto you to fol-
low us.

10 For even when we were with you, this
we commanded you, ^r that if any would not
work, neither should he eat.

^a 1 Cor. iv. 16; xi. 1; 1 Thess. i. 6, 7.—^b 1 Thess. ii. 10.—^c Acts xviii. 3; xx. 34; 2 Cor. xi. 9; 1 Thess. ii. 9.
^d 1 Cor. ix. 6; 1 Thess. ii. 6.—^e Verse 7.—^f Gen. iii. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 11.

ever his rank, circumstances, or profession may be; that *walketh disorderly*—Particularly (as the apostle here means) in not working; that you have no unnecessary converse or society with such. *Disorderly persons*, *αρακτοι*, are they who profess to be subject to the discipline of the gospel, yet do not walk according to its precepts. See 1 Thess. v. 14. What the apostle here condemned under this description, was *idleness*, verse 11; and by the solemnity with which he introduces his charge, we are taught, that it is most offensive to God, and dangerous to ourselves and others, to encourage, by our company and conversation, such as live in the practice of that or any gross sin! May all who have a regard to religion attend to this! The same important charge is repeated verse 14. *And not after the tradition which ye received of us*—The admonition we gave both by word of mouth and in our former epistle. *Yourselves know how ye ought to follow*—*Μιμνησθε*, to imitate, us—As if he had said, My own conduct entitles me to rebuke the disorderly; for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you—We were not irregular in our conduct, but endeavoured to conduct ourselves so as to recommend and enforce our doctrine by our example. *Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught*—Greek, *δωρεαν*, gratis, or as a free gift, but wrought with labour and travail—Or toil, as *μοχθω* signifies: *night and day*—This intimates that the apostle was frequently obliged to work at his business of tent-making a part of the night, that he might be at leisure during the day to preach the word, and teach those that came to him for religious instruction. See on 1 Thess. ii. 9. *Not because we have not power*—*Εξουσιαν*, authority, or right, to receive a maintenance from those to whom we minister. See on 1 Cor. ix. 4-7. When our Lord first sent out the twelve to preach, he said to them, (Matt. x. 10,) *The workman is worthy of his meat*; and by so saying conferred on his apostles a right to demand subsistence from those to whom they preached. This right Paul did not insist on among the Thessalonians, but wrought for his maintenance while he preached to them. Lest,

11 For we hear that there are some ^{A. M. 4058.}
^{A. D. 54.} which walk among you disorderly,
^a working not at all, but are busy-bodies.

12 ^a Now them that are such we command
and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, ^b that
with quietness they work, and eat their own
bread.

13 But ye, brethren, ^c be ^d not weary in well-
doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word
^e by this epistle, note that man, and ^f have
no company with him, that he may be
ashamed.

^a Verse 6.—^b 1 Thess. iv. 11; 1 Tim. v. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 15.
^c 1 Thess. iv. 11.—^d Eph. iv. 28.—^e Gal. vi. 9.—^f Or, faint not.—^g Or, signify that man by an epistle.—^h Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 9, 11.

however, his enemies might think this an acknowledgment that he was not an apostle, he here asserted his right, and told them that he had demanded no maintenance from them; that he might make himself a pattern to them of prudent industry. *This we commanded, that if any among you, capable of working, would not work*—For his own maintenance; *neither should he eat*—Be maintained by the charity of his fellow-Christians; do not support him in idleness. From this precept of the gospel we learn, that all men, without distinction, ought to employ themselves in some business or other which is useful; and that no man is entitled to spend his life in idleness. *We hear there are some, &c.*—After writing the former epistle, the apostle, it seems, had received a particular account of the state of the Thessalonian church; *working not at all, but are busy-bodies*—Idleness naturally disposes people to busy themselves with the concerns of others. *Such we command and exhort*—*Παρακαλυμεν*, beseech; by our Lord Jesus—To his command the apostle added earnest entreaty; and he did so by the direction of Christ. Or the meaning may be, We command by the authority, and beseech by the love of our Lord Jesus, that with quietness they work, forbearing to meddle, in any shape, with other people's affairs.

Verses 13-15. *But ye, brethren*—Who are not guilty of these, and such like miscarriages; *be not weary in well-doing*—In pursuing that line of conduct which is reputable and useful, which brings glory to God, and good to mankind. The original expression, *μη εκκακησητε*, properly signifies, *do not flag*, through sloth or cowardice. The Thessalonians, therefore, are here cautioned against flagging in the performance of their duty, either to God or their fellow-creatures. *If any man obey not our word*—Whether spoken to you during our short abode with you, or signified by this, or our former epistle; *note that man*—*σημειωθε*, set a mark upon, or point out, that man. Probably he intended that the rulers of the church should point him out to the rest, that they might avoid all familiarity and needless correspondence with him, which is meant by

A. M. 4058. 15 ^a Yet count *him* not as an ene-
A. D. 54. my, ^b but admonish *him* as a brother.

16 Now ^c the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.

17 ^d The salutation of Paul with mine own

^a Leviticus xix. 17; 1 Thessalonians v. 14.—^b Titus iii. 10.—^c Romans xv. 33; xvi. 20; 1 Corinthians xiv. 33; 2

having no company with him; that he may be ashamed—In order that, being shunned by all as an evil-doer, he may be ashamed of his conduct and amend. *Yet count him not as an enemy*—An obstinate, incurable sinner, no more to be regarded; *but admonish him as a brother*—Remind him of his duty and danger as a member of the same body with yourselves; or tell him lovingly of the reason why you shun him.

Verses 16, 17. *Now the Lord of peace himself*—See on Rom. xv. 33; or Christ may be here intended, and called the *Lord of peace*, in allusion to Isa. ix. 6, where he is foretold under the character of the *Prince of peace*, because he was to reconcile Jews and Gentiles to God and to one another. *Give you peace by all means*—In every way and manner.

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hand, which is the token in every A. M. 4058.
epistle: so I write. A. D. 54.

18 ^e The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

¶ The second *epistle* to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

Corinthians xiii. 11; 1 Thessalonians v. 23.—^d 1 Corinthians xvi. 21; Colossians iv. 18.—^e Romans xvi. 24.

This prayer the apostle subjoins to the foregoing command, to intimate that if the rulers of the church are faithful in their exhortations and admonitions, it is to be expected that the Lord will follow their labours with his blessing, and make them effectual for producing peace and righteousness among the members of his body. *The Lord be with you all*—A wish this founded on Christ's promise, (Matt. xxviii. 20.) *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*, with which promise it is probable Paul was made acquainted. *The salutation of Paul with mine own hand*—See on 1 Cor. xvi. 21; Gal. vi. 11; *which is the token in every epistle*—The mark to know those that are true from such as are counterfeit. *So I write*—This is my custom in all my epistles.

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b

PREFACE
TO THE
FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TIMOTHY.

TIMOTHY, or Timotheus, was a native of Lystra, in the Lesser Asia. His father was a Greek, but his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, were pious Jewish women, and trained him up from a child in the knowledge of the Scriptures. When young, and probably by hearing the gospel preached by Paul or Barnabas, he was converted to the Christian faith: and from the time of his conversion made such proficiency in the knowledge of the gospel, and was so remarkable for his piety and zeal in the cause of Christ, that he attracted the esteem of all the brethren in those parts, and was so well spoken of by them, that Paul would have him to accompany him in his journeys through the Gentile countries, and to assist him in his labours of preaching the gospel. And as Timothy, though a Jew, had not been circumcised, by reason that his father was a Gentile, the apostle thought it proper that he should bear that mark of his descent from a Jewess, because without it the Jews would have looked on him as a heathen, and would have despised his instructions. This, and not any opinion that circumcision was necessary to salvation, caused the apostle to propose and Timothy to receive that rite, by which the Jews, from the earliest times, had been distinguished from the rest of mankind. Afterward the presbyters at Lystra, the more strongly to impress Timothy with a sense of the importance of the work he had undertaken, solemnly set him apart to the office of an evangelist, by the laying on of their hands and by prayer. This was followed by the laying on of the apostle's hands, for the purpose of communicating to Timothy the gifts of the Holy Ghost, 2 Tim. i. 6.

Timothy being thus prepared to be the apostle's fellow-labourer in the gospel, accompanied him and Silas when they visited the churches of Phrygia, and delivered to them the decrees of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, declaring it unnecessary for the believing Gentiles to be circumcised, and to observe the ceremonial law of Moses. Having gone through these countries, and at length come to Troas, where Luke joined them, they were directed by a vision to go into Macedonia. Loosing, therefore, from Troas, they all passed over to Neapolis, and from thence went to Philippi, where they were instrumental in converting many, and in planting a Christian church. Leaving Luke at Philippi, they proceeded from thence to Thessalonica, where also they made many converts; but, being opposed with great violence by the unbelieving Jews, they were obliged to flee to Berea, whither the Jews from Thessalonica followed them. To elude their rage, Paul, who was most obnoxious to them, departed from Berea by night to go to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy in Berea. While the apostle remained at Athens, Timothy came to him, and gave him such an account of the afflicted state of the Thessalonian brethren, as induced him to send that evangelist back to comfort them. The apostle, meeting with little success at Athens, did not think it proper to continue there many days, but leaving that city, went forward to Corinth, where Silas and Timothy came to him, and assisted him in the work of preaching the gospel to the Corinthians. And when he left Corinth, they accompanied him first to Ephesus, then to Jerusalem, and after that to Antioch in Syria. Having spent some time in Antioch, Paul set out with Timothy on his third apostolical journey; in which, after visiting all the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, in the order in which they had been planted, they came to Ephesus the second time, and there abode long. In short, from the time Timothy first joined the apostle as his assistant, he never left him, except when sent by him on some special errand. And by his affection, fidelity, and zeal, he so recommended himself to all the disciples, and acquired such authority among them, that Paul inserted his name in the inscription of several of the letters which he wrote to the churches, to show that their doctrine was one and the same.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

Timothy, it must be observed, was properly, as was Titus also, an itinerant evangelist; a kind of secondary apostle, whose office was to regulate all things in the churches to which he was sent, and to inspect and reform whatsoever was amiss either in the bishops, deacons, or people. St. Paul had, doubtless, largely instructed him in private conversation for the due execution of so weighty an office. Yet, to fix things more upon his mind, and to give him an opportunity of having recourse to them afterward, as there might be occasion, and of communicating them to others, as also to leave divine directions in writing, for the use of the church and its ministers, in all ages, he sent him this excellent pastoral letter, which contains a great variety of important instructions and advices.

With respect to the date of this epistle, learned men have been greatly divided in their opinions. The hypothesis which has prevailed most generally is, that it was written about A. D. 60, when Paul had lately quitted Ephesus, on account of the tumult raised there by Demetrius, and was gone into Macedonia, Acts xx. 1. And this has been the opinion of many learned critics, ancient and modern; particularly of Athanasius, Theodoret, Baronius, Ludovic, Capellus, Blondel, Hammond, Grotius, Salmasius, Lightfoot, and Benson. On the other hand, Bishop Pearson endeavours to prove, that it could not be written till between the time of the first and second imprisonment of Paul at Rome, about A. D. 68; which opinion has been embraced by Le Clerc, L'Enfant, Cave, Fabricius, Mill, Whitby, Paley, Macknight, and others. The following arguments, however, in favour of the former hypothesis, do not appear to the author of this work to have yet received a satisfactory answer, and therefore he prefers the ancient opinion.

1. When Paul wrote his first epistle to him, Timothy was a young man, as appears from 1 Tim. iv. 12, where the apostle says, "Let no man despise thy youth;" which is also referred to 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11. Now supposing he were only sixteen years of age when converted to Christianity, which is thought to have been in St. Paul's journey through the Lesser Asia, recorded Acts xiv., (see note on Acts xvi. 1.) he would, in the year 60, be about thirty years of age; but in 68, when the latter hypothesis supposes the epistle was written, he would be thirty-eight, and certainly past the time of youth; thirty being the age at which the Levites were, according to the law, to enter upon their office. 2. The state of things in the church at Ephesus, in A. D. 60, better suits the contents of the first epistle than it does in A. D. 68. For it appears from chap. i. 3-7, and other passages, that those corruptions which the apostle speaks of as greatly increased and risen to a considerable height, when he met the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, and when he wrote his second epistle, were but just beginning to creep into the church at the time of his writing the first. To which it may be added that, from the particular instructions which the apostle gives Timothy about ordination, it seems as if the church at Ephesus, and those in the neighbourhood, had few or no bishops at the time it was written; from whence it appears extremely probable that the meeting between Paul and the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, must have been after the writing of this epistle. But, 3. The argument on which the principal stress hath been laid, in favour of the first hypothesis, is taken from the solemn prophetic declaration which Paul made when he took his leave of the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, in the following words, "I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more," Acts xx. 25. From whence it is inferred, that he must have written this epistle to Timothy before that interview, since in it he not only expresses a full expectation of returning, but speaks of his having just left Ephesus when he set out on his journey for Macedonia.

The epistle contains three parts: I. The inscription, chap. i. 1, 2. II. The instruction of Timothy how to behave at Ephesus; wherein, 1. In general, he gives an injunction to deliver to them that taught the law in a wrong manner, and confirms, at the same time, the sum of the gospel, as exemplified in himself, verses 3-20. 2. In particular, he prescribes to men a method of prayer, chap. ii. 1-8; to women, good works and modesty, verses 9-15. He recounts the requisites of a bishop, chap. iii. 1-7; the duties of deacons, verses 8-10; of women, verses 11-13. 3. He shows what Timothy should teach, verse 14; chap. iv. 1-6; what he should avoid, verses 7-11; what he should follow after, verses 12-16. How he should treat men and women, chap. v. 1, 2; widows, verses 3-16; elders, 17-19; offenders, 20, 21; himself, 22, 23; those he doubts of, 24, 25; servants, chap. vi. 1, 2. 4. False teachers are reprov'd, verses 3-10; Timothy is admonished and quickened, 11, 12; precepts are prescribed to be enforced on the rich, 17-19. III. The conclusion, verses 20, 21.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER I.

After the ordinary salutation, Paul, (1,) Reminds Timothy of the charge which he had given him at Ephesus, to adhere steadfastly to the Christian doctrine, 3, 4. (2,) Represents the true end and use of the Mosaic law, 5-11. (3,) With humble gratitude he relates his own marvellous conversion and call to the apostleship, 12-17. (4,) Charges Timothy to maintain faith and a good conscience, which some having abandoned, had been excommunicated, 18-20.

A. M. 4069. **PAUL**, an apostle of Jesus Christ
A. D. 65. ^a by the commandment ^b of God
our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, ^c which is
our hope ;

2 Unto ^d Timothy, ^e my own son in the faith ;
^f Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Fa-
ther and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still A. M. 4069.
at Ephesus, ^g when I went into Ma- A. D. 65.
cedonia, that thou mightest charge some ^h that
they teach no other doctrine,

4 ⁱ Neither give heed to fables and endless
genealogies, ^k which minister questions, rather
than godly edifying which is in faith ; *so do.*

^a Acts ix. 15.—^b Chap. ii. 3.—^c Col. i. 27.—^d Acts xvi. 1 ; 1 Cor. iv. 17 ; Phil. ii. 19 ; 1 Thess. iii. 2.—^e Tit. i. 4. ^f Gal. i. 3 ; 2 Tim. i. 2.

^g Acts xx. 1, 3 ; Phil. ii. 24.—^h Gal. i. 6, 7 ; Chap. vi. 3, 10.—ⁱ Chap. iv. 7 ; vi. 4, 20 ; 2 Tim. ii. 14, 16, 23. ^k Chap. vi. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1, 2. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ*—The apostle begins his epistle with asserting his apostolical dignity, not because Timothy was in any doubt concerning it, but to make the Ephesians sensible of the danger they incurred, if they rejected the charges and admonitions which the apostle ordered Timothy to deliver to them. Familiarity is to be set aside where the things of God are concerned. *By*—Or according to ; *the commandment*—The authoritative appointment ; *of God our Saviour*—So styled in many other places likewise, as being the grand orderer of the whole scheme of our salvation ; *and Christ our hope*—That is, the author, object, and ground of all our hope. *To Timothy, my own son*—If Timothy was not at first converted by the apostle, (which it is not certain he was from any historical account that has reached us,) yet he might term him *his own*, or *genuine son*, because of the parental affection he had for him, the complacency which he found in that assistance which he had received from him in the work of the ministry, in which he had faithfully served him, *like a son with his father*, (Phil. ii. 22,) and in the filial reverence and affection which this excellent young evangelist expressed to him ; not to mention that Timothy had received much establishment in the faith through

the apostle. *Grace, mercy, and peace*—St. Paul wishes *grace and peace* in his epistles to the churches. To Timothy he adds *mercy*, the most tender grace toward those who stand in need of it, as indeed all do. The experience of this prepares a man to be a minister of the gospel.

Verses 3, 4. *As I besought thee*—Παρηκαλεσα σε, *I entreated thee*. It is observed by Beza, that by using this soft expression the apostle hath left a singular example of modesty, to be imitated by superiors in their behaviour toward their inferiors in the church. *When I went into Macedonia*, (Acts xx. 1,) *that thou mightest charge some*—Who appeared to be inclined to introduce their own corrupt notions into the church ; *that they teach no other doctrine*—Than I have taught. Let them put nothing in the place of it, add nothing to it. These teachers were probably Judaizers, and members of the church at Ephesus ; for with other teachers Timothy could have little influence. In not mentioning the names of these corrupt teachers, the apostle showed great delicacy, hoping that they might still be reclaimed. The same delicacy he had observed in his treatment of the false teacher or teachers at Corinth, and of the incestuous person there. *Neither give heed to fables*—To fabulous Jewish traditions, so as either to teach or regard them ; *and endless genealogies*—

A. M. 4069. 5 Now ¹the end of the commandment
A. D. 65. is charity ^mout of a pure heart, and of
a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned :

6 From which some ¹having swerved, have
turned aside unto ^avain jangling ;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law ; ^oun-
derstanding neither what they say, nor where-
of they affirm.

¹ Rom. xiii. 8, 10 ; Gal. v. 14. — ^m 2 Tim. ii. 22. — ¹ Or, not
aiming at.

Questions about their genealogies. The apostle does not speak of those recorded in the Scriptures, but of the long intricate pedigrees whereby many of the Jews strove to prove their descent from certain persons : *which minister questions*—Which lead only to useless and endless controversies ; *rather than godly edifying*—The promotion of holiness, which leads men to God ; *which is in faith*—Which edification is by faith in the great truths of the Scriptures, and in Christ, of whom the Scriptures testify as the Redeemer and Saviour of lost sinners.

Verses 5-7. *Now the end*—The scope, design, or substance ; *of the commandment*—Or *charge*, rather, as *παράγγελια* properly signifies, being a noun derived from the verb, translated, *that thou mightest charge*, verse 3. The apostle had desired Timothy to continue at Ephesus, that he might *charge* some to teach no other doctrine than what had been taught : here he informs him what the scope of his charge to these teachers was to be, namely, that instead of inculcating fables, &c., they should inculcate *charity*, or love to God and man, proceeding from a *pure heart*—That is, from a heart purified by the Word and Spirit of God, from the love of sin, the love of the world, and all inordinate self-love, and from all corrupt affections and dispositions ; *a good conscience*—A conscience properly informed concerning sin and duty, thoroughly awakened and sprinkled from *evil*, or the guilt of sin, by the blood of Jesus, Heb. ix. 14 ; x. 22 ; *and faith unfeigned*—Namely, in the truths and promises of the gospel, and in Christ, in whom those truths and promises are *yea and amen*. Observe, reader, this faith unfeigned is the root of the other particulars here named. By it, and by it only, we obtain deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, essential to a good conscience ; by it our hearts are purified, Acts xv. 9 ; 1 Pet. i. 22 : and as it always *worketh by love*, (Gal. v. 6,) by it we obtain the love of God and of all mankind, the source, yea, and essence, of all piety and virtue. Here therefore the apostle asserts that the love which he speaks of, proceeding from the principles here named, is the scope and design of the gospel doctrine, or of the whole Christian institution, as it is indeed also of the moral law, and the writings of the prophets. *From which—Love*, accompanied with these other particulars ; *some having swerved*—The verb *αποχρησαντες*, thus rendered, signifies to err from the mark at which a person shoots or aims ; and is elegantly used in this

b

8 But we know that ^pthe law is ^{A. M. 4069.}
good, if a man use it lawfully ; ^{A. D. 65.}

9 ^aKnowing this, that the law is not made
for a righteous man, but for the lawless and
disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners,
for unholy and profane, for murderers of
fathers and murderers of mothers, for man-
slayers,

^a Chap. vi. 4, 20. — ^o Chap. vi. 4. — ^p Rom. vii. 12. — ^q Gal.
iii. 19 ; v. 23.

place, as *τελος*, the scope aimed at, was introduced in the preceding verse : *have turned aside into vain jangling*—Unprofitable disputes and discourses. An affectation of high and extensive knowledge sets a man at the greatest distance from faith, and all proper sense of true experimental religion : and of all vanities none are more vain than dry, empty disputes on the things of God. *Desiring to be teachers of the law*—Greek, *νομοδιδασκαλοι*, a word which, in the evangelists, is rendered *doctors of the law*, of the same import with the Hebrew word *rabbis*. And though it is not used exactly in that sense here, yet there seems to be some reference to it : *understanding neither what they say*—The very things they utter ; *nor whereof they affirm*—The subject they speak of, or concerning which they express themselves strongly and confidently, as the words *περι των διαβεβαιωνται* properly signify.

Verses 8-11. *We know that the law is good*—Answers excellent purposes ; *if a man use it lawfully*—In a proper manner. Even the ceremonial law is good as it points to Christ, and is emblematical of the various branches of salvation that are in and through him ; and the moral law is *holy, just, and good*, resulting from the nature of God and man, and the relations of mankind to him and each other, and of admirable use both to convince men of sin, and to bring them to Christ for justification, as well as to direct such as are justified in the way of holiness. The apostle's expression, *If a man use it lawfully*, plainly intimates, as Doddridge observes, "that there were some who abused the law, borrowing a pretence from it to condemn some of the best of men, and to subvert the gospel. And whereas some had represented Paul as an enemy to the law, he here denies and disproves the charge. The design of the Mosaic law was to direct the conduct of those to whom it was given, and to humble them under a sense of their sin. But it could not be intended to save them by a perfect conformity to it, which was *το αδυνατον τε νομω*, *what the law could not do*, Rom. viii. 3." *Knowing this*—As first necessary in order to the making a right use of the law ; *that the law is not made for*—Greek, *η κειται*, *does not lie against, a righteous man*—Who makes it the rule of his conduct, and has it written on his heart, sincerely loving it, and carefully guarding against every violation of it. Not that the righteous so fulfil the law as to answer its high demands in every respect ; in that sense, *by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living*

A. M. 406. 10 For whoremongers, for them
A. D. 65. that defile themselves with mankind,
for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons,
and if there be any other thing that is contrary
to sound doctrine,

11 According to the glorious gospel of the
blessed God which was committed to my trust.

* Chap. vi. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 3; Tit. i. 9; ii. 1.—† Chap. vi.
15.—‡ 1 Cor. ix. 17; Gal. ii. 7; Col. i. 25; 1 Thess. ii. 4;
Chap. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11; Tit. i. 3.—§ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

be justified, Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16; where see the notes. But Christ having redeemed true believers from that curse and condemnation of the law to which they would otherwise be exposed, through him their love to God and man is graciously accepted as the fulfilling of the law, Rom. xiii. 10; Gal. v. 14; James ii. 8. *But for the lawless*—That is, it lies against the lawless; and *disobedient*—Who, despising or disregarding the authority of the law-giver, knowingly transgress his commands. Perhaps, as some observe, the expression, *κερατ*, lies, refers to the custom of having laws written on tables, and hung up or laid in public places, to be read by all, and evidently showing against whom the law lay: see on Col. ii. 14. *Against the ungodly and sinners*—Persons destitute of the knowledge and fear, as well as love of God, and notorious transgressors; the *unholy*—In heart and life; and *profane*—Violating the name and day of God, and all sacred things, and so treating with contempt or neglect all the commands of the first table: *murderers of fathers and of mothers*—The apostle proceeds to speak of those who violate the commands of the second table; and first, of those who, instead of honouring their parents, even imbrue their hands in their blood, and so by one act transgress and trample under foot both the fifth and sixth commands: *whoremongers*—Adulterers, fornicators, and lewd persons of all kinds, who violate the seventh; *men-stealers*—Who in the grossest sense possible break the eighth; for of all thieves, those who steal human beings are the worst. In comparison of them, highwaymen and house-breakers are innocent! “They who make war for the inhuman purpose of selling the vanquished for slaves, as is the practice of African princes; and they who, like African traders, encourage their unchristian traffic by purchasing that which they know to be thus unjustly acquired, are really men-stealers.”—Macknight. And such are all the nations who legalize or connive at such proceedings. And what shall we say of those who steal children to beg with them, or that they may rob them of their clothes, or for other purposes: or of those who enlist soldiers by lies, tricks, or enticements? *Liars, perjured persons*—Who violate the ninth commandment; and *if there be any other thing*—As there are very many; *contrary to sound doctrine*—*Υγιανωση διδασκαλια*, salutary, or healing doctrine. According to the apostle, therefore, the doctrine which condemns and restrains wicked practices, though ridiculed by some as legal and Phari-

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord,^{A. M. 4069.}
A. D. 65. who hath enabled me,[†] for
that he counted me faithful,[‡] putting me into
the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a
persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy,
because I did it ignorantly in unbelief:

* 1 Cor. vii. 25.—† 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6; iv. 1; Col. i. 25.
‡ Acts viii. 3; ix. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 9; Phil. iii. 6.—§ Luke
xxiii. 34; John ix. 39, 41; Acts iii. 17; xxvi. 9.

saic, is, as far as it goes, salutary doctrine. On the other hand, the doctrine which encourages men to sin, or which makes them easy under it, though represented by some as evangelical, and the sweet doctrine of grace, is unwholesome and pernicious. *According to the glorious gospel*—Which, far from making void, does indeed establish the law, and that in the most effectual manner.

Verses 12–14. *And I thank Christ Jesus*—Here *thanksgiving*, an important branch of divine worship, is addressed to the Lord Jesus; *who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful*—The meaning is, I thank him for putting me into the ministry, and enabling me to be faithful therein; *who was before a blasphemer*—Of Christ; *a persecutor*—Of his church; and *injurious*—In my behaviour toward it; or rather a *reviler*, as *υβριστην* may be properly rendered, namely, of his doctrine and people. *But I obtained mercy*—He does not say, because I was unconditionally elected, but, *because I did it ignorantly*—Because, though I acted in a very rash, savage, and criminal manner, yet I did not therein contradict the sentiments of my own conscience; *in unbelief*—Not knowing nor believing that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, or that those whom I persecuted were his servants. Not that his ignorance took away his sin, but it left him capable of mercy, which he would hardly have been, had he acted as he did in contradiction to the conviction of his own mind: for had he knowingly opposed what he apprehended to be truth, (especially truth of such unspeakable importance to the glory of God and the salvation of mankind,) out of regard to his secular interest, he would doubtless have been left to perish under a judicial blindness and hardness of heart. It is probable, as Paul was “then a scholar at Gamaliel’s feet, he might not have been present when any of Christ’s miracles were performed, as Christ spent but little time at Jerusalem. The popular cry was strong against him, and the Pharisees and rulers treated him with so much contempt, and were so full of malignity toward him, and so ready to advance the most slanderous reports to the prejudice of his character, that it is the less to be wondered at that this rash, hot youth was borne down by the torrent. Yet we see how far Paul was from thinking all this, and whatever could be added to it, a sufficient excuse. Instead of insinuating, with some, that the miracle wrought for his conversion to Christianity was a reward for his extraordinary integrity and virtue while a Jewish zealot, he speaks of himself as

A. M. 4069. 14 ^b And the grace of our Lord was
A. D. 65. exceeding abundant ^c with faith ^d and
love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 ^e This is a faithful saying, and worthy of
all acceptation, that ^f Christ Jesus came into
the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit, for this cause ^g I obtained mercy,
that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth
all long-suffering, ^h for a pattern to them which
should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

^b Rom. v. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 10.—^c 2 Tim. i. 13.—^d Luke vii. 47.
^e Chap. iii. 1; iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 11; Tit. iii. 8.—^f Matt. ix. 13;
Mark ii. 17; Luke v. 32; xix. 10.—^g 2 Cor. iv. 1.—^h Acts xiii. 39.

one of the greatest sinners upon earth, and thereby shows, by the way, how much guilt a man may contract without acting directly contrary to the convictions of his mind, if he has neglected an impartial care in forming his principles of action."—Doddridge. *And the grace of our Lord*—Whereby I obtain mercy; *was exceeding abundant*—Υπερπελοουσα, superabounded; *with faith*—Opposite to my preceding unbelief; *and love*—Opposite to my blasphemy, persecution, and reviling; *which is in Christ Jesus*—Which, through his mediation and the influence of his Spirit, was implanted in my heart, thereby giving life and comfort to my profession.

Verses 15, 16. *This is a faithful saying*—A saying not only certainly true, but infinitely momentous, as the same expression evidently signifies chap. iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 11; Tit. iii. 8; *and worthy of all acceptation*—As infallibly true, it is worthy of all credit, and as infinitely important, worthy of being considered, received, and embraced, with all the powers of our souls; *that Christ*—The Messiah promised; *Jesus*—The Saviour exhibited; *came into the world to save sinners*—All sinners without exception, who are willing to be saved in the way of repentance toward God, and faith in him and his gospel. *Of whom I am chief*—"The apostle did not mean that he was absolutely the greatest of all sinners, but the greatest of those who sinned through ignorance, as is plain from verse 13. And he spake in this manner concerning himself, to show the deep sense he had of his sin in reviling Christ, and persecuting his disciples, and that he judged charitably of the sins of other men, and of their extenuations." *Howbeit, for this cause*—Among others which were also important; *I obtained mercy, that in me first*—Or, *in me the chief of sinners, as the clause may be rendered; Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering*—Might exhibit an example thereof to the view of the whole world; *for a pattern to them*—For the direction and encouragement of those who should afterward believe on him—Even to the remotest ages of time; that is, to teach and encourage them to expect the like mercy upon their believing in him, to the obtaining of *eternal life*. And it must be acknowledged, that no example could be more proper to encourage the greatest sinners in every age to repent, than the pardon which Christ grant-

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17 Now unto ⁱ the King eternal, ^k im- A. M. 4069.
mortal, ^l invisible, ^m the only wise God, A. D. 65.
ⁿ be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 This charge ^o I commit unto thee, son
Timothy, ^p according to the prophecies which
went before on thee, that thou by them might-
est ^q war a good warfare;

19 ^r Holding faith and a good conscience;
which some having put away, concerning faith
^s have made shipwreck:

ⁱ Psa. x. 16.—^k Rom. i. 23.—^l John i. 18.—^m Rom. xvi.
27.—ⁿ 1 Chron. xxix. 11.—^o Chap. vi. 13, 14, 20.—^p Eccles.
xlv. 1.—^q Chap. vi. 12.—^r Chap. iii. 9.—^s Chap. vi. 9.

ed to one who had so furiously persecuted his church.

Verse 17. *Now unto the King, &c.*—A consideration of the great mercy which God had shown him, in not only pardoning him when he was involved in such great guilt, but in making him an example for the comfort of future penitents, causes him to break forth in a rapture of praise and thanksgiving; *eternal*—Whose existence had no beginning, and shall have no end; *immortal*—Or *incorruptible*, as *αθάνατος* also signifies; it is however rightly translated *immortal*, because what is incorruptible is likewise immortal; *invisible*—To mortal eyes. By this epithet the true God is distinguished from all those heathen deities who were the workmanship of men's hands, or the creatures of God, such as the luminaries of heaven, and from all those deified heroes and other human beings who had once been visible on earth, and were made the objects of worship after their decease. *To the only wise God*—Or, *to God only wise*; that is, originally, independently, essentially, and infinitely; or, *to the wise God alone*, (for the reason of which rendering see note on Rom. xvi. 27,) *be honour and glory*—That is, let these excellences be more sensibly manifested, more seriously and frequently acknowledged, and sincerely venerated.

Verses 18–20. *This charge*—To the Judaizers not to teach differently, or this office of the ministry; *I commit unto thee*—That thou mayest deliver it to the church; *according to*—Or, being encouraged by; *the prophecies which went before on thee*—He refers to some special revelations concerning Timothy, that he should be taken into the ministry, and be eminently useful therein; probably these were uttered when he was first received as an evangelist, (see chap. iv. 14,) and that by many persons, chap. vi. 12. *That being assured by them that thy calling is from God, and that his grace and blessing will accompany thee, thou mightest war a good warfare*—Mightest execute thy office with courage, resolution, and persevering diligence, notwithstanding all opposition and discouragements whatever. *Holding fast a true and lively faith*—In the gospel and its divine Author; *and a good conscience*—That is, walking uprightly before God and man, according to the directions of an enlightened and renewed mind;

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A. M. 4069. 20 Of whom is 'Hymeneus and
A. D. 65. ' Alexander; whom I have ^xdelivered

unto Satan, that they may learn not A. M. 4069.
to ^yblaspheme. A. D. 65.

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 17.—² 2 Tim. ii. 14.

^x 1 Cor. v. 5.—^y Acts xiii. 45.

which—Namely, a good conscience; some—*ἄνωσται*, *having thrust away*, or *rejected*. "It departs unwillingly," says Bengelius, "it always says, 'Do not hurt me;' and they who retain this, do not easily make shipwreck of their faith." Indeed, none can make shipwreck of faith who never had faith. The persons here spoken of, therefore, were once true believers; yet they fell, not only foully, but finally. For ships once wrecked cannot be afterward saved. "In this metaphorical passage the apostle insinuates that a good conscience is the pilot, who must guide us in our voyage through the stormy sea of this life into the harbour of heaven." *Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander*—Two of the corrupt teachers at Ephesus, whom Timothy was left to oppose; *whom I have delivered unto Satan*—See on 1 Cor. v. 5; *that they may learn not to blaspheme*—That by what they suffer they may be, in some measure, restrained from speaking evil of the truths of God. The apostles delivered obstinate offenders to Satan, not only for their own reformation, but to strike

terror on others. If the offender, in consequence of this punishment, was afflicted with some bodily disease, it probably was removed on his repentance, or after a time. And even though it continued, some of the offenders may have been so obstinate in their wicked courses, that they did not amend. This seems to have been the case with the two persons here named; "for notwithstanding the apostle, after his departure, punished them by delivering them to Satan, they persevered in spreading their erroneous doctrines, 2 Tim. ii. 17; iv. 14. At what time the apostle delivered these persons to Satan does not appear; but from his informing Timothy of it as a thing he did not know, it may be conjectured that the apostle did it after he left Ephesus, and was come into Macedonia, probably immediately before he wrote this epistle. And as it was done without the knowledge or concurrence of the church at Ephesus, it was not the censure called *excommunication*, but an exercise of miraculous power, which was peculiar to him as an apostle."—Macknight.

CHAPTER II.

Here the apostle (1,) Directs prayers to be made for magistrates and all sorts of men, since the grace of God and the blessings procured by the mediation of Christ are free for all men, 1-8. (2,) He shows how women professing godliness ought to adorn and conduct themselves, and prohibits their teaching and usurping authority over men, 9-14. (3,) Signifies how they may be saved in child-bearing, 15.

A. M. 4069. I ¹ EXHORT therefore, that, first
A. D. 65. of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men:

2 ^a For kings, and ^b for all that are A. M. 4069.
in ² authority; that we may lead a A. D. 65.
quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

¹ Or, desire.—^a Ezra vi. 10; Jer. xxix. 7.

^b Rom. xiii. 1.—² Or, eminent place.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *I exhort therefore*—Seeing God is so gracious, and thou art intrusted with the office of the ministry, I give thee this in charge among other things. He proceeds to give directions, 1st, With regard to public prayers; and, 2d, With regard to doctrine. *That supplications*—To prevent evil; *prayers*—To procure good; *intercessions*—On behalf of others; and *giving of thanks*—For mercies received; *be made for all men*—Chiefly in public. "*Supplications, δεσους*," says Whitby, "are deprecations for the pardon of sin, and averting divine judgments; *προσευχαι*, *prayers*, for the obtaining of all spiritual and temporal blessings; *επρεσεις*, *intercessions*, addresses presented to God for the salvation of others. And by this rule were the devotions of the church continually directed. For, saith the author of the book *De Vocatione Gentium*,

"there is no part of the world in which the Christian people do not put up such prayers as these, praying not only for the saints, but for infidels, idolaters, the enemies of the cross, and the persecutors of Christ's members; for Jews, heretics, and schismatics." Of *prayer* in general we may observe, it is any kind of offering up of our desires to God. But the true, effectual, fervent prayer, which St. James speaks of as availing much, implies the vehemency of holy zeal, the ardour of divine love, arising from a calm, undisturbed soul, moved upon by the Spirit of God. "By this exhortation," says Macknight, "we are taught, while men live, not to despair of their conversion, however wicked they may be, but to use the means necessary thereto, and to beg of God to accompany these means with his blessing."

Verses 2-4. *For kings*—Especially; and *for all that are in authority*—"That is, for the ministers

A. M. 4069. 3 For this is ° good and acceptable
A. D. 65. in the sight ^d of God our Saviour;

4 ° Who will have all men to be saved, ^f and
to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

5 ° For *there is* one God, and ^h one mediator
between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

° Rom. xii. 2; Chap. v. 4.—^d Chap. i. 1; 2 Tim. i. 9.
• Exod. xviii. 23; John iii. 16, 17; Tit. ii. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 9.
^f John xvii. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 25.—^s Rom. iii. 29, 30; x. 12.
^h Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15.

and counsellors of kings, and for the inferior magistrates, by whatever name they may be called, seeing even the lowest country magistrates frequently do much good or much harm. In the early times the Jews prayed for the heathen princes, who held them in captivity, (Ezra vi. 10; Bar. i. 10, 11.) being directed by God so to do, Jer. xxix. 7. But afterward becoming more bigoted, they would not pray for any heathen ruler whatever. Nay, the zealots among them held that no obedience was due from the people of God to idolatrous princes, and often raised seditions in the heathen countries, as well as in Judea, against the heathen magistrates. This malevolent disposition some of the Jewish converts brought with them into the Christian Church. The apostle, therefore, agreeably to the true spirit of the gospel, commanded the brethren at Ephesus to pray, both in public and private, for all men, whatever their nation, their religion, or their character might be, and especially for kings. *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life*—God supports the power of magistracy for the sake of his own people, when, in the present state of men, it could not otherwise be kept up in any nation whatever. And we should pray that our rulers may exercise their power in such a wise and equitable manner, that, under the protection of their government, we may live in peace with our neighbours, and undisturbed by foreign enemies. *In all godliness*—In the genuine fear, love, worship, and service of God; and *honesty*—A comprehensive word, taking in the whole duty we owe to our neighbour. “In the first age, when the disciples of Christ were liable to be persecuted for their religion by their heathen neighbours, it was highly necessary, by praying for kings and all in authority, to make the heathen rulers sensible that they were good subjects. For thus they might expect to be less the object of their hatred.” *For this*—That we should pray for them and all men; *is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour*—Who has actually saved us, and is willing to save all. For the disciples of Christ thus to pray for all men, especially for their heathen enemies and persecutors, was of excellent use to make the latter sensible how good, how patient, and how benevolent the disciples of Jesus were, and that their religion led them to no seditious practices. Indeed, as Macknight observes, this display of the Christian character was then peculiarly necessary, in that the heathen were apt to confound the Christians with the Jews, and to impute to them the odious spirit and wicked practices of the Jews, who, confining their benevolence to

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6 ⁱ Who gave himself a ransom for A. M. 4069.
all, ^k to ³ be testified ^l in due time. A. D. 65.

7 ^m Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and
an apostle, (ⁿ I speak the truth in Christ, and
lie not,) ° a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and
verity.

¹ Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45; Eph. i. 7; Tit. ii. 14.—^k 1 Cor. i. 6.—³ Or, a testimony.—^l Rom. v. 6; Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 9; iii. 5.—^m Eph. iii. 7, 8; 2 Tim. i. 11.—ⁿ Rom. ix. 1.
° Rom. xi. 13; xv. 16; Gal. i. 16.

those of their own religion, cherished a most rancorous hatred of all the rest of mankind. *Who will have all men*—Not a part only, much less the smallest part; *to be saved*—Eternally. This is treated of verses 5, 6. *And*—In order thereto; *to come*—(They are not compelled;) *to the knowledge of the truth*—Which brings salvation. This is treated of verses 6, 7; to which knowledge they would be most likely to come, if they should see the professors of it behaving in the manner now recommended, and avoiding all occasions either of public or private offence.

Verses 5–7. *For there is one God*—One Creator of all, *the Father of the spirits of all flesh*, who is no respecter of persons; and *one Mediator between God and men*—Appointed by God to make atonement for the sins of men by his death, and who, in consequence of that atonement, is authorized to intercede with God in behalf of sinners, and empowered to convey all his blessings to them. *The man Christ Jesus*—Therefore all men are to apply to this Mediator. By declaring that the one Mediator is *the man Jesus Christ*, St. Paul intimated that his mediation was founded in the atonement which he made for our sins in the human nature. Wherefore Christ's intercession for us is quite different from our intercession for one another: he intercedes as having merited what he asks for us. Whereas we intercede for our brethren, merely as expressing our good-will toward them. We, depraved and guilty sinners, could not rejoice that there is a God, were there not a Mediator also; one who stands *between God and men*, to reconcile man to God, and to transact the whole affair of our salvation. This excludes all other mediators, as saints and angels, whom the Papists set up and idolatrously worship as such: just as the heathen of old set up many mediators to pacify their superior gods. *Who gave himself a ransom for all*—*Ἀντιλυτρον*, such a ransom, the word signifies, wherein a like or equal is given, as *an eye for an eye*. The clause seems to be an allusion to Christ's words, (Matt. xx. 28,) *to give his life, λυτρον αὐτοῦ, a ransom for many*. Any price given for the redemption of a captive, was called by the Greeks *λυτρον, a ransom*; but when life was given for life, they used the word *ἀντιλυτρον*. Indeed, this ransom paid by Christ, from the dignity of his person, was more than equivalent to all mankind. *To be testified in due time*—*Το μαρτυριον καιροῖς ἰδιοῖς, the testimony*, that is, a thing to be testified, *in his own seasons*; namely, those chosen by his own wisdom. *Whereunto I am ordained*—Appointed; *a preacher*—*ἑρμῆς, a herald*, to proclaim the grace of it all

A. M. 4069. 8 I will therefore, that men pray
A. D. 65. ^p everywhere, ^a lifting up holy hands,
without wrath and doubting.

9 In like manner also, that ^r women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with ⁴ broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array,

^r Mal. i. 11; John iv. 21.—^a Psalm cxxxiv. 2; Isaiah i. 15.
^r 1 Pet. iii. 3.

abroad; and an apostle—To attest by miracles that great and essential doctrine of it, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. *I speak the truth in Christ*—As thou, Timothy, well knowest; *I lie not*—In pretending to such an extraordinary mission. *A teacher of the Gentiles*—As if he had said, I was not only in general ordained to this ministry, but by peculiar destination was appointed to preach to the heathen and instruct them; *in faith and verity*—That is, in the faith of the gospel, and in the whole system of truth which it comprehends. This same solemn asseveration the apostle used Rom. ix. 1. He introduces it here in confirmation of his being an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles in the true faith of the gospel, because some in Ephesus denied his apostleship, and especially because the Jews were so averse to his preaching the gospel among the Gentiles, charging his doing it either upon the want of a due regard to his own nation, or some view of avarice or ambition. On this passage Dr. Benson remarks, “What writer ever kept closer to his subject than this apostle? The more we understand him, the more we admire how much every sentence and every word tends to the main purpose of his writing.”

Verse 8. *I will*—A word strongly expressing his apostolical authority; *therefore*—This particle connects the 8th and the 1st verse; *that men pray everywhere*—*Εν παντι τοπω, in every place*. Wherever men are, there prayer should be used; and if their hearts be right with God they will use it. By this precept the apostle condemned the superstitious notion of both the Jews and Gentiles, who fancied that prayers offered in temples were more acceptable to God than those offered anywhere else. This worshipping of God in all places was foretold as the peculiar glory of the gospel dispensation, Mal. i. 11. *Lifting up holy hands*—Pure from all known sin, and in particular from injustice and oppression; *without wrath*—In any kind, against any creature. And observe, reader, every temper of the soul which is not according to love is *wrath*; and *doubting*—Which is contrary to faith. Unholy actions, or wrath, or want of faith in him we call upon, are the three grand hinderances of God's hearing our petitions. Christianity consists of faith and love, embracing truth and grace. Therefore the sum of our wishes should be to pray, and live, and die, shunning every known sin, and guarding against ^w sin and doubting.

Verses 9, 10. *In like manner also, I command that women*—Particularly when they are about to

10 ^r But (which becometh women A. M. 4069.
A. D. 65. professing godliness) with good works.

11 Let the women learn in silence with all subjection.

12 But ^t I suffer not a woman to teach, ^a nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

^t Or, *plaited*.—¹ 1 Peter iii. 4.—¹ 1 Corinthians xiv. 34.
^a Eph. v. 24.

appear in public assemblies for divine worship; *adorn themselves in modest*—*κοσμιω, decent, or becoming, apparel*—Neither too costly nor sordid, but what is neat and clean, as the word signifies, and suitable to their place and calling. The word *καταβολη*, rendered *apparel*, according to Theophylact and Œcumenius, was a long upper garment which covered the body every way. What the apostle especially forbids is that immodest manner of dressing which is calculated to excite impure desires in the spectators, or a vain admiration of the beauty of those that use it: also that gaudiness or showiness of dress which proceeds from vanity, and nourishes vanity, wastes time and money, and so prevents many good works. *With shamefacedness*—*Μετα αιδους, with modesty*, teaching to avoid every thing unbecoming; and *sobriety*—Or *soundness of mind*, as *σωφροσυνη* signifies, which will prevent all unnecessary expense. This latter expression, in St. Paul's sense, signifies the virtue that governs our whole life according to true wisdom. *Not with broidered*—*Plaited*, or rather *curled hair*, as *πλεγμασιν* properly signifies; or *gold*—Worn by way of ornament; or *pearls*—Jewels of any kind; (a part is put for the whole;) or *costly array*—*ματιω πολυτελει, expensive clothing*. These four things are expressly forbidden by name to all women, (there is no exception,) *professing godliness*—And no art of man can reconcile with the Christian profession, the wilful violation of an express command. *But*—Instead of these vain ornaments, (what is itself infinitely more valuable, and much better *becometh women professing godliness*, and the gospel of Christ, the great rule of it,) *with good works*—That is, works of mercy and charity to their fellow-creatures, which will render them amiable in the eyes of God himself, and of all wise and virtuous persons with whom they converse.

Verses 11–14. *Let the women learn in silence*—Let every woman receive instruction in religious matters from the men in silence, in your public assemblies; *with all subjection*—With becoming submission to the other sex, neither teaching nor asking questions there. *I suffer not a woman to teach*—Namely, publicly; *nor to usurp authority over the man*—Which she might seem to do if she officiated under the character of a public teacher. The word *αυθεντειν*, here used, signifies both *to have*, and *to exercise authority over another*. In this passage it is properly translated *usurp authority*; because, when a woman pretends to exercise authority over a man, she arrogates a power which does not belong to her.

A. M. 4069. 13 For ² Adam was first formed,
A. D. 65. then Eve.

14 And ⁷ Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

² Gen. i. 27; ii. 18, 22; 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.

See note on 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. For Adam was first formed—As the head and chief; then Eve—To denote her subordination to and dependance on Adam. So that the woman was originally inferior. As if he had said, What I now enjoin is agreeable to what was intimated at the first formation of the human race. And Adam was not deceived—The serpent did not attempt to deceive Adam. But he attacked the woman, knowing her to be the weaker of the two. Hence Eve, in extenuation of her fault, pleaded, *The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*, Gen. iii. 13. And Eve did not deceive Adam, but persuaded him; for he said, *The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat*, Gen. iii. 12; insinuating that, as the woman had been given him for a companion and help, he had eaten of the tree from affection to her, which is also intimated verse 17, in God's words to him, *Thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife*. "In this view of the matter, the fall of the first man stands as a warning to his posterity to beware of the pernicious influence which the love of women, carried to excess, may have upon them to lead them into sin." The preceding verse showed why a woman should not usurp authority over the man: this shows why she ought not to teach. She is more easily deceived, and more easily deceives. Let it be observed here, however, that the apostle's doctrine concerning the inferiority of the woman to the man, in point of understanding, is to be interpreted of the sex in general, and not of every individual; it being well known that some women, in their understanding, are superior to most men. *The woman being deceived, was first in the transgression*—And prevailed upon Adam, by her solicitations, to transgress also. "The behaviour of Eve, who may be supposed to have been created by God with as high a degree of understanding as any of her daughters ever possessed, ought to be remembered by them all, as a proof of their natural weakness, and as a warning to them to be on their guard against temptation. Perhaps also the apostle mentioned Eve's transgression on this occasion, because the subjection of women to their husbands was increased at the fall on account of Eve's transgression, Gen. iii. 16."—Macknight.

Verse 15. *Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing*—That is, says Locke, *she shall be carried safely through child-bearing*; a sense which Dr. Whitby illustrates at large, and which Dr. Benson seems partly to adopt, observing, "The apostle having intimated that the man was superior by creation, and the subjection of the woman in-

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15 Notwithstanding, she shall be ^{A. M. 4069.}
saved in child-bearing, if they con- ^{A. D. 65.}
tinue in faith and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.

⁷ Gen. iii. 6; 2 Cor. xi. 3.

creased by the fall, he here declares, that if the Christian women continued in holiness and charity, the curse pronounced upon the fall would be removed or mitigated." To the same purpose also Baxter paraphrases the words: "Though her sin had brought her low, and even under a curse, in the pain and peril of child-bearing, she is, even in that low and sad condition, under God's merciful protection, and saving covenant of grace, which contains the promise of this life and that to come, if she continue in faith, charity, and purity, with sobriety." He adds another interpretation, as follows: "Though sin and sorrow in travail came in by the woman, yet by a woman's child-bearing a Saviour came into the world, (which is some reparation of the honour of the sex,) and so the women may be saved as well as the men by Christ." This latter sense is nearly that adopted by Macknight, who thus paraphrases on the verse: "However, though Eve was first in transgression, and brought death on herself, her husband, and her posterity, the female sex shall be saved equally with the male; through child-bearing; through bringing forth the Saviour; if they live in faith, and love, and chastity, with that sobriety which I have been recommending." He adds, by way of note, "The word σωθησεται, saved, in this verse, refers to η γυνη, the woman, in the foregoing verse, who is certainly Eve. But the apostle did not mean to say that she alone was to be saved through child-bearing; but that all her posterity, whether male or female, are to be saved through the child-bearing of a woman; as is evident from his adding, *If they live in faith, and love, and holiness, with sobriety*. For safety in child-bearing doth not depend on that condition, since many pious women die in child-bearing; while others of a contrary character are preserved. The salvation of the human race through child-bearing, was intimated in the sentence passed on the serpent, Gen. iii. 15; *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head*. Accordingly, the Saviour being conceived in the womb of his mother by the power of the Holy Ghost, he is truly the seed of the woman who was to bruise the head of the serpent. And a woman, by bringing him forth, hath been the occasion of our salvation. *If they continue in faith*—The change in the number of the verb from the singular to the plural, which is introduced here, was designed by the apostle to show that he does not speak of Eve, nor of any particular woman, [merely,] but of the whole sex."

CHAPTER III.

The apostle (1,) Instructs Timothy respecting the qualifications to be attended to in those who were to be set apart to the office of bishops, or overseers, of the flock of Christ, 1-7; and of deacons and their wives, 8-13. (2,) Gives Timothy a reason for his writing so particularly to him about these and other church affairs, for directing his conduct as an evangelist, 14-16.

A. M. 4069. **THIS** ^a is a true saying, If a man ^b desire the office of a ^b bishop, he desireth a good ^c work.

2 ^d A bishop then must be blameless, ^e the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, ^f of good

behaviour, given to hospitality, ^g apt ^h A. M. 4069. to teach; A. D. 65.

3 ⁱ Not ^j given to wine, ^k no striker, ^l not greedy of filthy lucre; but ^m patient; not a brawler, not covetous;

^a Chap. i. 15.—^b Acts xx. 28; Phil. i. 1.—^c Eph. iv. 12.—^d Titus i. 6, &c.—^e Chapter v. 9.—^f Or, modest.
^g 2 Tim. ii. 24.

^h Verse 8.—ⁱ Or, Not ready to quarrel, and offer wrong, as one in wine.—^j 2 Timothy ii. 24.—^k 1 Peter v. 2.—^l 2 Tim. ii. 24.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. Because some false teachers were now spreading their erroneous doctrines with assiduity among the believers at Ephesus, and it was necessary that Timothy (to whom the care of the church there was committed) should be assisted by some bishops, or elders, and deacons, well qualified to teach the people, the apostle, after observing what an honourable office that of a Christian bishop is, here describes the qualities and virtues necessary in one who desires to attain it. *This is a true saying*—Most certain in itself, and worthy of being always acknowledged and attended to; *if a man desire*, (or earnestly seek, as *ορεγεται* signifies,) *the office of a bishop—Overseer, or pastor of Christ's flock*, frequently termed presbyters, or elders, in the New Testament. See on Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2; *he desireth a good work*—An excellent but laborious employment. "A bishop's office is termed *εργον*, a work, to intimate that he must not spend his life in ease and idleness, but in a continued application to the duties of his office. It is also termed *καλον εργον*, a good, or excellent work, because of its honourableness and usefulness. See on 2 Tim. ii. 2. The words *καλος* and *αγαθος* are often used promiscuously, to denote what is *morally good*. But when they are distinguished, *καλος* includes also the idea of *honour*, and *αγαθος* the idea of *profit*.

Verses 2, 3. *A bishop then*—Or an overseer of the flock of Christ, that he may be capable of such an office; *must be blameless*—In every respect with regard to his moral character, since any thing which might be amiss in that would tend to bring a reproach upon his office, and greatly obstruct his usefulness; *the husband of one wife*—This neither means that a bishop *must* be married, nor that he *may not* marry a second wife; which is just as lawful for him to do as to marry a first, and may, in some cases, be his bounden duty. But whereas polygamy and divorce, upon slight occasions, were both common among the Jews and heathen, it teaches us that ministers, of all others, ought to stand clear of those sins. Macknight's reasoning on this subject is very conclusive. "That the gospel allows women to marry a second time, is evident from 1 Cor. vii. 9, 39. By parity of reason it allows men to marry a second time likewise. Wherefore, when

it is said here that *a bishop must be the husband of one wife*, and (1 Tim. v. 9,) that the widow, who is employed by the church in teaching the young of her sex, must have been *the wife of one husband*, the apostle could not mean that persons who have married a second time are thereby disqualified for sacred offices. For in that case, a bishop whose wife dies while he is young, must lay down his office, unless he can live continently unmarried. The apostle's meaning, therefore, in these canons, is, that such persons only were to be intrusted with sacred offices who in their married state had contented themselves with one wife, and with one husband at a time; because thereby they had showed themselves temperate in the use of sensual pleasures; through the immoderate love of which the Asiatic nations universally practised polygamy. In like manner because, according to our Lord's determination, persons who divorced each other unjustly were guilty of adultery when they married themselves to others; also because such really had more wives and husbands than one at a time, as was the case with the woman of Samaria, (John iv. 18,) the apostle, to restrain these licentious practices, which were common among the Greeks and Romans, as well as among the Jews, ordered that no widow should be chosen to instruct the younger women, but such as had been the wife of one husband only at a time." *Vigilant*—Intent upon his duty, ready to resist temptation, and careful to preserve his flock from seduction; *sober*—Greek, *σωφρονα*, *prudent*; or, as the word also implies, one who governs well his passions, and whose mind is well regulated. He must be lively and zealous, yet calm and wise; *of good or comely behaviour*—As *κοσμιον* might be properly rendered; implying that his conduct, in all respects, must be such as becomes his office: his discourse, his dress, his visage, his gait, his manners being all suitable to the gravity of his functions. The former word respects the inward man, and this the outward. *Given to hospitality*—Literally, *a lover of strangers*. As the primitive Christians took a particular charge of orphans, widows, sick people, and of such as were imprisoned for their religion, or spoiled of their goods, so also of strangers; to the care of whom they were led by the manners of the age, and the peculiar circumstances of the times.

A. M. 4069. 4 One that ruleth well his own
A. D. 65. house, ¹having his children in sub-
jection with all gravity ;
5 (For if a man know not how to rule his

¹ Tit. i. 6.—² Or, one newly come to the faith.

For many of the first converts, having devoted themselves to the preaching of the gospel, often travelled from one place to another; and as there were no inns in the eastern countries like those used now with us, it was customary for travellers to lodge with their acquaintance, or with such persons as they were recommended to. But all the disciples of Christ, considering themselves as brethren, and as engaged in one common cause for the benefit of the world, they made each other welcome, though unacquainted, to such food and lodging as they could afford. And therefore, when travellers were not acquainted with the brethren in any particular place, all they had to do was to make themselves known as Christians, by declaring their faith, (2 John 10,) especially to the bishops, who had a liberal maintenance given them to enable them to be hospitable. Yet the bishop's hospitality was not to be confined to the brethren: he was to extend it, on occasion at least, even to such heathen strangers as, agreeably to the manners of the times, came to him, drawn by his reputation for wisdom or beneficence. The reason was, by receiving such into his house, he would have an opportunity of recommending the true religion to them by his conversation and example. From this account it is evident, that the hospitality anciently required in a bishop was not what is now meant by that word, namely, the keeping a good table, and an open house for one's friends and others, who are able to make him a return in kind; but it consisted in entertaining strangers of the character just now described; the poor also, and the persecuted for the sake of religion. *Apt, or fit, to teach*—By having a thorough knowledge of the things he is to teach, a clear manner of expressing his thoughts, and an earnest desire to instruct the ignorant; or one that is himself well instructed in the things of the kingdom of God, and is communicative of what he knows; is both able and willing to impart to others the knowledge which God hath given him. *Not given to wine*—Or any other kind of strong liquor; *no striker*—Not of such a hasty temper as to have so little government of himself as to be ready to strike those who provoke him; or one that is apt to use violence to any one, but who does every thing in a spirit of meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, and love. *For the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle toward all men*, 2 Tim. ii. 24; *not greedy*—Or *desirous*, rather, *of filthy lucre*—That is, who does not make his ministry subservient to any secular design or interest; that uses no mean, base, sordid ways of getting money; who is dead to the wealth of this world, and makes it appear by his conduct that he is so, and that he lives above it. It is remarkable that the phrase

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own house, how shall he take care
of the church of God? A. M. 4069.
A. D. 65.

6 Not ³a novice, lest being lifted up with pride
^m he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

^m Isa. xiv. 12.

αισχροκερδης, which is here used, and signifies a person attached to sordid gain, is seldom or never used in the New Testament to express any gain, but that which is made or procured by the covetousness of Christian ministers; and "never surely," as Doddridge observes, "does an eagerness in pursuit of money appear more dishonourable and sordid than in persons of that noble, but, alas! too often prostituted profession." *But patient*—*Επεικειν*, gentle, yielding, or moderate; one that does not insist upon the extremity of his right, but is ready to give it up, in some degree, for the sake of peace; *not a brawler*—A contentious person; *not covetous*—*Αφιλαργυρον*, not a lover of money, or of riches, but who, having food and raiment for himself and those dependant upon him, is content therewith.

Verses 4-6. *One that ruleth well his own house*—That not only rules it, but rules it well, and keeps his family in good order: that rules it so as to promote religion and virtue in all its members; rules it calmly, but firmly; never using harshness where gentleness and love will produce the desired effect; *having his children*—If he be a father; *in subjection, with all gravity*—Or *seriousness*; for levity undermines all domestic authority: and he must thus rule his house both that he may set a good example to other masters of families, and that he may thereby give proof of his ability to preside over the church of God. *For if a man know not how to rule his own house*—So as to preserve a due decorum in the family where he has such a natural authority; *how should he be able to take care of*—Or to govern, in a proper manner, that greater and more important society, *the church of God*—In which there will be such a diversity of characters and dispositions, and over which it will be impossible for him to maintain an equal inspection and influence? *Not a novice*—*νεοφυτον*, literally, *one newly ingrafted*, namely, into the body of Christ, or *newly planted*, namely, in the garden of his church; that is, one newly converted. Such were not to be made bishops, or presbyters; because, being yet but imperfectly instructed in the Christian doctrine, they were not fit to teach it to others. Besides, as their zeal, constancy, fidelity, and other graces, had not been sufficiently tried, they could have had but little authority, especially with the brethren of longer standing and greater experience. *Lest being lifted up with pride*—Greek, *τρωθεις*, *puffed up*, with this new honour conferred upon him, or the applause which frequently follows it; *he fell into the condemnation of the devil*—The same into which the devil fell, or be guilty of the sin of self-conceit and high-mindedness, for which the devil was condemned.

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A. M. 4069. 7 Moreover, he must have a good
A. D. 65. report ⁿ of them which are without ;
lest he fall into reproach ^o and the snare of the
devil.

8 Likewise *must* ^p the deacons *be* grave, not
double-tongued, ^q not given to much wine, not
greedy of filthy lucre ;

^m Acts xxii. 12 ; 1 Cor. v. 12 ; 1 Thess. iv. 12.—ⁿ Chap. vi.
9 ; 2 Tim. ii. 26.

Verse 7. *Moreover, he must have a good report*—That is, a fair or good character, or good testimony, namely, as to the time past ; *of them that are without*—That are not Christians ; *lest he fall into reproach*—By their rehearsing his former life ; *and the snare of the devil*—Which Satan might make a snare of to discourage and cast him down, or in some other way entangle him in unbelief and sin. Here Macknight remarks, “It is intimated, that the sins which a person has formerly committed, when cast in his teeth after he becomes a minister, may be the means of tempting him to repeat these sins, by the devil’s suggesting to him that he has little reputation to lose. Nor is this the only evil. The people, knowing his former miscarriages, will be less affected with what he says to them. All who are candidates for the ministry ought to consider these things seriously.”

Verses 8, 9. *Likewise the deacons*—Of whom see on Acts vi. 3, 4, and Phil. i. 1 ; *must be grave*—Or *serious*, as some render *σεμνός* : men of a steady, decent, and venerable behaviour. No mention is made of *presbyters*, or elders, as distinct from bishops ; evidently because (as has been observed on verse 1, and Phil. i. 1) they were not distinct from them ; but the two names were used promiscuously for the same persons. *Not double-tongued*—Deceitful and dissembling, speaking one thing in one company, and another in another ; *not given to much wine*—Which would render them utterly unfit for their office ; *not greedy*, or desirous of *filthy lucre*—See on verse 3. “With what abhorrence does the apostle everywhere speak of this ! All that is gained, (above food and raiment,) by ministering in holy things, is *filthy gain* indeed ! Far more *filthy* than what is honestly gained by raking kennels, or emptying common sewers.”—Wesley. *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*—Well instructed in, and firmly believing, all the great doctrines of the gospel, and adorning them by a correspondent practice ; or steadfast in faith, and holy in heart and life. Although the apostle did not mention it, Timothy would readily infer from this direction concerning deacons, that it was equally necessary in bishops as in them to be sound in the faith, and holy in life. As *soundness in the faith* was required in deacons, it is probable they were sometimes, if not generally, employed in teaching ; but whether by preaching or catechising is not certain. They likewise acted as readers in the congregations.

9 ^r Holding the mystery of the faith A. M. 4069.
in a pure conscience. A. D. 65.

10 And let these also first be proved ; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found blameless*.

11 ^s Even so *must their wives be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

^r Acts vi. 3.—^s Verse 3 ; Lev. x. 9 ; Ezek. xlv. 21.—^t Chap.
i. 19.—^u Tit. ii. 3.

Verse 10. *Let these also*—(The word *also* implies that the same rule was to be observed with relation to bishops) *first be proved*—“By the examination,” says Whitby, “of the soundness of their faith, and the purity of their former lives : *and then let them be admitted to use the office of a deacon, being thus found blameless.*” And he shows, by a quotation from the Life of the Emperor Severus, written by Lampridius, and from the epistles of Cyprian, that such an examination was used at the ordination of both bishops and deacons in the churches of the early Christians, and that it was a practice derived from the apostles. Some, however, think that the apostle required, in this direction, that no one should be made either a bishop or a deacon, till he had given proof both of his steadfastness in the faith, and of his genuine piety and good conduct during a reasonable space of time after his conversion : or, that the persons admitted to these offices should be under trial for a while, how they conducted themselves therein, and then afterward, if they gave satisfaction, they should be confirmed in them.

Verse 11. *Even so must their wives*—Namely, the wives of the deacons ; *be grave*—Serious in their deportment ; *not slanderers*—Or false accusers of the brethren and others ; *sober*—Or *watchful*, (as *ὑπαγρυλλέως* may be rendered,) for occasions of doing good, and guarding against every temptation to evil ; *faithful*—To God, their husbands, and the poor ; *in all things*—Committed to their care, lest their imprudent and unfaithful conduct should bring the character of their husbands under suspicion. The apostle, however, may be understood here, as not only speaking of the wives of the deacons and bishops, but of the believing women in general, and particularly of those who were invested with any office in the church. So the Vulgate interprets his meaning, having here, *mulieres similiter pudicas, the women in like manner must be modest*. Chrysostom also, and the Greek commentators, with most of the Latin fathers, were of opinion that the apostle, in this passage, is speaking both of those women who, in the first age, were employed in ministering to the afflicted, and of those who were appointed to teach the young of their own sex the principles of religion. As the manners of the Greeks did not permit men to have much intercourse with women of character, unless they were their relations, and as the Asiatics were under still greater restraints, it was proper that an order of female teachers should be instituted in the church for instruct-

A. M. 4069. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands
A. D. 65. of one wife, ruling their children and
their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a
deacon well, purchase to themselves a good
degree, and great boldness in the faith which
is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to
come unto thee shortly :

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest

¹ Matthew xxv. 21.—² Or, ministered.—³ Ephesians ii. 21, 22; 2 Timothy ii. 20.—⁴ Or, stay.—⁵ John i. 14; 1 John i. 2.—⁶ Gr. manifested.—⁷ Matthew iii. 16; John i. 32, 33; xv. 26; xvi. 8, 9; Romans i. 4; 1 Peter iii. 18; 1

ing the young of their own sex. These, it seems, were generally widows, Clement of Alexandria reckoning widows among ecclesiastical persons, *Pædag.*, lib. iii. c. 12; and Grotius tells us that these female presbyters, or elders, were ordained by imposition of hands till the council of Laodicea.

Verses 12, 13. *Let the deacons*—As well as the bishops; *be husbands of one wife*—That is, such as have shown their temperance by avoiding polygamy and causeless divorce; (see on verse 2;) *ruling their children, &c.*—This qualification, which was required in bishops likewise, shows how anxious the apostle was that all who bore sacred offices should be unblameable in every respect; knowing that the disorderly behaviour of the members of their family might give occasion to suspect that they had been careless of their morals. *For they that have used*—Have discharged; *the office of a deacon well*, (see Rom. xii. 7, 8,) *purchase to themselves a good degree*—Greek, *βαθμον*, *step*, namely, toward some higher office; *and great boldness*—From the testimony of a good conscience; *in the faith which is in Christ Jesus*—Namely, in professing and teaching it, for even the wicked must respect persons who show so much benevolence and activity in relieving the poor, the afflicted, and the persecuted.

Verses 14–16. *These things*—Concerning the character of persons fit to be intrusted with the office of bishops or deacons; *I write, hoping to come to thee shortly*—It seems evident from hence, that Paul intended to have come back to Timothy at Ephesus in a little time, but was providentially called another way; but, as Doddridge observes, it can by no means be concluded from hence that Paul wrote this epistle to Timothy after his imprisonment at Rome. *But if I tarry long*—If I am hindered from coming, I give thee these instructions in the mean time; *that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself*—That is, how to discharge thy office properly; (which is the scope of the whole epistle;) *in the house of God*—In which thou hast the honour to bear so high an office, even in that house, or family, *which is the church of the living God*—Where he is worshipped in spirit and in truth by his believing people, manifests his special presence, and bestows peculiar blessings. The tabernacle first, and afterward the temple, obtained the name of the

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know how thou oughtest to behave thyself^a in the house of God, which^{A. M. 4069. A. D. 65.} is the church of the living God, the pillar and⁵ ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: ² God was ⁶ manifest in the flesh, ⁷ justified in the Spirit, ⁸ seen of angels, ^a preached unto the Gentiles, ^b believed on in the world, ^c received up into glory.

John v. 6, &c.—¹ Matthew xxviii. 2; Mark xvi. 5; Luke ii. 13; xxiv. 4; John xx. 12; Ephesians iii. 10.—² Acts x. 34.—³ Colossians i. 6, 23.—⁴ Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 19; 1 Peter iii. 22.

house or habitation of God, because there the symbol of the divine presence resided, 1 Sam. i. 7; Matt. xxi. 13; xxiii. 38. But under the gospel dispensation no material building or temple is called the *house of God*. That appellation is given only to the church of God, or to those societies of men who profess to believe in Christ, and join together in worshipping God according to the gospel form. *The pillar and ground*—Or *support*, as *ὑπόστασις* signifies; *of the truth*—That is, of the whole system of gospel truth. “Some commentators think Timothy is called, in this passage, *the pillar and support of the truth*, for the same reason that Peter, James, and John are called *pillars*, (Gal. ii. 9,) and that the particle *ως*, *as*, should be supplied before these words, and the clause translated thus: *That thou mayest know how thou ought to behave thyself, as the pillar and support of the truth in the church of the living God*. But, not to insist on the harshness and irregularity of this construction, it must be observed, that seeing the interpretation of the passage hath been much contested, a word, which entirely changes the apostle’s meaning, should by no means be inserted in the text on mere conjecture, because in that manner the Scriptures may be made to speak any thing which bold critics please.”—Macknight. According to the common reading, the church of God is evidently here called the pillar and support of truth. And since the apostle must be understood as speaking, not of any particular falsely pretended, fallen, or corrupt church, but of the true, genuine, catholic church, or, as he expresses himself, *the church of the living God*, consisting of all the true churches of Christ throughout the world, and comprehending all true believers and lovers of God, all who *hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*; (verse 9;) this church, so constituted, may with perfect propriety be termed *the pillar and support of the truth*, as preserving, from age to age, the Holy Scriptures, which attest the truth, and as always believing and maintaining the great fundamental articles of the Christian faith. Bengelius, however, and many others, adopt a different reading, so far as to end the sentence with *the church of the living God*, and to begin the next with the words following, thus: *The mystery of godliness is the pillar and ground of truth, and confessedly a great thing.*

And this reading is approved by Witsius, Whitby, Doddridge, Wesley, and many other eminent commentators. According to this interpretation, by the *mystery of godliness* we are to understand that wonderful and sublime doctrine which is revealed in the gospel, and immediately specified in six articles, which sum up the whole economy of Christ upon earth.

God was manifest in the flesh—Namely, the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, was incarnated, (John i. 14,) in the human nature of Jesus, conceived by a miracle in the womb of the virgin, and born of her, to whom, therefore, the divine names of *God*, *Lord*, and *Jehovah*, are repeatedly given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; as also the divine titles of *the true God*, 1 John v. 20; *God over all blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5; *Jehovah of hosts*, Isa. viii. 13, 14; Hos. xii. 5; *the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8; *the Holy One and Just*, and *the Prince of life*, Acts iii. 14, 15; *the first and last*, Rev. i. 17. To him divine attributes are ascribed; *omnipresence*, Matt. xviii. 20; *omnipotence*, Phil. iii. 21; *omniscience*, Rev. ii. 23. And divine works, namely, those of *creation*, John i. 3; *preservation*, Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3; *redemption and salvation, passim*, and judging all mankind at the last day, Matt. xxv. 31, 32, &c. And to him, as we have very often seen in the course of these notes, divine worship was frequently paid by those divinely-inspired persons, who could not be mistaken, particularly in a matter so momentous. He was manifested in the form of a servant, in the fashion of a man, for thirty-three years, his divine glory frequently breaking forth through the veil of his humanity, especially in the wisdom of his discourses, in the power of his miracles, in the holiness of his spotless life, and in his unspeakable and never-ceasing benevolence, beneficence, and other divine virtues, and in a peculiar manner when he was transfigured on the holy mount, 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. *Justified in the Spirit*—The Lord Jesus appeared on earth in all the infirmity and frailty of mortal flesh, poor, despised, persecuted, and at last put to death as a blasphemer; yet he professed and maintained a high claim, the highest possible, even that of being the Messiah, the Son of God in a peculiar sense, and one with his Father, John viii. 58, and x. 30, 36. Now how could he be justified in making this claim? *He was justified in, or by, the Spirit*—Namely, the Holy Ghost; 1st, That Spirit had moved holy men of old, (2 Pet. i. 21,) to utter many predictions concerning him, and these were all exactly fulfilled in him. 2d, The Spirit descended upon him in a visible form at his baptism, and pointed him out as the person, whom the voice from heaven declared to be *God's beloved Son*; and this Spirit he possessed without measure in its gifts and graces, as his doctrine, life, and miracles showed. 3d, By this Spirit he was raised from the dead, (1 Pet. iii. 18,) and thereby powerfully demonstrated to be the Son of God, Rom. i. 4. 4th, He baptized his disciples with this Spirit, particularly on the day of pentecost, according to the prediction of the Baptist, (Matt. iii. 11,) and his own often-repeated promise, and thereby

convinced of sin those that did not believe in him, whether Jews or Gentiles, and showed them to be inexcusable in resisting such evidence; giving full proof, at the same time, that he himself was righteous, John xvi. 7-10. *Seen of angels*—However regardless men might be of this astonishing mystery, this manifestation of God in the flesh, the angels viewed it with deep and constant attention and great interest, as a most astonishing and instructive spectacle, more mysterious than any work of creation, or dispensation of providence, and giving them such views of their Maker's justice and grace, and especially of his love, as they had not had before, 1 Pet. i. 12. Accordingly they worshipped him at his entrance into the world, Heb. i. 6; celebrated his birth, Luke ii. 9-13; ministered to him in the desert, Matt. iv. 11; and in his agonies, Luke ii. 43; were present at his resurrection and ascension, Luke xxiv. 4; Acts i. 10. *Preached to the Gentiles*—This also is termed a mystery Eph. iii. 4-6; Col. i. 25; where see the notes. And if we consider how the Gentile world was sunk in idolatry and vice of every kind, and that whoever preached the gospel to them must testify against their abominable practices in strong terms, and therefore had every reason to expect the most violent opposition and ill usage, even to imprisonment, torture, and martyrdom, we must allow both that God manifested astonishing grace in sending his apostles to preach the gospel to them, and that these his messengers displayed amazing fortitude in going so willingly to preach it. *Believed on in the world*—This was a still greater mystery; 1st, That a poor, mean, and persecuted man, crucified as the vilest malefactor, should be believed on as the Messiah expected by the Jews and all nations—the Son of God—the Saviour of the world. 2d, That his gospel, so simple and unpromising in appearance, preached without wisdom of words, and by men who had not the advantage of wealth, power, or learning to recommend them, and whose doctrine condemned the reigning idolatry, should be believed in as a revelation from God: especially as, 3d, It could not prevail but it must evidently overthrow the heathen idolatry, established and revered for ages, and bring all the esteemed doctrines of the philosophers into discredit, and therefore would certainly be opposed and persecuted by the three classes of people of the greatest power, the priesthood, the philosophers, and the Roman emperor, with all subordinate kings and magistrates. 4th, Whoever believed it were under an indispensable obligation to confess it; and whoever did so was in danger of suffering the loss of all things, imprisonment, torture, and death. But notwithstanding all these obstacles in the way, Jesus and his gospel were *believed on in the world*. "This undeniable fact, of which the evidence remains at this day, is mentioned as a part of the mystery of godliness, because it is a strong proof of the truth of Christ's resurrection, and of the spiritual gifts and miraculous powers by which the apostles and their assistants are said, in the Christian records, to have spread the gospel through the world. For, to believe that the multitudes, not only among the barbarous nations, but among the learned

Greeks and Romans, who forsook their native religion and embraced the gospel, were persuaded to do so merely by the force of words, without the aid of miracles and spiritual gifts, is to believe a greater miracle than any recorded in the gospel history."—Macknight. *Received up into glory*—When his ministry on earth was completed; when he had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, and answered the ancient types; taught the whole truth belonging to his new dispensation, and confirmed it by miracles; had set his followers a perfect example; expiated sin by dying, broke the power of death by his resurrection; giving his disciples clear proof thereof by frequently appearing to them, as well as by show-

ing them that the ancient prophets had foretold these things; and had given them their commission and all needful instruction;—He, who had so long tabernacled in our frail nature in a state of poverty, reproach, and suffering, was *received up into glory*: that is, as the eternal Son of God, he resumed the glory he had with his Father before the world was; (John xvii. 5;) his human nature was transformed and glorified, and in his complete person, as God and man, he was placed at the head of the whole creation for the good of his church, (Eph. i. 20-22,) invested with all authority and power in heaven and on earth, and constituted the final Judge of men and angels.

CHAPTER IV.

Here (1.) The apostle foretels a dreadful apostacy from the doctrines and practices of the gospel, 1-5. (2.) He directs Timothy to attend to the great essential matters of religion, and to be diligent, prudent, and faithful in his personal conduct, and in the discharge of the duties of his office, 6-16.

A. M. 4069. A. D. 65. NOW the Spirit ^a speaketh expressly, that ^b in the latter times some shall

depart from the faith, giving heed ^c to se- A. M. 4069 ducing spirits, ^d and doctrines of devils; A. D. 65.

^a John xvi. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 3.—^b 1 Pet. i. 20.

^c 2 Tim. iii. 13.—^d Dan. xi. 35, 37, 38; Rev. ix. 20.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *Now the Spirit*—By calling the Christian Church, in the end of the preceding chapter, *the pillar and support of the truth*, the apostle taught, that one of the important purposes for which that great spiritual building was reared, was to preserve the knowledge and practice of true religion in the world. Nevertheless, knowing that in after times great corruptions, both in doctrine and practice, would at length take place in the church itself, and that the general reception of these corruptions by professed Christians would be urged as a proof of their being the truths and precepts of God, on pretence that the church is *the pillar, &c., of the truth*, the apostle, to strip these corruptions of any credit which they might derive from their being received by the multitude, and maintained by persons of the greatest note in the church, judged it necessary in this chapter to foretel the introduction of these corruptions, under the appellation of *an apostacy from the faith*, and to stigmatize the authors thereof as hypocrites and deceivers. And to give his prediction the greater authority, he informed Timothy that it was revealed to him in a peculiar and express manner. *The Spirit*, says he, *speaketh expressly*—As concerning a thing of great moment, and soon to be fulfilled. Some have thought the meaning of the apostle to be, that the Holy Spirit had revealed what follows by Daniel, and some of the other prophets; but, says Macknight, "the things here mentioned are not in Daniel, nor anywhere else in Scripture, not even in the prophecy which the apostle himself formerly delivered concerning the man of sin. I therefore think these words were, for the greater

solemnity and certainty, pronounced by the Spirit in the apostle's hearing, after he had finished the preceding passage." But the apostle might mean, that the Holy Spirit had revealed this, not only to him, but also to other contemporary prophets.

That in the latter, or after times—As the phrase *εν νεστοις καιροις* may be translated, because it denotes future times, without marking whether they are near or remote. Or if, as Mede thinks, Daniel's four monarchies are referred to, as it was under the Roman that the God of heaven set up the kingdom of his Son, the *latter, or after times* here intended may be the last part of the duration of the Roman empire. *Some shall depart*—Or rather, *shall apostatize, from the faith*—The apostle had predicted the same thing before, 2 Thess. ii. 3, where see the notes. There the character of the teachers who were to introduce the apostacy is described; but in this epistle the erroneous opinions and corrupt practices which constituted the apostacy are foretold. And as the apostle hath introduced this prophecy immediately after his account of the mystery of godliness, is it not probable that his design in so doing was to give the faithful an opportunity of comparing this *mystery of iniquity* with the *mystery of godliness*, that they might be more sensible of the pernicious nature of it? It may be proper to observe, that it is not every error or heresy that is an apostacy from the faith. It is a revolt in the principal and essential articles, as when we worship God by an image or representation, or when we worship other beings besides God, and pray unto other mediators besides the one Mediator between God and men, *the man Christ Jesus*. It is the very essence of Chris-

A. M. 4069. 2 ° Speaking lies in hypocrisy,
A. D. 65. † having their conscience seared with
a hot iron ;
3 ° Forbidding to marry, † and commanding

* Matt. vii. 15 ; Rom. xvi. 18 ; 2 Pet. ii. 3.—† Eph. iv. 19.
‡ 1 Cor. vii. 28, 36, 38 ; Col. ii. 20, 21.

tian worship, to worship the one true God through the one true Christ ; and to worship any other God or any other Mediator, is apostacy and rebellion against God and Christ. It is, as St. Paul says, (Col. ii. 19,) *not holding the head*, but depending upon other heads ; it is, as St. Peter expresses it, *denying the Lord that bought us*, and serving other lords ; and the denial of such an essential part may as properly be called apostacy, as if we were to renounce the whole Christian faith and worship. It is renouncing them in effect, and not regarding God as God, or Christ as Christ. Such is the nature of *apostacy from the faith*, and it is implied that this apostacy should be general, and infect great numbers. For though it be said only *some* shall apostatize, yet by *some* in this place *many* are understood, which is the case also in many other passages of the Scriptures, as Bishop Newton has fully proved. *Giving heed to seducing spirits*—Who inspire false teachers ; or to men that persuade others to believe them by the pretence of some inspiration or revelation of the Holy Spirit, and thereby cause people to err from the true faith of the gospel. The apostle means those gross frauds by which the corrupt teachers, in the dark ages, would enforce their erroneous doctrines and superstitious practices on the ignorant multitudes, under the notion of revelations from God, or from angels, or departed saints. In the same sense St. John is to be understood, when he says, (1 Epist. iv. 1,) *Believe not every spirit*, every pretender to inspiration, *but try the spirits whether they be of God*. And to *doctrines of devils*—Or rather, doctrines concerning demons. The word *δαίμονια*, translated *demons*, was used by the Greeks to denote a kind of beings of a middle nature between God and man. They gave the same name also to the souls of some departed men, who they thought were exalted to the state and honour of demons for their virtue. The former sort they called *superior demons*, and supposed them to have the nature and office which we ascribe to angels. The latter they termed *inferior demons*. These were of the same character with the Romish saints. And both sorts were worshipped as mediators. When therefore the Spirit of God foretold, that in after times *many would give heed to deceiving spirits, and to doctrines concerning demons*, he foretold that, on the authority of feigned revelations, many in the church would receive the doctrine concerning the worship of angels and saints, and the praying souls out of purgatory ; and called it *the doctrine of demons*, because it was in reality the same with the ancient heathenish worship of *demons*, as mediators between the gods and men. Thus the sin for which many are represented as being punished, (Rev. ix. 20,) is said

to abstain from meats, which God A. M. 4069.
hath created † to be received † with A. D. 65.
thanksgiving of them which believe and know
the truth.

‡ Rom. xiv. 3, 17 ; 1 Cor. viii. 8.—† Gen. i. 29 ; ix. 2.
‡ Rom. xiv. 6 ; 1 Cor. x. 30.

to be their worshipping, *τα δαίμονια, demons*, that is, angels and saints ; not *devils*, as our translators have rendered the word, for in no period of the church have devils been worshipped by Christians.

Verse 2. *Speaking lies in hypocrisy*—Greek, *ἐν υποκρισει ψευδολογων*, by the *hypocrisy of them that speak lies*. This is a more literal, and at the same time a more just translation of the words than that given in our Bible, which represents the demons as speaking lies in hypocrisy, which could not be the apostle's meaning, as it would not accord with what follows. *Having their conscience seared, &c.*—An expression which could not be intended of devils. The *hypocrisy* here mentioned is that feigned show of extraordinary piety and sanctity which the lying teachers were to put on, with an intention to gain the confidence of the multitude. Hence they are described as *having the form of godliness, but denying the power*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. These hypocritical teachers are called *liars*, because of the gross fictions and frauds which they were to contrive for the purpose of establishing the worship of demons. How well the appellation agrees to the Romish clergy in the dark ages, any one may understand who is acquainted with the lies then propagated concerning the apparitions of angels, and of the ghosts of departed saints ; and concerning the miracles done by them, and by their relics, and by the sign of the cross, &c., all preached by monks, priests, and even bishops ; and committed to writing, in the fabulous legends of their saints, to render them objects of adoration. "It is impossible," says Bishop Newton, "to relate or enumerate all the various falsehoods and lies which have been invented and propagated for this purpose ; the fabulous books forged under the names of apostles, saints, and martyrs ; the fabulous legends of their lives, actions, sufferings, and deaths ; the fabulous miracles ascribed to their sepulchres, bones, and other relics ; the fabulous dreams and revelations, visions, and apparitions of the dead to the living ; and even the fabulous saints who never existed but in the imagination of their worshippers : and all these stories the monks, the priests, the bishops of the church, have imposed and obtruded upon mankind, it is difficult to say, whether with greater artifice or cruelty, with greater confidence or hypocrisy, and pretended sanctity, a more hardened face, or a more hardened conscience. The history of the church, saith Pascal, *is the history of truth* ; but, as written by bigoted Papists, it is rather the *history of lies*."

Verse 3. *Forbidding to marry*—The same hypocritical liars, who should promote the worship of demons, should also prohibit lawful marriage. This false morality was very early introduced into the

A. M. 4069. 4 For ¹every creature of God is
A. D. 65. good, and nothing to be refused, if
it be received with thanksgiving :

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God,
and prayer.

¹ Rom. xiv. 14, 20 ; 1 Cor. x. 25 ; Tit. i. 15.

church, being taught first by the Encratites and Marcionites, and afterward by the Manicheans, who said marriage was the invention of the evil god ; and who considered it as sinful to bring creatures into the world to be unhappy, and to be food for death. In process of time the monks embraced celibacy, and represented it as the highest pitch of sanctity. It is a thing universally known, that one of the primary and most essential laws and constitutions of all monks, whether solitary or associated, whether living in deserts or in convents, is the profession of a single life, to abstain from marriage themselves, and to discourage it all they can in others. It is equally certain that the monks had the principal share in promoting and propagating the worship of the dead ; and either out of credulity, or for worse reasons, recommended it to the people with all the pomp and power of their eloquence in their homilies and orations. At length celibacy was recommended by the priests, and by the orthodox themselves, and more especially by the bishops of Rome, the great patrons of the worship of angels and saints. For they strictly enjoined their clergy, both regular and secular, to abstain from marriage. Thus the worship of demons and the prohibition of marriage, though naturally unconnected, have gone hand in hand in the church, as the Spirit here foretold. *And commanding to abstain from meats*—The same lying hypocrites, who enjoined the worship of demons, would not only prohibit lawful marriage, but likewise impose unnecessary abstinence from meats. This part of the prophecy hath been exactly fulfilled ; for it is as much the rule of the monks and nuns to abstain from meats as from marriage. Some never eat any flesh, others only of certain kinds, and on certain days. Frequent fasts are the rule, the boast of their order ; and their carnal humility is their spiritual pride. So lived the monks of the ancient church ; so live, with less strictness, perhaps, but with greater ostentation, the monks and friars of the Church of Rome : and these have been the principal propagators and defenders of the worship of the dead, both in former and in later times. Here therefore the apostle hath pointed out two instances of the hypocrisy of the lying teachers, who should enjoin the worship of demons. Under the false pretence of holiness, they should recommend abstinence from marriage to the monks, friars, and nuns ; and under the equally false pretence of devotion, they should enjoin abstinence from meats, to some men at all times, and to all men at some times. There is no necessary connection between the worship of demons and abstinence from marriage and meats. And yet it is certain that the great advocates of this worship have commanded both : and by this pretended purity and mortification

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6 If thou put the brethren in re- A. M. 4069.
membrance of these things, thou A. D. 65.
shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, ²nour-
ished up in the words of faith and of good
doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

² 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15.

have procured the greater reverence to their persons, and the readier reception of their doctrine : a proceeding this which the Spirit of God alone could have foreseen and foretold. *Which meats God hath created to be received with thanksgiving*—So that this Popish, monkish abstinence is as unworthy of a Christian, as it is unnatural to man. It is perverting the purpose of the Author of nature, and prohibiting the use of the creatures which he hath made, and given to be used of *them who believe and obey the truth*—Here the apostle intimates that only true believers have a covenant right to the creatures of God, though others may have a providential right. By those, however, *who know the truth*, he may chiefly intend those who are instructed to place religion not in such indifferent things as abstaining from marriage, or from certain meats, but in things more truly excellent and worthy of God, and who know that all meats are now clean, and therefore may be used with a pure conscience, and with thanksgiving flowing therefrom. *For every creature of God*—Fit for man's food ; *is good*—Lawful to be used, *and nothing to be refused*—*Αποβλητον, to be rejected, or cast away*, either from peevishness, or a fancy that it is unlawful ; *if it be received with thanksgiving*—Which is a necessary condition. *For it is sanctified*—That is, under the gospel all meats are made lawful to us ; *by the word of God*—Allowing us to eat of every kind in moderation ; *and by prayer*—To God, that he would bless us in the use of it. Observe, reader, the children of God are to pray for the sanctification of all the creatures which they use, and to give thanks for them : and not only the Christians, but even the Jews, yea, the very heathen, used to consecrate their table by prayer and praise. "What then," says Bishop Newton, "can be said of those who have their tables spread with the most plentiful gifts of God, and yet constantly sit down and rise up again without suffering so much as one thought of the Giver to intrude upon them ? Can such persons be reputed either to believe or know the truth ?"

Verses 6, 7. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance, &c.*—*Ταυτα υποτιθεμενος τοις αδελφοις, suggesting these things to the brethren*, concerning the lawfulness of all sorts of meats, and concerning the corrupt doctrines and practices which are to arise in the church ; *thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ*—And shalt act as may be expected from one who has been *nourished up*—From his very childhood ; *in the words of faith*—Words laying a foundation for faith, and the means of producing it in men's hearts ; *and good doctrine*—True, genuine, gospel doctrine ; *whereunto*—That is, *to the knowledge of which, thou hast attained*—*So η παρηκολυθησθης may be properly translated.* See Luke i. 3, where the

A. M. 4069. 7 But ^a refuse profane and old wives' fables, and ^b exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For ^c bodily exercise profiteth ^d little: ^e but godliness is profitable unto all things, ^f having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

^a Chap. i. 4; vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16, 23.—^b Heb. v. 14. ^c 1 Corinthians viii. 8; Colossians ii. 23.—^d Or, for a little time.—^e Chap. vi. 6.

same verb is rendered, *having perfect understanding*. It is a just remark of Macknight here, that, "If any prejudices, with respect to the distinction of meats, remained in Timothy's mind, through the strictness of his education in the Jewish religion, the clear and express manner in which the apostle here asserted the lawfulness of eating all kinds of meats, must have entirely freed him from these prepossessions." *But refuse profane and old wives' fables*—This, says Dr. Doddridge, "undoubtedly signifies Jewish traditions; and if they were such as those with which the rabbinical writers abound, nothing ever better deserved the name, they being not only the most incredible, but the most insipid and senseless tales anywhere to be met with." In Bishop Newton's opinion, however, the apostle intended here to signify, that all the things which the lying teachers would preach, during the above-mentioned apostacy, concerning the worship of angels, abstinence from meats, and the miracles said to be performed by the saints and their relics, in confirmation of the superstitions which they inculcated, are no better than profane and old wives' fables, told to amuse children. *And exercise thyself* (the word *γυμναζε*, so rendered, is used in allusion to the exercises by which the contenders prepared themselves for the combats in the Grecian games) *unto godliness*—Train thyself up in holiness of heart and life with the utmost vigour and diligence.

Verse 8. *For bodily exercise profiteth little*—That is, say Estius, Whitby, Doddridge, and some others, the exercises about which many are so solicitous, and in the pursuit of which they go through so many fatigues, namely, in preparing for and attending the public games, are but of little use, the best rewards of them being of a very transient and fading nature. Or by bodily exercise may be understood rather the mortifications which the Jewish fables were framed to recommend, and the austerities and labours of the Essenes and Pythagoreans, according to the rules and institutions of their sects: to which we may add, All the diligence that can be used in mere external duties, however laboriously and punctually performed, and with whatever degree of self-denial and punctuality, even although commanded of God, can be of little use to any man, separated from the devotion of the heart; and all inventions and observances merely human, must be still more useless and vain. The apostle, however, may be understood in a yet different sense. He had said in the preceding verse, *Exercise thyself unto*

9 *This is a faithful saying, and A. M. 4069. worthy of all acceptation.* A. D. 65.

10 For therefore ^a we both labour and suffer reproach, because we ^b trust in the living God, ^c who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

11 ^d These things command and teach.

^a Psa. xxxvii. 4; lxxxiv. 11; cxii. 2, 3; cxlv. 19; Mark x. 30; Rom. viii. 28.—^b Chap. i. 15.—^c 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12. ^d Chap. vi. 17.—^e Psa. xxvii. 6; cvii. 2, 8, &c.—^f Chap. vi. 2.

godliness; including in that term all the graces and virtues of the Christian life. He then adds, *η γαρ σωματικη γυμνασια προς ολιγον εστιν ωφελιμος*; literally, *for bodily exercise profiteth a little*; that is, the exercise of the body is of some use, increasing its health and strength; *but godliness*—In all its branches, namely, true, substantial, and practical godliness, the worship and service of God, by both the inward and outward man, the heart and life; *is profitable for all things*—Benefits a man in every respect; is useful to him in things temporal as well as spiritual, in his domestic and civil, as well as religious affairs and in all his relations and connections in the present world; *having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come*—Christ having assured us that if we *seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, things necessary shall be added unto us*, Matt. vi. 33. And moreover, that as he gives *grace and glory, he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly*, Psa. lxxxiv.

11. It is true these, and such like promises, do not ascertain to all who live in a godly manner, health, and wealth, and reputation; but they assure us that true piety and virtue have a natural tendency to promote our happiness even in this world, and indeed do promote it, not only in being attended with peace of mind, a conscience void of offence, a well-grounded and lively hope of future felicity, and communion with God, which is heaven begun on earth; but with protection in dangers, succour in temptations, support and comfort in troubles, with an assurance that all things which God may permit to happen to us, even poverty, reproach, affliction, and death, *shall work together for our good*.

Verses 9–11. *This*—Concerning the advantage of godliness; *is a faithful saying*—A saying as important as it is true; *and worthy of all acceptation*—That is, of entire credit, and of the most earnest and continued attention and regard. *For, therefore*—On this account, because we are assured of the excellence and necessity of this godliness, and of the advantages attending it in time and in eternity; *we both labour and suffer reproach*—Take all manner of pains, and undergo all kinds of hardships, regarding neither wealth, nor honour, nor pleasure, nor any thing this world can offer; *because we trust*—*Ηλπικαμεν, we have trusted, and at present do trust*, (the word denoting continuation of action,) *in the living God*—Rest on him for the performance of his promises, fully persuaded he will give the life and felicity he has promised; *who is the Saviour of all*

A. M. 4069. 12 * Let no man despise thy youth ;
A. D. 65. but * be thou an example of the be-
lievers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in
spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading,
to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 ^b Neglect not the gift that is in thee,
which was given thee ^c by prophecy, ^d with the

^a 1 Cor. xvi. 11; Tit. ii. 15.—^b Tit. ii. 7; 1 Pet. v. 3.—^c 2
Tim. i. 6.—^d Ch. i. 18.—^e Acts vi. 6; viii. 17; xiii. 3; xix. 6;

men—Saving them from many evils, and supplying
them with manifold mercies; preserving them in this
life, and willing to save them eternally; but *espe-
cially*—In a more eminent manner, is he the Saviour
of those that believe—Saving them from their sins
here, and from the consequences of them hereafter.
These things command and teach—For they are of
infinite importance.

Verses 12, 13. *Let no man despise thy youth*—That
is, let no one have reason to despise it, but conduct
thyself with such gravity, wisdom, and steadiness,
as, instead of exposing thee to contempt, will rather
gain thee respect and reverence. In particular, *be
thou an example of the believers*—A pattern worthy
of their imitation; *in word*—In prudent and edifying
discourse, whether public or private; *in conversa-
tion*—Greek, *ναρροπον*, in behaviour; *in charity*—Or
love, rather, namely to God, his people, and all man-
kind; *in spirit*—In thy whole temper; *in faith*—In
thy sincere and constant belief of, and adherence to,
the truth as it is in Jesus; in thy profession of it, and
faithfulness to thy trust in the execution of thy
office. When faith is placed in the midst of several
other Christian graces, it generally means fidelity,
or faithfulness; *in purity*—Of heart and life. *Till I
come*—To take thee along with me; *give attendance
to reading*—Both publicly and privately. Study
the Scriptures diligently, and read and expound them
to the people, whose instructor thou art appointed to
be. “Enthusiasts, observe this! expect no end
without the means.”—Wesley. “Besides reading
the Jewish Scriptures to the brethren in their assem-
blies for worship, after the example of the synagogue,
Timothy was here directed to read these Scriptures
in private likewise for his own improvement, (verse
15,) that he might be able to confute the Jews and
Judaizers, who founded their errors on misinterpre-
tations of them. Thus understood, the direction, as
the ancient commentators observe, is a useful lesson
to the ministers of the gospel in all ages. For if a
teacher, who possessed the spiritual gifts, was com-
manded to read the Scriptures for improving him-
self in the knowledge of the doctrines of religion,
how much more necessary is that help to those
teachers who must derive all their knowledge of the
gospel from the Scriptures, and who cannot, without
much study, be supposed to know the customs, man-
ners, and opinions alluded to in these writings.”—
Macknight.

Verse 14. *Neglect not*—Through omitting to exer-

b

laying on of the hands of the pres- A. M. 4069.
bytery. A. D. 65.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself
wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear
^a to all.

16 * Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doc-
trine; continue in them: for in doing this thou
shalt both ^f save thyself, and ^g them that hear thee.

Chap. v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6.—^a Or, in all things.—^b Acts xx. 28.
^c Ezek. xxxiii. 9.—^d Rom. xi. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 22; James v. 20.

cise it to the full; *the gift that is in thee*—The word
χαρισμα, here used, commonly denotes some spiritual
gift conferred on believers in the first age, whether
by an immediate effusion of the Holy Spirit, or by
means of the imposition of the apostle's hands. See
Rom. i. 10. By this it appears, that even the mira-
culous gifts might be improved; and that the con-
tinuance of them with individuals depended in a
great measure upon the right temper of their minds,
and upon their making a proper use of their gifts.
Which was given thee by prophecy—By immediate
direction from God, or in consequence of predictions
uttered by those who had the gift of prophecy,
pointing thee out as a person fit to be invested with
the office of an evangelist, and called of God to it.
As it appears, from 2 Tim. i. 6, that the gift here re-
ferred to was given to Timothy by the laying on of
the apostle's hands, we learn from hence, that in
conferring the spiritual gifts, as well as in working
miracles, the apostles were not left to their own pru-
dence, but were directed by revelations from God,
communicated to themselves or others. *With the
laying on of the hands of the presbytery*—Whose
hands, with those of Paul, were laid on Timothy at
the time when he was set apart solemnly by prayer
to the office of the ministry, and received the spiri-
tual gift here spoken of. Probably the apostle first
conferred on Timothy the gift by the laying on of
his own hands, and then set him apart to his office
by prayer, the elders joining with him, and laying
on their hands to show their concurrence with him
in the solemn work.

Verses 15, 16. *Meditate on these things*—On the
instructions I have given thee, or the things men-
tioned verse 13. True meditation implies the lively
exercise of faith, hope, love, joy, as it were melted
down together by the fire of God's Holy Spirit, and
offered up to God in secret. *Give thyself wholly to
them*—On this passage Bengelius writes, He that is
wholly in these things, will be little in worldly com-
pany, in other studies, in collecting books, shells,
coins, wherein many pastors consume a consider-
able part of their lives. *That thy profiting*—Thy
proficiency in knowledge and wisdom, holiness and
usefulness; *may appear unto all*—To their edifica-
and the honour of the gospel. *Take heed unto
thyself*—To the state of thy own soul, thy growth in
grace, the motives of thy actions, and thy whole
spirit and conduct; *and to thy doctrine*—That it be
true, important, and adapted to the state and charac-

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ter of thy hearers. *Continue in them*—In attention to all the preceding advices, and especially in this diligent care respecting both thy life and doctrine. *For in doing this*—With zeal, constancy, and perseverance; *thou shalt both save thyself and those that hear thee*—What a powerful argument is here suggested to engage ministers to preach the doctrines of the gospel with truth, zeal, fidelity, and diligence, and to set a proper example before their hearers! By thus faithfully discharging their duty, they

will give satisfactory proof of the reality of their faith and love, and the sincerity of their obedience, and, persevering in this way, will save themselves eternally. In the mean time by their sound doctrine, and, edifying example, they will impress their hearers with such a just sense of the truth and excellence of Christianity, as to induce them also to believe and obey the gospel, so that they likewise will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER V.

This chapter contains directions for Timothy's conduct toward persons in different circumstances, and particularly elders and widows. He shows (1.) How he was to reprove others, elder and younger, 1, 2. (2.) How he was to behave toward poor widows, 3-8. (3.) What widows were proper to be taken under the church's care, or to receive her liberality, and who not, 9-16. (4.) He regulates the honour due to elders, who ruled in the church, 17-19. (5.) Prescribes the greatest care and impartiality in rebuking offenders, and in ordaining elders; and the necessary care of health, 20-25.

A. M. 4069. **R**EBUKE ^a not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; and the younger men as brethren;
 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.
 3 Honour widows ^b that are widows indeed.
 4 But if any widow have children or ne-

phews, let them learn first to show A. M. 4069. ¹ piety at home, and ^c to requite their A. D. 65. parents: ^d for that is good and acceptable before God.
 5 ^e Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and ^f continueth in supplications and prayers ^g night and day.

^a Lev. x. 32.—^b Verses 5, 16.—¹ Or, kindness.—^c Gen. xlv. 10, 11; Matt. xv. 4; Eph. vi. 1, 2.

^d Chap. ii. 3.—^e 1 Cor. vii. 32.—^f Luke ii. 37; xviii. 1. ^g Acts xxvi. 7.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1, 2. Because it is the duty of ministers to reprove such of their people as err in principle or practice, and because the success of reproof depends, in a great measure, upon the manner in which it is given, the apostle here proceeds to direct Timothy in that important branch of his office. *Rebuke not*—Or rather, *rebuke not severely*, the phrase, *μη επιτιληης*, literally signifying, *do not strike*, and metaphorically, *do not sharply reprove*; *an elder*—Or aged man, as the word *πρεσβυτερω* here evidently signifies, being opposed to *νεωτερος*, *the younger*, in the following clause. So that it is not the name of an office, as it is verses 17, 19, but denotes simply one in advanced age; *but entreat him as a father*—Or as thou wouldst thy father in the like case; *and the younger men*—Who sin; *as brethren*—As if they were thy own brothers; that is, with kindness and affection, and not with a lordly, domineering contempt. *The elder women as mothers*—With respect and deference; *and the younger as sisters, with all purity*—With the strictest decorum in thy converse with them, and distance from every thing, in word or deed, that could have the least appearance of levity and wantonness, remembering how many eyes are upon thee, and how fatal any thing in thy conduct, which might bring the least blemish upon thy character, would be to the honour and success of thy ministry, and to the credit of the gospel and its professors.

Verses 3, 4. *Honour*—And endeavour honourably to support from the public stock; *widows*—Whose destitute circumstances recommend them as the certain objects of charity. According to the Greek commentators, the widows of whom the apostle speaks in this passage were aged women appointed by the church to instruct the young of their own sex in the principles of the Christian faith, and who, for that service, were maintained out of the funds of the church. This opinion is rendered probable by the apostle's order to Timothy, (verse 9,) to admit none into the number of widows without inquiring into their age, circumstances, character, and qualifications, even as in ordaining bishops and deacons; *who are widows indeed*—Really such; that is, who are desolate, and neither able to maintain themselves, nor have any near relations to provide for them, and who are wholly devoted to God. *But if any widow have children*—Able to provide for her; or *nephews*—Rather *grand-children*, as *εγγονα* signifies; *let them learn*—Their children or descendants; *first to show piety at home*—Before the church be burdened with them; *and to requite their parents*—For all their former care, trouble, and expense; *for that is good*—*Καλον*, *decent, fair, and amiable*, in the eyes of men; *and acceptable before God*—Who requires us, out of regard to his honour and favour, to attend carefully to the duties of those relations in which we stand to each other.

Verses 5-7. *Now she who is a widow indeed*—

A. M. 4069. 6 ^h But she that liveth ² in pleasure, A. D. 65. is dead while she liveth.

7 ¹ And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

8 But if any provide not for his own, ^k and especially for those of his own ³ house, ¹ he hath denied the faith, ^m and is worse than an infidel.

9 Let not a widow be ⁴ taken into the num-

^h James v. 5.—¹ Or, *delicately*.—² Chap. i. 3; iv. 11; vi. 17.—³ Isa. lviii. 7; Gal. vi. 10.—⁴ Or, *kindred*.—⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 5; Tit. i. 16.

Deprived of all support from her relations and friends. The apostle seems to allude to the signification of the word *χήρα*, rendered *widow*, which comes from *χρηος*, *orbis*, *desertus*, a person destitute, forsaken: and *desolate*—*Μεμονωμενη*, *reduced to solitude*, having neither children nor grand-children to relieve her; *trusteth in God*—Having no one else to trust in; and *continueth in supplications and prayers, &c.*—Devotes herself wholly to the service of God, spending a great part of her time by day and night in devotion. *But she who liveth in pleasure*—Delicately, voluptuously, in elegant regular sensuality, though not in the use of any such pleasures as are unlawful in themselves. The original word *σπαταλωσα*, properly signifies, *faring deliciously; is dead while she liveth*—Both in respect of God, whom she does not serve, and in respect of her fellow-creatures, whom she does not benefit. She is spiritually dead, dead to true piety and virtue. *These things give in charge*—For they are things which concern Christians in all circumstances and relations of life, who are too ready to seek happiness in the pursuit of sensual pleasure; *that they may be blameless*—The gender of the word here rendered *blameless* shows that the Ephesian brethren, not the widows, were the persons to whom Timothy was to give these things in charge. Probably either the deacons, or Timothy's hearers in general, were intended. Indeed, in so luxurious a city as Ephesus, widows could not be the only persons who were in danger of falling into such sensualities as the apostle had been warning them against.

Verse 8. *If any provide not*—Food and raiment; *for his own*—Poor relations; *and especially those of his own house*—*Των οικειων*, *his own domestics*, those relations who live in his own family, and consequently are under his eye; *he hath denied the faith*—Namely, by such a practice, which is utterly inconsistent with Christianity, which does not destroy, but perfects natural duties. Here we see, to disobey the precepts of the gospel, is to deny or renounce the faith of the gospel; from whence we infer, that the faith of the gospel includes obedience to its precepts; *and is worse than an infidel*—Dr. Whitby shows here, by very apposite citations, that the heathen were sensible of the reasonableness and necessity of taking care of their near relations, and especially of their parents, when reduced to poverty and want. But "what has this to do with heaping

ber under threescore years old, ⁿ having been the wife of one man, A. M. 4069. A. D. 65.

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have ^o lodged strangers, if she have ^p washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

11 But the younger widows refuse: for when

ⁿ Matt. xviii. 17.—^o Or, *chosen*.—^p Luke ii. 36; Ch. iii. 2. ^q Acts xvi. 15; Heb. xiii. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 9.—^r Gen. xviii. 4; xix. 2; Luke vii. 38, 44; John xiii. 5, 14.

up money for our children, for which it is often so impertinently alleged? But all men have their reasons for laying up money; one will go to hell for fear of want, another acts like a *heathen*, lest he should be *worse than an infidel*!"—Wesley.

Verses 9, 10. *Let not a widow be taken into the number*—*Καταλεγασθαι*, *taken upon the list* of those who are to be maintained by the church, and to attend upon the sick poor, and teach the young; *under threescore years old*—It might, on many accounts, and for very obvious reasons, be proper that this office should be committed only to persons of an advanced age, and such as laid aside all thoughts of marrying again. *Having been*—Neither a harlot nor a concubine; but *the wife of one man*—At a time; or having chastely confined herself to one husband while in the married relation, and not divorced him and married another. See note on chap. iii. 2. *Well reported of for good works*—Of different kinds; *if she have brought up children*—Religiously and virtuously, her own, or others who had been committed to her care; if, in her more prosperous days, she manifested a generous and hospitable disposition; *and lodged Christian strangers*—Who were at a loss for necessary accommodations on their journeys; *if she have washed the saints' feet*—Has been ready to do the meanest offices for them; *if she have relieved the afflicted*—This, and some of the other good works mentioned by the apostle, being attended with great expense, the poor widows, who desired to be taken into the number, cannot be supposed to have performed them at their own charges. "I therefore suppose," says Macknight, "the apostle is speaking of female deacons, who had been employed in the offices here mentioned at the common expense; consequently the meaning of the direction will be, that in choosing widows, Timothy was to prefer those who formerly had been employed by the church as deaconesses, and had discharged that office with faithfulness and propriety. For since these women had spent the prime of their life in the laborious offices of love mentioned by the apostle, without receiving any recompense but maintenance, it was highly reasonable, when grown old in that good service, to promote them to an honourable function, which required knowledge and experience rather than bodily strength, and which was rewarded with a liberal maintenance."

Verses 11-13. *But the younger widows refuse*—

A. M. 4069. they have begun to wax wanton
A. D. 65. against Christ, they will marry;

12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

13 ^a And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.

14 ^v I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, ^g give none occasion to the adversary ^s to speak reproachfully.

^a 2 Thess. iii. 11. — ^v 1 Cor. vii. 9. — Chap. vi. 1; Tit. ii. 8. — ^g Gr. for their railing. — ^s Verses 3, 5. — ^v Rom. xii. 8; 1 Cor. ix. 10, 14; Gal. vi. 6; Phil. ii. 29; 1 Thess. v. 12,

Do not choose; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ—To whose more immediate service they had devoted themselves; they will marry—And, perhaps, to husbands who are strangers to Christianity, or at least not with a single eye to the glory of God, and so withdraw themselves from that service of Christ in the church which they were before engaged in. On the word *κατασφραγισσῶσι*, rendered to wax wanton, Erasmus remarks, that it comes from *σφραγισσῶσι*, to pull away, and *ῥησῶσι*, reins, and that the metaphor is taken from high-fed brute animals, which, having pulled away the reins, run about at their pleasure. Le Clerc and some others translate the clause, *who do not obey the rein*. The apostle plainly means, that the younger widows, who had undertaken the office of teaching the young of their own sex, not being willing to continue under that restraint from marriage which they had laid on themselves by devoting themselves to the service of Christ, and which the nature of their office required, would marry, and desert his service. *Having damnation*—*Condemnation* rather, both from God and men; because they have cast off their first faith—Have deserted their trust in God, and have acted contrary to their first conviction, namely, that wholly to devote themselves to his service was the most excellent way; for their first faith here means that faithfulness to Christ which they had virtually plighted, when they took on them the office of teaching the younger women; for by marrying they put it out of their power to perform that office with the attention and assiduity which it required. *And withal they learn to be idle*—Slothful and negligent in the office they have undertaken, and instead of attending to the proper duty of their charge, *wandering about, &c.*; *tattlers also*—Greek, *φλυαροὶ*, *triflers*, *foolish talkers*, or tale-bearers; a vice to which women, who go about from house to house, are commonly much addicted; *busy-bodies*—Concerning themselves unnecessarily and impertinently in the affairs of others; *speaking things which they ought not*—Things very unbecoming.

Verses 14–16. *I will therefore that the younger women*—Or *widows* rather, (concerning whom only

15 For some are already turned aside A. M. 4069.
after Satan. A. D. 65.

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve ^t them that are widows indeed.

17 ^v Let the elders that rule well, ^z be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

18 For the Scripture saith, ^v Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, ^z The labourer is worthy of his reward.

13; Heb. xiii. 7, 17. — ^z Acts xxviii. 10. — ^v Deut. xxv. 4. 1 Cor. ix. 9. — ^z Lev. xix. 13; Deut. xxiv. 14, 15; Matt. x. 10; Luke x. 7.

the apostle is here speaking,) *marry*—Instead of thinking to intrude themselves into a situation for which they are generally so unfit. From this command it is evident, that under the gospel second marriages are lawful both to men and women, and that abstaining from them is no mark of superior piety. It is true the apostle, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, advised all who had the gift of continency to remain unmarried; not, however, because celibacy is a more holy state than marriage, but because in the then persecuted state of the church, a single life was more free from trouble and temptation. See 1 Cor. vii. 9, 26, 32–39. *Give no occasion to the adversary, &c.*—To reproach the gospel on account of the bad behaviour of those who profess it. *For some widows have already turned aside after Satan*—Who has drawn them from Christ. He means that some of the widows employed by the church as teachers, had, through the temptations of Satan, deserted their station in the church, and, by marrying, incapacitated themselves for continuing in the excellent office they had engaged in. *If any man or woman that believeth have poor widows*—Nearly related to them; *let them relieve them*—If they are able; *and let not the church be charged*—Or *burdened*, with maintaining them; *that it may relieve them that are widows indeed*—That have no friends able to support them, and who, if the church did not grant them aid, would be entirely destitute.

Verses 17, 18. *Let the elders that rule well*—Who approve themselves faithful stewards of all that is committed to their charge; *be counted worthy of double honour*—A more abundant provision, seeing that such will employ it all to the glory of God. As they were the most laborious and disinterested men who were put into these offices, so, whatever any one had to bestow, in his life or death, was generally lodged in their hands for the poor. By this means the churchmen became very rich in after ages. But as the design of the donors was the general good, there was the highest reason why it should be disposed of according to their pious intent. *Especially they who labour*—Diligently and pain-

A. M. 4069. 19 Against an elder receive not an
A. D. 65. accusation, but ⁶ before ^a two or three
witnesses.

20 ^b Them that sin rebuke before all, ^c that
others also may fear.

21 ^d I charge thee before God, and the
Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels,
that thou observe these things ^e without pre-
ferring one before another, doing nothing by
partiality.

22 ^f Lay hands suddenly on no man, ^g nei-

⁶ Or, under.—^a Deut. xix. 15.—^b Gal. ii. 11, 14; Tit. i. 13.
^c Deut. xiii. 11.—^d Chap. vi. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 14; iv. 1.

fully; in the word and doctrine—That is, in preach-
ing and teaching. For the Scripture saith, &c.—
See on 1 Cor. ix. 9.

Verses 19, 20. Against an elder—Or presbyter;
do not even receive an accusation—Unless it is
offered to be proved by two or three credible wit-
nesses—By the Mosaic law a private person might
be cited (though not condemned) on the testimony
of one witness. But St. Paul forbids an elder to be
even cited on such evidence, his reputation being of
more importance than that of others. Them that
sin—Namely, openly and scandalously, and are duly
convicted; rebuke before all the church, that others
also may fear—To commit the like offences.

Verse 21. I charge thee before God, &c.—He
refers to the last judgment, in which we shall stand
before God, and Christ, and his elect—That is, holy,
angels—Who are the witnesses of our conversation.
The apostle looks through his own labours, and even
through time itself, and seems to stand as one already
in eternity; that thou observe these things without
preferring, &c.—Προκριματος, prejudging. The word
signifies a judgment formed before the matter judged
hath been duly examined; doing nothing by par-
tiality—For or against any one; Greek, κατα προ-
κλισην, literally, a leaning to one side, through favour
arising from private friendship or affection.

Ver. 22–25. Lay hands suddenly—And rashly; on

ther be partaker of other men's sins: A. M. 4069.
keep thyself pure. A. D. 65.

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little
wine ^e for thy stomach's sake, and thine often
infirmities.

24 ^b Some men's sins are open beforehand,
going before to judgment: and some men they
follow after.

25 Likewise also the good works of some are
manifest beforehand; and they that are other-
wise cannot be hid.

⁷ Or, without prejudice.—^a Acts vi. 6; xiii. 3; Chapter iv. 14,
2 Tim. i. 6.—^b 2 John 11.—^c Psa. civ. 15.—^d Gal. v. 19.

no man—That is, appoint no man to church offices
without full trial and examination: otherwise thou
wilt be accessory to, and accountable for, his mis-
behaviour in his office. Neither be partaker of
other men's sins—As thou wilt certainly make thy-
self, if thou be the means of bringing those into the
ministry whom thou mightest have discovered to be
unfit for that office. Keep thyself pure—Free from
all such blameworthy practices, and from the blood
of all men. Some men's sins are open—Or mani-
fest; beforehand—Before any strict inquiry be
made; going before to judgment—Leading a per-
son immediately to judge them unworthy of any
spiritual office; and some men they—Their sins; fol-
low after inquiry has been made—Or are not dis-
covered perhaps till after their ordination. For which
reason no one ought to be appointed to sacred offices
hastily. Likewise the good works—And good qua-
lities; of some are manifest beforehand—Before
any particular inquiry be made; they are evident
to all. Such therefore may be admitted to sacred
offices without much examination; and they—Those
good works and good qualities; that are otherwise—
That remain concealed under the veils that humility
spreads over them; cannot be entirely hid long—From
thy knowledge, and must recommend such silent
and reserved Christians both to thy esteem, and that
of those who are intimately acquainted with them.

CHAPTER VI.

The apostle (1.) Prescribes the duty of servants toward their masters, whether believing or not, and charges Timothy to in-
sist on it, in opposition to the Judaizing teachers, who perverted the gospel, 1–5. (2.) He shows the advantage of godli-
ness with contentment, and the miserable consequences of indulging a covetous pursuit of riches, 6–10; and inculcates
upon Timothy the duty of avoiding worldly-mindedness, and following after piety and virtue, 11, 12. (3.) He solemnly
charges him to adhere faithfully to the directions he had given him, and to admonish rich men how to use their wealth, 13–21.

A. M. 4069. **L**ET as many ^aservants as are
A. D. 65. under the yoke count their own
masters worthy of all honour, ^bthat the name
of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed.

2 And they that have believing masters, let
them not despise *them*, ^cbecause they are bre-
thren; but rather do *them* service, because they
are ^dfaithful and beloved, partakers of the be-
nefit. ^eThese things teach and exhort.

3 If any man ^fteach otherwise, and consent
^gnot to wholesome words, *even* the words of

^a Eph. vi. 5; Col. iii. 22; Tit. ii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 18.—^b Isa. lii. 5; Rom. ii. 24; Tit. ii. 5, 8.—^c Col. iv. 1.—^d Or, *believing*.—^e Chap. iv. 11.—^f Chap. i. 3.—^g Chapter i. 10; 2 Tim. i. 13; iv. 3; Tit. i. 9.—^h Tit. i. 1.—ⁱ Or, *a fool*.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1, 2. Because the law of Moses (Exod. xxi. 2) did not allow Israelites to be made slaves for life, without their own consent, it seems the Judaizing teachers, with a view to allure slaves to their party, encouraged them in disobeying the commands of their masters. This doctrine the apostle condemns here, as in his other epistles, (1 Cor. vii. 20-22; Col. iii. 22,) by enjoining Christian slaves to obey their masters, whether believers or unbelievers. *Let servants—Or slaves*, rather; (see on Eph. vi. 5, and Col. iii. 22;) *under the yoke—Of heathen masters; count them worthy of all honour—All the honour due from a servant to a master, and show it by their obedience and respectful behaviour. That the name of God—God himself; and his doctrine—The doctrine of the gospel; be not blasphemed—That is, evil spoken of, as tending to destroy the political rights of mankind. And they that have believing masters—Which for any to have is a great privilege; let them not despise them—Pay them the less honour or obedience; because they are brethren—In Christ, believers; and in that respect on a level with them. They that live in a religious community know the danger of this, and that greater grace is requisite to bear with the faults of a brother than of a man of the world, or even of an infidel. But rather do them service—Serve them so much the more diligently; because they are faithful—Or believers, as πιστοι may be rendered; and beloved—Of God; partakers of the benefit—The common salvation. "Instead of encouraging slaves to disobedience, the gospel makes them more faithful and conscientious. And by sweetening the temper of masters, and inspiring them with benevolence, it renders the condition of slaves more tolerable than formerly. For, in proportion as masters imbibe the true spirit of the gospel, they will treat their slaves with humanity, and even give them their freedom, when their services merit such a favour."—Macknight. These things teach and exhort—Thus Paul the aged gives young Timothy a charge to dwell upon practical holiness. Less experienced teachers are apt to neglect the su-*

our Lord Jesus Christ, ^aand to the A. M. 4069.
doctrine which is according to godli- A. D. 65.
ness,

4 He is ^bproud, ^cknowing nothing, but
^ddoting about ^equestions and strifes of words,
whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil sur-
misings,

5 ^fPerverse ^gdisputings of ^hmen of corrupt
minds, and destitute of the truth, ⁱsupposing
that gain is godliness: ^jfrom such withdraw
thyself.

^a 1 Cor. viii. 2; Chapter i. 7.—^b Or, *sick*.—^c Chapter i. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 23; Tit. iii. 9.—^d 1 Cor. xi. 16; Chap. i. 6.—^e Or, *Gallings one of another*.—^f 2 Tim. iii. 8.—^g Tit. i. 11; 2 Pet. ii. 3.—^h Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Tim. iii. 5.

perstructure, while they lay the foundation. But of so great importance did St. Paul see it to enforce obedience to Christ, as well as to preach *faith* in his blood, that after urging the life of faith on professors, (verse 12,) he even adds another charge for the strict observance of it, verse 13, &c.

Verses 3-5. *If any man teach otherwise—Than strict, practical holiness, in all its branches; and consent not to wholesome words—Υγιαίνουσι λογους, literally, healing, or healthful words, words that have no taint of falsehood, or tendency to encourage sin; and the doctrine which is according to godliness—The sole design and direct tendency of which is to make people godly, and to promote the glory of God, while it secures the salvation of men; he is proud—Greek, τευφωται, puffed up; which is the cause of his not consenting to this doctrine; knowing nothing—As he ought to know; but doting—Greek, νοσων, being sick, or distempered in his mind; about questions—Dotingly fond of disputes; an evil, but common disease, especially where practice is forgotten. Such contend earnestly for singular phrases and favourite points of their own; but every thing else, however like the preaching of Christ and his apostles, is all law and bondage, and carnal reasoning. And strifes of words, whereof cometh envy—Of the gifts and success of others; contention for the pre-eminence. Such disputants seldom like the prosperity of others, or to be less esteemed themselves; railings—Βλασφημιαι, evil speakings, against those that differ from them; evil surmisings—Or unjust suspicions easily entertained against others; it not being their way to think well of those that hold opinions different from theirs. Perverse disputings—Carried on contrary to conscience, by men wholly corrupted in their minds, and destitute of the truth—Of the knowledge of, and faith in, the true doctrine of the gospel; supposing that gain is godliness—That what promises the greatest gain is the most worthy of their pursuit; or who reckon whatever produces most money to be the best religion. A far more common case than is usually supposed. From such withdraw thyself—Shun all society with them.*

A. M. 4069. 6 But ^o godliness with contentment
A. D. 65. is great gain.

7 For ^p we brought nothing into *this* world, and *it is* certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And ^q having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

9 But ^r they that will be rich, fall into temptation, ^s and a snare, and *into* many foolish and

^o Psa. xxxvii. 16; Prov. xv. 16; xvi. 8; Heb. xiii. 5.—^p Job i. 21; Psa. xlix. 17; Prov. xxvii. 24; Eccles. v. 15.—^q Gen. xxviii. 20; Heb. xiii. 5.—^r Prov. xv. 27; xx. 21; xxviii. 20;

Verses 6–10. *But godliness*—The genuine fear and love of God, and obedience to his will; *with contentment*—The inseparable companion of vital piety; *is great gain*—Brings unspeakable profit in time as well as in eternity, and indeed is the only true abiding gain; for all other gain is perishing. *For we brought nothing into this world*—But were thrown naked upon the indulgent provision which our gracious Creator has been pleased to make for us; *and it is certain*—Whatever treasures insatiable avarice may amass; *we can carry nothing out*—But must, in a little time, return to the dust, stripped of all. To what purpose then do we heap together so many things? O let us remember one thing is needful, and let us, above all things, take care to ensure that. *And having*—While we continue in this transitory and uncertain life; *food and raiment*—Or food and coverings, rather; the word *σκεπασματα* comprehending not only clothes, but lodgings; (it signifies indeed coverings of every sort;) *let us be therewith content*—And not seek, with restless solicitude, the great things of this world, which are often of short continuance, and of a precarious as well as an unsatisfying nature. *But they*—Who, not content with these; (which are all that a Christian needs, and all that his religion allows him to desire;) *will be rich*—Who desire to be so, and resolve to use every means in order thereto; *fall*—Headlong; *into temptation*—Or trial, frequently great, peculiar, and distressing; *and a snare*—Which entangles them in sin and misery; *and into many foolish and hurtful lusts*—Or desires, which have no reason whatever in them, and which not only sink men below the dignity of their nature, but prove the occasion of much further mischief, yea, *drown men in destruction* here, and eternal *perdition* hereafter. “In this admirable picture the apostle represents men who are actuated by the desire of riches, and with the lusts excited by the possession of them, as pursuing, to the utmost verge of a precipice, those shadowy phantoms which owe all their semblance of reality to the magic of the passions, which riches, and the desire of them, have excited in their minds; and as falling into a gulf, where they plunge so deep that they are irrecoverably lost.” *For the love of money*—Commonly called prudent care of what a man has; *is the root*—Or source; *of all*—Of every kind of;

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hurtful lusts, ^t which drown men in A. M. 4069.
destruction and perdition. A. D. 65.

10 ^u For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have ^v erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 ^x But thou, ^y O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Matt. xiii. 22; James v. 1.—^u Chap. iii. 7.—^v Chap. i. 19. ^u Exodus xxiii. 8; Deuteronomy xvi. 19.—^v Or, *been seduced*. ^x 2 Tim. ii. 22.—^y Deut. xxxiii. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 17.

evil—Of sin and misery consequent thereon, in various respects. “The pernicious influence of this vice hath been taken notice of, and painted in striking colours, by moralists and poets, even among the heathen. But none of them have drawn the picture with such skill and effect as the apostle hath done in this and the preceding verse; where he hath set forth, in the strongest colouring, and with the fewest words, the deformity of the passion, and the evils which it produces, both in the bodies and in the minds of those who indulge it.”—Macknight. *Which, while some have coveted after*—Greek, *ορεγομενοι*, *reaching out to*, or eagerly coveting; *have erred*—*Απεπλανηθησαν*, *have wandered far from the faith*, or have wholly missed the mark. Indeed they aimed not at faith, but at something else; *and pierced themselves through*—Or *all round*, as *περιπεριφαν* properly signifies; have stabbed themselves, as it were, from head to foot on all sides, so as to be like a person wholly covered with wounds; *with many sorrows*—Arising from a guilty conscience, tormenting passions, desires contrary to reason, religion, and one another. How cruel are worldly men to themselves!

Verses 11, 12. *But thou, O man of God*—Whatever all the world else do; (a man of God is either a prophet, a messenger of God, or a man devoted to God, a man of another world;) *flee*—As from a serpent, instead of coveting *these things*, and *follow after righteousness*—Truth, justice, mercy, with all their proper fruits; *godliness*—Sincere and fervent piety, implying devotedness to God, in heart and life, and a conformity to his image; *faith*—In all its branches, especially as having the perfections of God, and the truths and promises of his word for its object, implying an *evidence of things not seen*, and an *earnest of things hoped for*, with fidelity as to every trust committed to thee. This faith is the foundation of righteousness, the support of godliness, the root of every grace of the Spirit; *love*—To God and all mankind, friends or enemies, and especially to all the saints. This the apostle intermixes with every thing that is good: he, as it were, penetrates whatever he treats of with *love*, the glorious spring of all inward and outward holiness. *Patience*—Under all afflictions coming immediately from the hand of God; *meekness*—Under all provocations proceeding from man through God’s per-

A. M. 4069. 12 ^a Fight the good fight of faith,
A. D. 65.

^a lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, ^b and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13 ^c I give thee charge in the sight of God, ^d who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, ^e who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good ^f confession;

14 That thou keep *this* commandment with-

^a 1 Cor. ix. 25, 26; Chap. i. 18; 2 Tim. iv. 7.—^b Phil. iii. 12, 14; Verse 19.—^c Hebrews xiii. 23.—^d Chapter v. 21.
^e Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6; John v. 21.—^f Matt. xxvii. 11; John xviii. 37.

mission. *Fight the good fight of faith*—Greek, αγωνιζει τον καλον αγωνα, *agonize the good agony*, or, *maintain the good combat*: the words, with those that follow, are plainly agonistical, and refer to the eagerness with which they who contended in the Grecian games struggled for, and laid hold on the crown; and the degree to which the presence of many spectators, or the cloud of witnesses, animated them in their contests. Some would translate the clause, *Exercise the good exercise*; but the word *exercise* does not, by any means, express the force of αγωνα, which always supposes an opponent to be resisted. *Lay hold on eternal life*—The prize just before thee; *whereunto thou art also called*—By the gospel and the grace of God; and—In pursuance thereof; *hast professed, &c.*—Or, rather, *hast confessed*; a good confession—Probably at his baptism or ordination, or perhaps at both; *before many witnesses*—Who were present on that solemn day, when thou wast dedicated entirely and irrevocably to the service of God, of Christ, of his church, and all mankind.

Verses 13–16. *I give thee charge, &c.*—See note on chap. v. 21; *in the sight*—In the presence; of God—Whose eye is upon us both; and *who quickeneth all things*—Who is the source of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, and therefore is able to raise those from the dead that suffer for him; a suitable, though oblique intimation, that should Timothy, after the example of his great Lord, sacrifice his life to the honour of his profession, God, who raised Christ from the dead, would raise him. See 2 Tim. ii. 3, 10–12. The earnestness and solemnity with which the apostle addresses Timothy on this occasion, did not proceed from any suspicion of his fidelity as a minister, but from his own deep sense of the importance of the truths which Timothy was to confess and maintain. Hence the ministers of the gospel may learn that these truths ought to be often and earnestly insisted on by them in their public discourses. *And before*—In the presence of; *Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession*—This was made by our Lord most explicitly before Caiaphas and the Jewish council, when, being asked whether he was *Christ the Son of the Blessed*, he acknowledged that he was; and added, *Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, &c.*, Mark xiv. 61, 62.

out spot, unrebukable, ^f until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: A. M. 4069. A. D. 65.

15 Which in his times he shall show, *who is* ^g the blessed and only Potentate, ^h the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 ⁱ Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: ^k whom no man hath seen, nor can see; ^l to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

^a Or, *profession*.—^b Phil. i. 6, 10; 1 Thess. iii. 13; v. 23. ^c Chap. i. 11, 17.—^d Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16.—^e Chap. i. 17. ^f Exod. xxxiii. 20; John vi. 46.—^g Eph. iii. 21; Phil. iv. 20; Jude 25; Rev. i. 6; iv. 11; vii. 12.

This confession was adhered to by our Lord in the presence of Pilate, when he acknowledged himself *the King of the Jews*, John xviii. 33, 37; that is, acknowledged that he was *Messiah the prince*, and suffered death rather than conceal or retract it. And the apostle calls it a *good confession*, because all our hopes of salvation are built upon the truth of it. *That thou keep this commandment*—That thou observe whatsoever I have enjoined thee, or, that thou keep the doctrine which I have committed to thee; *without spot*—Without adding to it, detracting from it, concealing or misrepresenting any part of it; and *unrebukable*—So that no one may have cause to find any fault with thee, or reprove thee for thy neglect; *till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*—Till he shall call thee hence by death; or the meaning of the exhortation is, that Timothy, by keeping the doctrines and precepts which the apostle had committed to him *without spot*, was to hand them down pure to his successors in the ministry, and thereby to contribute his part toward preserving them in the world till Christ's second coming. *Which appearing, in his appointed time*—(The power, the knowledge, the revelation of which remain in his own eternal mind;) *he shall show*—In the most awful and conspicuous manner; *who is the blessed and only Potentate*—Before whom no other name or power is worthy of being mentioned; *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*—These titles the apostle gave to God, because all who have dominion, whether in heaven or on earth, have it from God, and are absolutely subject to him. The eastern princes affected these titles very improperly, being weak, mortal men: the true *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, who hath the fates and lives of all the monarchs on earth entirely in his hands, is alone worthy of them. *Who only hath*—Underived and independent; *immortality*—Life without beginning and without ending; and as this implies *immutability*, he only is *immutable*, as well as *immortal*; whence he is called, (Rom. i. 23,) *αθάρατος Θεος, the incorruptible, or immutable God*, as also 1 Tim. i. 17. Every other being, angel or man, that hath life without end, hath it by his gift. *Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto*—Which is absolutely inaccessible to mortals, and probably also to angels. *Whom no man hath seen, nor can see*—With bodily eyes; yet there is a

A. M. 4069. 17 Charge them that are rich in
A. D. 65. this world, that they be not high-
minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but
in the living God, who giveth us richly all
things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in
good works, ready to distribute, willing to
communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a
good foundation against the time to come,

^a Job xxxi. 24; Psa. lii. 7; lxi. 10.—^b Gr. *the uncertainty of riches.*—^c Prov. xxiii. 5.—^d 1 Thess. i. 9; Chap. iii. 15; iv. 10.—^e Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 25.—^f Luke xii. 21; Chap. v. 10; Tit. iii. 8.—^g Rom. xii. 13.

sense in which the pure in heart shall see God, in the future and eternal state: yea, shall see him as he is, Matt. v. 8; 1 John iii. 2. *To whom be honour, &c.*—Ascribed by every intelligent being in the universe, through eternal ages.

Verses 17-19. What follows seems to be a kind of postscript. *Charge them that are rich in this world*—Rich in such beggarly riches as this world affords. For the clause, *εν τω νυν αιωνι*, seems evidently to be added to extenuate the value of riches, which extend only to this transitory and precarious world, and cannot attend us into the other; nor, if they did, could at all influence our happiness there; that they be not high-minded—That they do not think better of themselves on account of their money, or any thing it can purchase. But, alas! who regards this advice? *Nor trust in uncertain riches*—Which they may lose in an hour, either for happiness or defence. Those who place their happiness in the enjoyment of sensual pleasure, or in the possession of the conveniences and elegancies of life, naturally trust to their riches for their happiness, because by their money they can procure these things; and thus they become dead to all sense of their dependance on God and his providence for their happiness. *But in the living God*—All the rest is dead clay; who giveth us—As it were, holding them out in his hand; richly—Freely, plentifully; all things—Which we have; to enjoy—As his gift, in him and for him. When we use them thus, we do indeed enjoy all things. *That they do good*—Make this their daily employ; that they be rich—That they abound; in good works—To their utmost ability; ready to distribute—Singly, to particular persons; willing to communicate—To join in all public works of benevolence and beneficence. These advices clearly show that there was not, at this time, a community of goods among Christians in general: for in that case there could have been no room for the exhortation here given, and the distinction on which it is founded. *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation*—Hereby manifesting the truth of their faith in Christ, and in the promises of his gospel, and the genuineness of their love to God and mankind, and thereby proving that

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that they may lay hold on eternal life. A. M. 4069.
A. D. 65.

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called;

21 Which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

¶ The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana.

^a Or, *sociable.*—^b Gal. vi. 6; Heb. xiii. 16.—^c Matt. vi. 20; xix. 21; Luke xvi. 9.—^d Verse 12.—^e 2 Tim. i. 14; Tit. i. 9; Rev. iii. 3.—^f Chap. i. 4, 6; iv. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 14, 16, 23.—^g Chap. i. 6, 19; 2 Tim. ii. 18.

they are united to Christ, and made heirs through him of the heavenly inheritance; and, by bringing forth these fruits of righteousness, obtain for themselves, from the free mercy of God in Christ, an everlasting and abundant reward; that they may lay hold on eternal life—This cannot be done by alms-deeds, or any good works that we can perform; which are all so defective, that they have need of a pardon, instead of being sufficient to procure for us eternal life. They, however, when performed, as here directed, both manifest the reality of our grace, and come up for a memorial before God, Acts x. 4; and while they are, through Christ Jesus, to the praise and glory of God, (Phil. i. 11,) shall assuredly meet with an ample recompense from Him who is not unfaithful to forget that work and labour of love which his children thus show to his name, Heb. vi. 10; Gal. vi. 9.

Verses 20, 21. To conclude all: O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust—The original expression, *την παρακαταθηκην φυλαξον*, is, literally, guard the deposit; namely, the purity of gospel doctrine, with the dispensation of which thou art intrusted; avoiding profane and vain babblings—See chap. i. 4, and iv. 7; and oppositions of science falsely so called—Such philosophical disquisitions and debates, as both contradict one another, and were contrary to the truth, though reckoned high points of knowledge. Though it is not certain that the name of *Gnostics*, or the *knowing men*, was used in the church so early to denominate a distinct sect, yet it is highly probable that they who opposed the apostle made extraordinary pretences to knowledge, and this text seems sufficient to prove it. Indeed, most of the ancient heretics were great pretenders to knowledge. Which knowledge, some teachers professing to have attained, (1 Tim. i. 6, 7,) have erred concerning the faith—Have departed from the true Christian doctrine, some entirely forsaking it, and others corrupting it with gross adulterations. *Grace be with thee*—To guide, in all things, thy judgment and thy conduct. This epistle being chiefly designed for Timothy's own use, no salutations were sent to any of the brethren at Ephesus.

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PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

TIMOTHY.

CONCERNING the parentage, country, and education of Timothy, as also his conversion and appointment to the office of an evangelist, with some particulars of his life and labours, see the preface to the former epistle. That this second epistle was written while Paul was a prisoner at Rome is universally acknowledged; but whether during his first or second imprisonment, has been matter of debate. Hammond, Lightfoot, Cave, and Lardner, with several others, have maintained the former opinion; while Bishop Pearson, Whitby, Doddridge, Paley, and Macknight, with many more critics, contend for the latter: and the arguments they offer seem to be quite conclusive. The principal are the following:—1st. It appears from chap. i. 8, and ii. 9, that when the apostle wrote this epistle he was a prisoner in bonds: but these could not be his first bonds; for then he was, *in libera custodia*, dwelling in his own hired house, receiving all that came to him, no one forbidding him, (Acts xxviii. 30, 31,) and his bonds being known in Cesar's palace, and "to all others." But when he wrote this second epistle, he was *in arcta custodia*, in such close confinement, that Onesiphorus was obliged to "seek him out diligently," few knowing where he was to be found, chap. i. 17. Secondly, In his first bonds, many of the brethren, being encouraged by his bonds, "were bold to speak the word without fear," (Phil. i. 14,) but when he wrote this second epistle all men had forsaken him, chap. iv. 16. Thirdly, When he wrote his former epistle he had an expectation of being soon released, and of seeing his Christian friends again, chap. iii. 14; but in this epistle he not only gives no hint of any such expectation, but evidently signifies the contrary, observing, chap. iv. 6, "I am now ready to be offered," or "I am now offered," as *ἡδὴ σπειρόμαι* means, "and the time" *της εμης αναλυσεως εφελθηκε*, "of my dissolution is instant," or "is come." "I have finished my course," &c., "henceforth," *λοιπον*, "what remains, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," &c. From which words it is justly inferred, that when he wrote this he was in immediate expectation of death, either in consequence of Nero's menaces, or of some express revelation from Christ, such as Peter also probably had a little before his martyrdom. See 2 Peter i. 14. And from hence the ancients generally concluded that this was the last epistle that St. Paul wrote.

There appears to be no certainty where Timothy was when the apostle wrote this epistle to him; but his principal design in writing it seems evidently to have been, to prepare Timothy for those sufferings to which he foresaw he would be exposed; to forewarn him of the apostacy and corruption which were beginning to appear in the church, and at the same time to animate him by his own example, and from the powerful motives which the gospel furnishes, to the most vigorous and resolute discharge of every part of the sacred office to which he had been called. The epistle has three parts: I. The inscription, chap. i. 1, 2. II. An invitation, "Come to me," variously expressed; 1. Having declared his love to Timothy, verses 3–5, he exhorts him, "Be not ashamed of me," verses 6–14, and subjoins various examples, verses 15–18. 2. He adds the two-fold proposition, (1.) "Be strong;" (2.) "Commit the ministry" to faithful men, chap. ii. 1, 2. The former is treated of verses 3–13; the latter, verse 14; with further directions concerning his own behaviour, verse 15; chap. iv. 8. 3. "Come quickly," verse 9. Here St. Paul mentions his being left alone, verses 10–12.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

Directs to bring his books, verse 13. Gives a caution concerning Alexander, verses 14, 15. Observes the inconstancy of men, and the faithfulness of God, verses 16–18. 4. “Come before winter:” salutations, verses 19–21. III. The concluding blessing, verse 22.

From this epistle, as well as from the first to the Thessalonians, we may draw a convincing argument in favour of the certain truth and unspeakable importance of Christianity. “The apostle had been for some time under close confinement at Rome, at the mercy of a cruel and capricious tyrant. He had seen himself deserted by his friends in his greatest extremity, and had nothing before him but the certain prospect of being called to suffer death in the same cause to which he had devoted his life. In this situation how does he behave? Does he seem to look back with concern on his past conduct, or to regret the sacrifice he had made of all his worldly interest? Can we discover any thing that betrays a secret consciousness of guilt, or even a suspicion of the weakness of his cause? Nay, does he drop a single expression that can be interpreted as a mark of fear, or discomposure of mind, in the apprehension of those gloomy scenes that lay before him? Surely if he had been an impostor, or had entertained the least doubt of the doctrines he had taught, something of this kind must have escaped him when writing to so intimate a friend, with whom he could intrust all the secrets of his breast. On the contrary, upon the most calm and deliberate survey, he expresses an entire satisfaction in reflecting on the part he had acted, and earnestly recommends it to his beloved pupil to follow his example in maintaining the glorious cause, even at the hazard of his life. He appears, throughout his epistle, to have felt a strong inward conviction of the truth of those principles he had embraced, and glories in the sufferings he endured in support of them, triumphing in the full assurance of being approved by his great Master, and of receiving at his hands a crown of distinguished lustre. A behaviour like this, in one who had so considerable a share in establishing the Christian religion, and expected in a short time to seal his testimony to it with his blood, must be allowed a strong confirmation of the truth of those facts on which our faith depends. It is at least a convincing proof that the apostle was himself sincere in what he professed to believe; and when the several circumstances of his history are considered, and impartially weighed, it will appear as evident that he could not possibly be deceived, and, consequently, that his testimony is to be admitted in full force.”—Doddridge.

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THE
SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO
TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER I.

Paul (1.) Asserts his apostolical character, salutes Timothy, and declares his permanent and high regard for him, as a true believer, and sympathizing, affectionate brother, 1-5. (2.) Exhorts him to a diligent, courageous, and patient improvement of his spiritual gifts and graces in exercising the ministry of the glorious gospel, which he had received, 6-14. (3.) He relates, to the honour of Onesiphorus, how he had befriended him when many others at Rome had shamefully deserted him, 15-18.

A. M. 4070.
A. D. 66. **PAUL**, * an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to ^b the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,
2 ° To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.
3 ^d I thank God, ° whom I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, that ^f with-

out ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; A. M. 4070.
A. D. 66.
4 ° Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;
5 When I call to remembrance ^h the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and ⁱ thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

* 2 Cor. i. 1.—^b Eph. iii. 6; Tit. i. 2; Heb. ix. 15.—^c 1 Tim. i. 2.—^d Rom. i. 8; Eph. i. 16.—^e Acts xxii. 3; xxiii. 1; xxiv.

14; xxvii. 23; Rom. i. 9; Gal. i. 14.—^f 1 Thess. i. 2; iii. 10 & Chap. iv. 9, 21.—^g 1 Tim. i. 5; iv. 6.—^h Acts xvi. 1.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1-5. *Paul, an apostle by the will of God*—See 1 Cor. i. 1-5; according to the promise of life—Appointed to exhibit, by preaching the gospel, and to bring men to, eternal life, promised by God to all true believers; *in*—And through; *Christ Jesus*—Who hath revealed and procured it. *I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers*—That is, whom both I and my ancestors served, or, whom I serve as the holy patriarchs did of old; *with a pure conscience*—He always worshipped God according to his conscience, both before and after his conversion. Before his conversion, however, his conscience was neither truly enlightened nor awakened; for he was neither acquainted with the spirituality and extent of the moral law, nor with his own sinfulness and guilt through his violations of it. *That without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers*—See on Rom. i. 8, 9. To know that the apostle prayed for him continually, must have afforded great encouragement to Timothy amidst his labours and sufferings: *being mindful of thy tears*—Perhaps frequently shed, as well as at

the apostle's last parting with him; *that I may be filled with joy*—In conversing with thee, and giving thee my dying charge and blessing. *When I call to remembrance, &c.*—That is, my desire to see thee is greatly increased by my calling to remembrance *the unfeigned faith*—In the gospel, and in its glorious Author; *that is in thee*—Of which thou hast given convincing evidence; *and which dwelt*—An expression not applicable to a transient guest, but only to a settled inhabitant; *first in thy grandmother Lois*—Probably this was before Timothy was born. Here it is insinuated, to the great praise of Timothy's grandmother Lois, that, having embraced the Christian faith herself, she persevered in it, and persuaded her daughter Eunice to do the same; and that the instructions and example of these pious women prepared their son for receiving the gospel when it was preached to him: a fit example this for the imitation of all mothers, who, if they take the same pains with their children, may hope that, by the blessing of God, their care will be followed with similar happy effects.

A. M. 4070. 6 Wherefore I put thee in remem-
A. D. 66. brance, ^k that thou stir up the gift of
God, which is in thee by the putting on of my
hands.

7 For ^l God hath not given us the spirit of
fear; ^m but of power, and of love, and of a
sound mind.

8 ⁿ Be not thou therefore ashamed of ^o the
testimony of our Lord, nor of me ^p his pri-
soner: ^q but be thou partaker of the afflictions
of the gospel according to the power of God;

^k 1 Thess. v. 19; 1 Tim. iv. 14. — ^l Rom. viii. 15. — ^m Luke
xxiv. 49; Acts i. 8. — ⁿ Rom. i. 16. — ^o 1 Tim. ii. 6; Rev. i. 2.
^p Eph. iii. 1; Phil. i. 7. — ^q Col. i. 24; Chap. iv. 5. — ^r 1 Tim.
i. 1; Tit. iii. 4. — ^s 1 Thess. iv. 7; Heb. iii. 1.

Verses 6, 7. *Wherefore*—Because I remember
this; *I put thee in remembrance*—Because of my
love to thee; *that thou stir up the gift of God*—
That is, every gift which the grace of God has
given thee. The word *αναζωπυρειν* is a metaphori-
cal expression, borrowed from stirring up fire when
it is almost extinct, and thereby causing it to burn
with a fresh flame. The meaning is, that Timothy
was to embrace the opportunities which his station
afforded him for improving his spiritual gifts, by
boldly and diligently exercising them in inculcating
and defending the doctrines of the gospel. *By the
putting on of my hands*—Together with those of
the presbytery, 1 Epist. iv. 14. And let nothing
discourage thee, *for God hath not given us the spirit
of fear*—That is, the spirit which God hath given
us Christians, is not the spirit of fear, or of timidity,
or cowardice, as *δειλιας* signifies; *but of power*—
Banishing fear; or of Christian courage in the midst
of dangers and troubles; *and of love*—To God and
all mankind, animating us to zeal and diligence in
God's service, and in our endeavours to save
men's souls. *And of a sound mind*—So as to act
according to the best principles of reason and reli-
gion.

Verses 8-10. *Be not thou, therefore*—Discouraged
by any dangers or trials; or *ashamed of the testi-
mony of our Lord*—The gospel which testifies of
Christ, or of testifying the truth and importance of it
to all men; *nor of me his prisoner*—The cause of
the servants of God, doing his work, cannot be sepa-
rated from the cause of God himself. *But be thou
partaker of the afflictions of the gospel*—Of such
afflictions as I endure for the gospel's sake: or, be
ready to undergo the persecutions and troubles
which attend the profession and preaching of the
gospel: *according to the power of God*—That is,
as God shall enable thee; *who hath saved us*—By
faith in his Son and in his gospel, from sin and mis-
ery, present and eternal, and therefore we may the
more readily endure any temporal evils for the gos-
pel. The love of the Father, the grace of our Saviour,
and the whole economy of salvation, are here ad-
mirably described. *And called us with a holy call-
ing*—A calling holy in regard, 1st, Of the author,

9 ^r Who hath saved us, and ^s call- A. M. 4070.
ed us with a holy calling, ^t not A. D. 66.
according to our works, but ^u according
to his own purpose and grace, which was
given us in Christ Jesus ^x before the world
began;

10 But ^y is now made manifest by the
appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, ^z who
hath abolished death, and hath brought
life and immortality to light through the
gospel:

^r Rom. iii. 20; ix. 11; Tit. iii. 5. — ^s Rom. viii. 28. — ^t Rom.
xvi. 25; Eph. i. 4; iii. 11; Tit. i. 2; 1 Pet. i. 20. — ^u Rom.
xvi. 26; Ephesians i. 9; Col. i. 26; Titus i. 3; 1 Pet. i. 20.
^x 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55; Heb. ii. 14.

God; 2d, The means, his word and Spirit; 3d, The
end, holiness; *not according to our works*—See on
Rom. ix. 11; xi. 6. *But according to his own pur-
pose and grace*—That is, his gracious purpose; (see
on Eph. iii. 11); *which was given us in Christ*—
Through his mediation and grace; *before the world
began*—He being appointed, in the everlasting and
unchangeable counsels of God, to be the Redeemer
and Saviour of all that should believe in and obey
him. *But now is made manifest*—Is openly re-
vealed and exhibited; *by the appearing of our
Saviour*—By his manifestation in the flesh, and the
publication of the gospel of his grace. *Who hath
abolished death*—Hath obtained for persevering be-
lievers a glorious resurrection even from temporal
death hereafter, and deliverance from the sting of it
here; with a title to, and meetness for, the eternal
life of both soul and body; so that death shall be
completely swallowed up in victory. *And hath
brought life and immortality to light*—Hath clearly
revealed by the gospel that immortal life which he
hath purchased for us. Or, if *αφθαρσιαν* be rendered,
as it properly may, not *immortality*, but *incorrupt-
tion*, the meaning will be, *he hath clearly revealed
the life*, or existence and happiness, *of the soul im-
mediately after death, and the incorruption of the
body*: or rather, *hath made them clear*; for the
word *φωριζω*, here used, means to make a thing *clear*
and *plain* which was formerly obscure, a translation
which is more proper here than to *bring to light*.
“For the Israelites had an obscure knowledge of the
immortality of the soul, and of the resurrection of
the body, given them in the writings of Moses, as is
plain from our Lord's words, (Luke xx. 37,) and
from what is related 2 Mac. vii. 9, 14, 23. Neverthe-
less, as these things were but obscurely revealed in
the ancient oracles, the far more clear discovery of
them in the gospel, but especially Christ's express
promise to raise the dead, and give eternal life to
believers, might with the greatest propriety be called
a *making these things clear*.” The heathen also
had some confused hopes of the immortality of the
soul, but as they had no ground for these hopes but
uncertain tradition and their own wishes, they were
much in the dark concerning it.

A. M. 4070. 11 ^a Whereunto I am appointed a
A. D. 66. preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher
of the Gentiles.

12 ^b For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: ^c for I know whom I have ¹ believed, and am persuaded that he is able to ^d keep that which I have committed unto him ^e against that day.

13 ^f Hold fast ^g the form of ^h sound words, ⁱ which thou hast heard of me, ^k in faith

^a Acts ix. 25; Eph. iii. 7, 8; 1 Tim. ii. 7; Chap. iv. 17.
^b Eph. iii. 1; Chap. ii. 9.—^c 1 Pet. iv. 19.—^d Or, *trusted*.
^e 1 Tim. vi. 20.—^f Verse 18; Chap. iv. 8.—^g Chap. iii. 14; Tit. i. 9; Heb. x. 23; Rev. ii. 25.—^h Rom. ii. 20; vi. 17.

Verses 11, 12. *Whereunto*—For proclaiming which good news; *I am appointed a preacher*—*Κηρῦς, a herald*; and *an apostle*—Invested with an extraordinary commission, and furnished with spiritual gifts to make me a successful *teacher of the Gentiles*—That is, of them chiefly. *For which*—Namely, my preaching to the Gentiles; *I suffer these things*—“By assigning his preaching salvation to the Gentiles through Christ, without obedience to the law of Moses, as the cause of his second bonds in Rome, he hath insinuated that the unbelieving Jews were active in getting him imprisoned, and tried for his life as a criminal.”—Macknight. *Nevertheless*—Though my condition may seem infamous; *I am not ashamed*—Either of my doctrine or of my sufferings. *For I know whom I have believed*—That is, whose word and promise I have credited, and to whom I have trusted all my important concerns: I know his power, and love, and faithfulness; and am persuaded, fully satisfied, *he is able to keep that which I have committed to him*—*Τὴν παραθήκην μου, my deposite, until that day*—Of final retribution; meaning, undoubtedly, his immortal soul, or his whole person, soul and body. Thus Peter, (1 Epist. iv. 19,) *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him*, (or, as may be included, the preservation, or, if taken away, the restoration, of the life of their bodies,) *in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*, who never did, and never will, deceive, or disappoint the hopes of any that trust in him.

Verses 13, 14. *Hold fast the form*—The draught, pattern, or model; (*συνστυπωσις* signifies;) *of sound words*—Of pure and salutary doctrine; *which thou hast heard of me*—Hast received repeatedly from my own lips: keep this, not merely in theory, and in thy memory, but in thy heart; *in faith and love*—In that cordial faith and sincere love which are essentially necessary to our being in Christ Jesus, and which will ensure our being owned by him as his true disciples. Macknight thinks the phrase *ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων, sound, wholesome, or salutary words*, here used by the apostle, is an insinuation that the false teachers had introduced into their discourses a variety of high-sounding, mysterious

and love which is in Christ Je- A. M. 4070.
sus. A. D. 66.

14 ¹ That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost ² which dwelleth in us.

15 This thou knowest, that ³ all they which are in Asia be ⁴ turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16 The Lord ⁵ give mercy unto ⁶ the house of Onesiphorus; ⁷ for he oft refreshed me, and ⁸ was not ashamed of ⁹ my chain:

¹ 1 Tim. i. 10; vi. 3.—² Chap. ii. 2.—³ 1 Tim. i. 14.
⁴ 1 Tim. vi. 20.—⁵ Rom. viii. 11.—⁶ Acts xix. 10.—⁷ Chap. iv. 10, 16.—⁸ Matt. v. 7.—⁹ Chap. iv. 19.—¹⁰ Philem. 7.
¹¹ Verse 8.—¹² Acts xxviii. 20; Eph. vi. 20.

words and phrases of their own invention, on a pretence that they expressed the Christian doctrines better than those used by the apostles; and that Timothy was hereby required to “resist this bad practice, by adhering closely to the words and phrases in which the apostle had taught him the doctrines of the gospel, and which he terms *wholesome words*, because, being dictated by the Spirit, (1 Cor. ii. 13,) they are more fit for expressing the doctrines of Christ than any words of human invention. The teachers in modern times, who, in explaining the articles of the Christian faith, use phrases different from the Scripture phraseology, would do well to attend to this apostolical injunction.” *That good thing which was committed, &c.*—Greek, *τὴν καλὴν παρακαταθήκην*, literally, *the good deposite*. “Our translators have added the words *to thee*, which are not in the original; and besides are unnecessary, because the apostle is speaking of a deposite committed in trust to himself, as well as to Timothy; as is plain from the last words of the verse, *φυλάξον, guard by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*.” Concerning this deposite, see on 1 Tim. vi. 20. “As the form of sound words, mentioned in the preceding verse, was a part of this deposite, an exhortation to guard them was extremely necessary, before the writings of the apostles and evangelists were published, in which the doctrines of the gospel are expressed in words taught by the Holy Ghost. And now that these inspired writings are in our possession, this exhortation implies that we ought to preserve them pure, without any alteration; and that all the translations which are made of them ought to exhibit, as nearly as possible, the very words which were dictated to the inspired writers by the Spirit of God.”

Verses 15–18. *This thou knowest*—Of this thou hast received information; *that all they which are in Asia*—He appears to mean those of Asia who were known to him by a profession of Christianity, and who had attended him at Rome for a while; *are turned away from me*—And have proved treacherous friends, after all their forward pretences. See on chap. iv. 16. “What! turned away from Paul, the aged, the faithful soldier, and now prisoner of

A. M. 4070. 17 But when he was in Rome, he
A. D. 66. sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him ^a that he may

^a Matt. xxv. 34, 40.

Christ! This was a glorious trial, and wisely reserved for that time when he was on the borders of immortality."—Wesley. *Of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes*—Probably he mentions these two persons as known to Timothy, or as having distinguished themselves by their profession, so that there was great reason to expect a different conduct from them. *The Lord give mercy unto the house*—Or family; of Onesiphorus—As well as himself; *for he oft refreshed me*—By his visits and liberalities, both at Ephesus and Rome; see verse 18; *and was not ashamed of my chain*—That is, he both owned and relieved me without fear or shame, in this time of my imprisonment. It appears that offices of kindness done to Paul, especially when in distress,

find mercy of the Lord ^a in that day: A. M. 4070.
and in how many things he ^b minis- A. D. 66.
tered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

^a 2 Thess. i. 10; Verse 12.—^b Heb. vi. 10.

made a deep impression on his mind, and filled him with gratitude. *When he was in Rome he sought me out*—An expression implying that the apostle was in such close confinement that few knew where he was to be found. *The Lord grant, &c., that he may find mercy of the Lord*—*The Lord*, in this latter clause, may mean the Lord Jesus; or the words may be a common Hebraism for, *May the Lord grant him mercy*. By praying first for the family of Onesiphorus, (verse 16,) the apostle intimated that Onesiphorus was at a distance from his family; and then his praying for that good man himself, implies that he was not dead, as the Papists suppose, inferring from this prayer of the apostle the lawfulness of praying for the dead.

CHAPTER II.

Here the apostle (1.) Exhorts Timothy, in the strength of Christ, to labour in his ministerial work with courage, diligence, patience, and perseverance, in hopes of a happy issue, 1-13. (2.) He warns him against unprofitable and erroneous doctrines and teachers, 14-18. (3.) Comforts him with the assurance that God would save his true people, and uphold his church, though different sorts of professors would always be found in her while on earth, 19-21. (4.) He charges him to flee youthful lusts, and to preserve a meek spirit in all his endeavours to instruct and recover sinners from the miserable condition into which they were fallen, as the most likely way to be successful in winning souls, 22-26.

A. M. 4070. THOU therefore, ^a my son, ^b be
A. D. 66. strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 ^c And the things that thou hast heard of me ^d among many witnesses, ^e the same com-

^a 1 Tim. i. 2; Chap. i. 2.—^b Eph. vi. 10.—^c Chap. i. 13; iii. 10, 14.—^d Or, by.—^e 1 Tim. i. 18.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *Thou therefore, my son*—Animated by the example of fidelity and courage manifested by Onesiphorus; *be strong*—*Εὐδυνασθε*, be encouraged and strengthened, in a firm reliance on the grace that is in Jesus—And which he is always ready to communicate to all that pray for and expect it. *And the things*—The wholesome doctrine, (chap. i. 13,) *that thou hast heard of me*—To which I have often borne solemn testimony; *among many witnesses*—See 1 Tim. vi. 12. By these *many witnesses*, he seems to have meant the elders, deacons, and others, present when Timothy was set apart to the sacred office of the ministry, and received a solemn charge from the apostle to execute his trust faithfully. *The same commit thou*—With great seriousness, care, and diligence, before thou leavest Ephesus; *to faithful men, who shall be able to teach*

b

mit thou to faithful men, who shall A. M. 4070.
be ^c able to teach others also. A. D. 66.

3 ^d Thou therefore endure hardness, ^e as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 ^f No man that warreth entangleth himself

^a 1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 9.—^b Chap. i. 8; iv. 5.—^c 1 Tim. i. 18.—^d 1 Cor. ix. 25.

others—After thou art gone: that the truth may be continued, in an uninterrupted succession of such persons, who shall hand it down from one to another throughout all ages, even till the end of time.

Verses 3-7. *Thou therefore endure hardness*—*Κακοπαθησον*, literally, *endure evil*; that is, expect persecutions and various sufferings, and, by the powerful aids of divine grace, endure them with courage, constancy, and patience; *as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*—Who endured much greater afflictions in the days of his flesh, and hath thereby shown all who engage to fight under his banner, and would approve themselves his faithful soldiers, that they must expect to meet with various hardships and sufferings, and in what spirit they must sustain them, that they may war a good warfare, and prove victorious. *No man that warreth entangleth himself*—

A. M. 4070. with the affairs of *this* life; that he
A. D. 66. may please him who hath chosen him
to be a soldier.

5 And ¹ if a man also strive for masteries, *yet*
is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 ² The ³ husbandman that laboureth must
be first partaker of the fruits.

7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give
thee understanding in all things.

8 Remember that Jesus Christ, ¹ of the seed
of David, ² was raised from the dead, ³ accord-
ing to my gospel:

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 25, 26.—² 1 Cor. ix. 10.—³ Or, *the husbandman, labouring first, must be partaker of the fruits.*—¹ Rom. i. 3, 4; Acts ii. 30; xiii. 23.—² 1 Cor. xv. 1, 4, 20.—³ Rom. ii. 16. ^o Acts ix. 16; Chap. i. 12.—^p Eph. iii. 1; Phil. i. 7; Col.

any more than is unavoidable, *in the affairs of this life*—With any other business or employment; *that*—Minding war only; *he may please him who hath chosen him, &c.*—Namely, his captain or general. In this and the next verse, there is a plain allusion to the Roman law of arms, and to that of the Grecian games. According to the former, no soldier, at least no legionary soldier, (as Grotius has here shown,) was suffered to engage in any civil occupation, such as agriculture, merchandise, mechanical employments, or any business which might divert him from his profession. According to the latter, no one could be crowned as conqueror who did not keep strictly to the rules of the game. The apostle, by applying these things to the ministers of the gospel, hath shown that all who undertake the office of the ministry should, on the one hand, avoid engaging in such secular businesses as would engross their attention, and require much time to execute; and, on the other, should be careful to observe all the rules of faith and practice enjoined in the gospel. *The husbandman that laboureth, &c.*—This should undoubtedly be rather rendered, *The husbandman must first labour, and then partake of the fruits; or, must labour before he partake of the fruits.* For it was entirely to the apostle's purpose to remind Timothy that the labour of the husbandman must precede the harvest; but whether he was to receive these fruits *first*, or before any others, was not the point in question. How much more, as if the apostle had said, oughtest thou to labour, O Timothy, in the ministry before thou art rewarded. *Consider what I say*—Concerning the necessity of devoting thyself wholly to the ministry, and enduring evil; *and the Lord give thee understanding in all things*—Belonging to the gospel, and thy duty as a Christian and a minister.

Verses 8–10. *Remember*—So as to be encouraged against, and supported under, any sufferings which thou mayest be called to endure for the truth; *that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David*—According to the flesh; see on Rom. i. 3; Heb. ii. 16; *was raised from the dead*—And thereby demonstrated himself to be the true Messiah. So our translators have ren-

9 ^o Wherein I suffer trouble, as an ¹ evil-doer, ² even unto bonds; ³ but the
A. M. 4070. word of God is not bound. A. D. 66.

10 Therefore ¹ I endure all things for the
elect's sake, ² that they may also obtain the
salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal
glory.

11 ¹ It is a faithful saying: For ² if we
be dead with *him*, we shall also live with
him:

12 ² If we suffer, we shall also reign with
him: ³ if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

iv. 3, 18.—¹ Acts xxviii. 31; Eph. vi. 19, 20; Phil. i. 13, 14. ² Eph. iii. 13; Col. i. 24.—³ 2 Cor. i. 6.—¹ 1 Tim. i. 15. ² Rom. vi. 5, 8; 2 Cor. iv. 10.—³ Rom. viii. 17; 1 Pet. iv. 13. ^o Matt. x. 33; Mark viii. 38; Luke xii. 9.

dered the clause, understanding the sense to be, Remember and adhere to this important fact, as the great foundation of the gospel. But the original expressions, *μνημονεύει Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐγερμένον ἐκ νεκρῶν*, are, literally, *Remember Jesus Christ raised from the dead, &c.* That is, think on him, keep him continually in remembrance, and it will be instead of a thousand arguments to support thee under, and carry thee through, all thy dangers and difficulties, thy labours and sufferings. *Wherein*—In the service of which gospel; *I suffer trouble as an evil-doer*—A malefactor, deserving some heavy punishment; *even unto bonds*—Imprisonment and chains. *But the word of God is not bound*—It will spread itself in spite of all opposition. "This short sentence," says Macknight, "is a beautiful display of the apostle's character. The evils which he was suffering for the gospel, though great, he reckoned as nothing, because of the joy which he felt from his persuasion that the honour of Christ and the happiness of mankind would be promoted by his sufferings, and because he knew that all the opposition which infidels were making to the gospel, would not hinder it from being preached and believed. They have bound me in chains, said he, and may put me to death, but the word of God they cannot bind. Not only the strength of the apostle's reasoning here, but the energy of his expression is admirable." *Therefore*—In hope of a glorious reward, to be conferred in due time on them and myself. *I endure all things for the elect's sake*—That is, that I may thereby promote the salvation of God's people. See on 2 Thess. ii. 13. Observe the spirit of a real Christian! Who would not wish to be like-minded! *That they may obtain salvation*—From sin and all its consequences, or deliverance from all evil; *with eternal glory*—The enjoyment of all good.

Verses 11–14. *It is a faithful saying*—A saying as important as it is true. *If we be dead*—Greek, *συναπεθανομεν*, die, or have died, *with him*—To the world and sin, and be ready to die for him; *we shall live with him*—In that everlasting happiness which he hath prepared for all his people. *If we suffer with him*—Persecution, or whatever he may be pleased

A. M. 4070. 13 ^a If we believe not, *yet* he abideth
A. D. 66. faithful: ^a he cannot deny himself.

14 Of these things put *them* in remembrance,
^b charging *them* before the Lord ^c that they
strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the
subverting of the hearers.

15 Study to show thyself approved unto God,

^a Rom. iii. 3; ix. 6. — ^a Num. xxiii. 19. — ^b 1 Tim. v. 21; vi.
13; Chap. iv. 1. — ^c 1 Tim. i. 4; vi. 4; Tit. iii. 9, 11.

to appoint or permit to happen to us, with faith and patience becoming a Christian; *we shall also reign with him*—In heavenly glory: see on Rom. viii. 17; 1 Pet. iv. 13. *If*—Intimidated with these transitory evils, *we* desert his cause, and *deny him*—Before men, that we may escape suffering for him; *he also will deny us*—In the great day, before his Father and the holy angels, Matt. x. 33; Luke xii. 9. *If we believe not*—That he will deny us, presuming upon his mercy; *yet he abideth faithful*—And will fulfil his threatenings on such as expose themselves to them; *he cannot deny himself*—Cannot falsify his word, or fail to make it good. Or the verse may be interpreted in a more general sense thus: *If we believe not the truths and promises of his gospel, or if we are unfaithful, (as some render απιστημεν, considering it as opposed to πιστος, faithful,) yet he abideth faithful, and will steadily adhere to those rules of judgment, and distribution of rewards and punishments, which he hath so solemnly laid down in his word: for it is certain he cannot deny himself, or frustrate his own public declarations. Therefore be diligent, as if the apostle had said, in the discharge of thy duty, and shrink not from it for fear of suffering. Of these things put them in remembrance*—Remind those who are under thy charge of these powerful motives to persevere in patiently suffering ill, and diligently doing well; *charging them before the Lord*—As in his presence, and as they will answer it to him; *not to strive*—Greek, μη λογομαχεειν, *not to contend, or quarrel, about words*—An evil to which they are prone; *to no profit*—Such a contention is altogether unprofitable, and even tends to the subverting of the hearers—The diverting their attention from true, vital religion, and the important truths on which it is built, and filling their minds with pride and passion, and numberless other disorders and vices. There is an awful solemnity, as Doddridge justly observes, in this charge, which plainly shows the great folly and mischief of striving about little controversies. Indeed, consequences such as those here referred to, are wont to flow from most religious disputes as they are commonly managed; so that they tend to nothing but to the subverting of the faith and morals of those who engage keenly in them. They ought therefore to be carefully avoided by all who desire to promote true piety and virtue, agreeably to the apostle's direction.

Verse 15. *Study to show thyself approved, &c.*—Greek, σπουδασον σεαυτον δοκιμον παρασησαι τω θεω, literally, *be zealous, make haste, or diligently endeavour, to present thyself approved to God, what-*

b

a workman that needeth not to be ^{A. M. 4070.}
ashamed, rightly dividing the word of ^{A. D. 66.}
truth.

16 But ^d shun profane and vain babblings:
for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a ^e canker:
of whom is ^e Hymeneus and Philetus;

^d 1 Timothy iv. 7; vi. 20; Titus i. 14. — ^e Or, *gangrene.*
^e 1 Tim. i. 20.

ever men may judge of thee and thy services; *a workman that needeth not to be ashamed*—Either on account of unfaithfulness, unskilfulness, lukewarmness, negligence, or sloth; *rightly dividing the word of truth*—Greek, ορθοτομειν, literally, *rightly cutting up the word*—In allusion, as some think, to the action of the Jewish priests in dissecting the victims, and separating the parts in a proper manner, as some were to be laid on God's altar, and others to be given to those who were to share in the sacrifices. Or rather, the metaphor may be taken from the distribution made by a steward in delivering out to each person under his care such things as his office and their necessities require; or to the action of one who carves at a table, and distributes meat to the guests, according to their ages, and their state of health. In this manner the apostle himself divided the word to the Corinthians, feeding them *with milk, as babes in Christ, and not with meat, as not being then able to bear it.* See Heb. v. 12–14. The Vulgate version renders the clause, *recte tractantem, rightly handling the word, which gives the apostle's meaning very well.* Thus those ministers handle it who duly explain and apply the whole gospel, so as to give each hearer his due portion. But they that give one part of the gospel to all, (the promises and comforts, suppose, to unawakened, hardened, and scoffing sinners,) have real need to be ashamed. To divide or handle the word of truth aright, implies that it be done, 1st, With evidence and demonstration, so as to convince the conscience, Acts ii. 37; 1 Cor. ii. 4. 2d, With sincerity and faithfulness, delivering the whole counsel of God, Acts xx. 27. 3d, With power and authority, Matt. vii. 29; 1 Thess. i. 5. 4th, With wisdom and seasonableness, as men are able to bear it, Mark iv. 33; John xvi. 12. 5th, With meekness, gentleness, love, and all winning insinuations, verses 24, 25; 1 Thess. ii. 7. 6th, With courage and boldness, Jer. i. 17; Eph. vi. 19.

Verses 16–18. *But shun profane and vain babblings*—See on 1 Tim. i. 4; *for they will increase, &c.*—Though the evil of some of them may not immediately appear, and they may seem trifling rather than mischievous, they will advance unto more impiety; for the persons who so babble, having been prevailed on by Satan to quit the right way of experimental and practical godliness, will proceed not only to neglect, but even to deny, the most essential articles of the Christian faith. *And their word*—Their doctrine; *will eat as doth a canker*—Will destroy the souls of men, as a gangrene destroys the body, spreading itself further and further till the whole is

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A. M. 4070. 18 Who ^c concerning the truth have
A. D. 66. erred, ^e saying that the resurrection is
past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless ^h the foundation of God
standeth ⁴ sure, having this seal, The Lord
ⁱ knoweth them that are his. And, Let every

^f 1 Tim. vi. 21.—^g 1 Cor. xv. 12.—^h Matt. xxiv. 24; Rom.
viii. 35; 1 John ii. 19.

infected. *Of whom*—Of which sort of ungodly talkers; *are Hymeneus and Philetus*—The apostle mentions these two by name as empty babblers, whom the faithful were to resist, because their errors were of the most dangerous nature, as is evident from the account which the apostle gives of them in the next verse. *Of Hymeneus*, see on 1 Tim. i. 20; *Philetus* is mentioned nowhere else in Scripture. Probably these teachers denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, (see 1 John iv. 2,) consequently they denied the reality both of his death and resurrection. *Who concerning the truth have erred*—*Ἠροήσαυ, have gone wide of the mark*; have fallen into a most dangerous and destructive error, by their allegorical interpretations, explaining away one of the most fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and maintaining that the resurrection is past already—That is, that there is no other but a spiritual resurrection, from a death in sin to a life in righteousness, which consequently is already past with regard to all true Christians; and overthrow the faith of some—In a capital point, namely, concerning the resurrection of the body, and a future life of glory designed for it, as well as for the soul. By explaining the doctrine of the resurrection in a figurative sense, these false teachers probably endeavoured to recommend the gospel to the Greek philosophers, who considered the resurrection of the body not only as impossible in itself, but as a thing highly disadvantageous had it been possible.

Verse 19. *Nevertheless the foundation of God*—That is, the foundation of God's church, represented as a house, verse 20; 1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 5; in which God dwells, Eph. ii. 22; as a family inhabiting a house, Heb. iii. 3; as a temple, Eph. ii. 21; in which God displays his glory, communicates his blessings, receives the prayers, praises, and oblations of his people, and is worshipped in spirit and in truth. The foundation of this church is, 1st, The great truth spoken of verse 8, namely, the resurrection of Christ, the principal support of the whole fabric of Christianity, as manifesting Christ to be the Son of God, Rom. i. 4; confirming his doctrine, showing the efficacy of his atonement, Rom. iv. 25; obtaining for us the Holy Spirit, John xvi. 7; showing the necessity of our rising to a new life, Rom. vi. 4, 5; Eph. ii. 5, 6; proving that we shall rise at the great day; that immortality is before us; and that we ought, therefore, to set our affections on, and seek, the things above. 2d, The doctrine of our resurrection through Christ, which is a capital article of Christianity, (Heb. vi. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 19,) and all the other fundamental doctrines of the gospel connected

one that nameth the name of Christ
depart from iniquity. A. M. 4070.
A. D. 66.

20 ^k But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; ^l and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

^m Or, steady.—ⁿ Nah. i. 7; John x. 14, 27; Num. xvi. 5.
^o 1 Tim. iii. 15.—^p Rom. ix. 21.

with that of Christ's and his people's resurrection, termed, (Eph. ii. 20,) *the foundation of the apostles and prophets*; that is, the foundation laid by them. See the note there, and on 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16. 3d, Christ himself, in whom all these doctrines are yea and amen, is the foundation of his church, and of the knowledge, experience, and practice of every individual belonging to it, of which see the note on 1 Cor. iii. 11. This three-fold foundation standeth sure—Remains immovable and the same, throughout all ages. But who build on this foundation? Who are true members of this church, true worshippers in this spiritual temple? This we learn from the next clause. *Having this seal*—Or *inscription*, as the word *σφραγίς* often signifies, meaning the mark made by a seal, as well as the seal itself. So it signifies Rev. ix. 4; and the expression is here used with propriety, in allusion to the custom of engraving upon some stones laid in the foundation of buildings, the names of the persons by whom, and the purposes for which, the structure was raised. See Zech. iii. 9. And nothing can have a greater tendency to encourage the confidence and hope, and at the same time to engage the obedience of sincere Christians, than the double inscription here mentioned. One part of this is, *The Lord knoweth*—Or *acknowledgeth*; *them that are his*—Namely, those who truly turn to him in repentance, faith, and new obedience, or who *confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus*, even when their confessing him might be followed with the loss of all things, with imprisonment and martyrdom, and who *believe with their heart unto righteousness, that God hath raised him from the dead*, Rom. x. 9, 10. All such he assuredly knows, acknowledges, and will favour and protect as his. Dr. Whitby supposes that the apostle alludes here to Num. xvi. 5, *To-morrow the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy*; and that the clause has a peculiar reference to the apostles, in opposition to heretical teachers. Let it be observed, however, that all these will manifest that they are the Lord's not merely by *naming the name of Christ*—Or making a profession of Christianity; but by *departing from iniquity*—Without which they would not be worthy of being accounted members even of the visible church, as they would show themselves visibly, or evidently, to be of the devil, by doing his works, John viii. 4; 1 John iii. 8.

Verses 20, 21. *But in a great house*—Such as the Christian Church soon became, taking in multitudes of Gentiles in all parts of Asia, Macedonia, Greece, and Italy, and such as it has long been, and now is; *there are not only vessels of gold and silver*—De-

A. M. 4070. 21 ^m If a man therefore purge him-
A. D. 66. self from these, he shall be a vessel
unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the mas-
ter's use, *and* ⁿ prepared unto every good
work.

22 Flee also youthful lusts : but ^o follow right-
eousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that
^p call on the Lord ^q out of a pure heart.

23 But ^r foolish and unlearned questions

^m Isaiah lii. 11.—ⁿ Chapter iii. 17; Titus iii. 1.—^o 1
Timothy vi. 11.—^p Acts ix. 14; 1 Corinthians i. 2.—^q 1
Timothy i. 5; iv. 12.

signed for the most honourable uses; *but of wood
and of earth*—Intended for uses less honourable.
The apostle alludes to the houses of nobles, princes,
and other great persons, in which are usually found
vessels of different materials, and for various uses.
Thus, in the visible church, there always have been,
are, and will be, persons of different gifts or abilities,
and intended for different offices, as is also repre-
sented where the apostle compares the members of
the church of Christ to the different members of the
human body, as Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12–27,
and elsewhere. *And some to honour, and some to
dishonour*—That is, 1st, Some designed and quali-
fied for more honourable offices than others; and,
2d, Some whose holy tempers and practices are an
honour to the religion they profess; and others who,
if by departing from outward iniquity they obtain a
name and place among the people of God, and are
reckoned members of the visible church, yet, by
their hypocrisy, formality, lukewarmness, and ne-
gligence, are so far from adorning the doctrine of God
their Saviour, or from being an honour to the cause
of Christ, that they are a disgrace to it. *But if a
man purge himself from these*—1st, By making ap-
plication by faith to Christ's cleansing blood, 1 John
i. 7; 2d, By praying for and receiving God's purify-
ing Spirit, Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27; 1 Pet. i. 2; 3d, By
receiving and obeying the purifying word, John xv.
3; 1 Pet. i. 23; 4th, By exercising purifying faith,
Acts. xv. 9; and, 5th, By self-denial and mortification
Rom. viii. 13; *he shall be a vessel unto honour*—
He shall be a credit to the religion of Jesus; *sancti-
fied*—That is, separated from sin and sinners, and
dedicated to God in heart and life; *meet for the
master's use*—For the service of Christ; *prepared
unto*—And employed in; *every good work*—Which he
is called to perform. Add to this, not only may those
who are vessels unto dishonour in the bad sense,
and a reproach to the Christian cause, become an
honour to it by their vital piety and active virtue;
out those whose gifts are inferior, and who are like
vessels of wood and earth, only fit for lower offices
in the church, may, by properly exercising their gifts
and graces, so improve them as to become qualified
for higher and more useful offices; and be, as it
were, vessels of silver and gold. For to him that
hath, that makes a right use of, and improves what
he hath, shall more be given, Matt. xiii. 12. Still,

b

avoid, knowing that they do gender A. M. 4070.
strifes. A. D. 66.

24 And ^s the servant of the Lord must not
strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, ^t apt to
teach, ^u patient;

25 ^v In meekness instructing those that op-
pose themselves; ^w if God peradventure will
give them repentance ^x to the acknowledging
of the truth;

^s 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; vi. 4; Verse 16; Tit. iii. 9.—^t Tit.
iii. 2.—^u 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3.—^v Or, *forbearing*.—^w Gal. vi. 1.
^x Acts viii. 22.—^y 1 Tim. ii. 4; Chap. iii. 7.

however, they will be but vessels; empty in them-
selves, and useless, if not filled by, and employed
for, the Lord.

Versc 22. *Flee youthful lusts*—Or desires, namely,
those peculiarly incident to youth; that is, shun all
occasions of exciting or gratifying them, whether,
on the one hand, the love of sensual pleasure and the
inclination to gratify the appetites and senses of the
body, or, on the other, pride, ambition, vain-glory,
rashness, contention, obstinacy; vices to which
young persons are peculiarly obnoxious; and which
some who are free from sensual lusts, are at little
pains to avoid; *but follow, &c.*—That is, instead of
making provision for these carnal dispositions, or
yielding to their motions when they arise, pursue,
with the greatest ardour and intenseness of mind,
and with all diligence and constancy, *righteousness*
—In all its branches; every part of thy duty toward
God and man; *faith*—Or fidelity; *charity*—That is,
love; *peace with them that call on the Lord, &c.*—
Especially with all the true people of God.

Verses 23–25. *But foolish and unlearned questions*
—Or unimportant subjects of inquiry and debate;
avoid, knowing that they gender strifes—Or conten-
tions in the church; and certainly it is a most im-
portant part of the duty of a Christian minister to
guard against all occasions of offence and mischief.
For the servant of the Lord must not strive—Or
contend eagerly and passionately, as do the vain
wranglers spoken of in the preceding verse; *but
be gentle*—Or mild, forbearing, and long-suffering;
unto all men; apt to teach—Chiefly by patience and
unwearied assiduity. *In meekness*—Of which he
has always need; *instructing those who oppose
themselves*—Or who set themselves in opposition to
the doctrines of the gospel; *if peradventure*—Or by
any means; *God may give them repentance to the
acknowledgment*—The belief and profession; *of the
truth*—In these verses, “the apostle seems to have
had Christ's example as a teacher in his eye, pro-
posing it as a model to all who are employed in
teaching. The virtues here mentioned, our Lord
generally exercised in teaching. Yet, on some occa-
sions, he departed from his usual mildness, and with
great severity reproved notorious sinners; such as
the scribes and Pharisees. In the same manner,
the prophets and apostles used strong speech in
checking obstinate offenders; while those who

A. M. 4070. 26 And *that* they may ⁶ recover
A. D. 66. themselves ² out of the snare of the

⁶ Gr. *awake*.—² 1 Tim. iii. 7.

showed any candour and honesty in their opposition to the truth, they instructed with the greatest meekness.”—Macknight. *That they may recover themselves*—Or rather, *may awake*, and deliver themselves; *out of the snare of the devil*—In which they have lain sleeping, and, as it were, intoxicated. “In order to understand this beautiful image,” says Doddridge, “it is proper to observe, that the word *αναψωσιν* properly signifies to *awake* from a deep sleep, or from a fit of intoxication, and refers to an artifice of fowlers to scatter seeds impregnated with some drugs intended to lay birds asleep, that they

devil, who are ⁷ taken captive by him A. M. 4070.
at his will. A. D. 66.

⁷ Gr. *taken alive*.

may draw the net over them with the greater security.” *Who are taken captive by him*—Greek, *εξωρημενοι*, *caught alive*. The word denotes the action of a fisher, or hunter, who takes his prey alive in order to kill it; which is properly applied to Satan’s insnaring men in order to destroy them. And the snares in which he takes them are those prejudices, errors, lusts, and vices, in which he entangles, and by which he detains them his captives, in the most shameful bondage, danger, and misery, while they have been dreaming, perhaps, of liberty and happiness.

CHAPTER III.

in this chapter the apostle (1.) Foretels again the great departure from practical godliness which should prevail in the Christian world, and the enemies to the truth and holiness of the gospel which should arise in it, 1–9. (2.) He proposes his own example for Timothy’s imitation, in opposition to them, 10–13. (3.) He exhorts him to adhere to the doctrines which he had learned from him and from the Scriptures, which, being inspired by God, are sufficient to direct men in the way of salvation, 14–17.

A. M. 4070. **THIS** know also, that ^a in the last
A. D. 66. days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be ^b lovers of their own

^a 1 Tim. iv. 1; Chap. iv. 3.—^b Phil. ii. 21.—^c 2 Pet. ii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. The apostle, at the close of the preceding chapter, having intimated to Timothy that false teachers did and would arise in the church, he, in the beginning of this chapter, foretels that in future times, through the pernicious influence of corrupt doctrines propagated by these teachers, many professing Christians, and, among the rest, the false teachers themselves, would become so wicked, that it would become dangerous to the truly pious to live among them. As if he had said, It is the more necessary to urge thee, as I do, to use every precaution and every effort which may tend to preserve the purity and honour of the Christian Church, since, after all we can do for this purpose, sad scenes will open in it. *This know also*—Besides what I formerly told thee concerning the apostacy, (1 Tim. iv. 1,) *that in the last, or latter days*—That is, under the gospel dispensation, called the latter days, as being intended to wind up the economy of providence, and to remain in full force even to the end of the world: *perilous times shall come*—In which it will be difficult for the faithful followers of Jesus to discharge their consciences, and yet, at the same time, to maintain their safety. *For men*—Even within the pale of the outward church, *will be*—In great numbers, and to a higher degree than ever,

selfes, ^c covetous, ^d boasters, ^e proud, A. M. 4070.
^f blasphemers, ^g disobedient to parents, A. D. 66.
unthankful, unholy,

^d Jude 16.—^e 1 Tim. vi. 4.—^f 1 Tim. i. 20.—^g Rom. i. 30.

lovers of themselves—Only, (the first root of evil,) not of God and their neighbours. “The vices mentioned in this and the two following verses have always existed in the world. But their being spoken of here as characteristic of the latter days, implies that, besides being common in these days, they would be openly avowed and defended. Accordingly, it is well known, the clergy of the Romish Church have defended all the enormities mentioned by the apostle, encouraged the people by their false doctrine to commit them, and gone before them in the practice of them.” *Covetous*—*φιλαργυροι*, *lovers of money*, (the second root of evil,) so as to be impelled to the basest practices, by the hopes of obtaining it. The Catholic clergy, it is well known, have carried their love of money to such a height, that they pretend to sell heaven for money, even to the wickedest of men, under the name of indulgences; *boasters*—Of what they have, or are, or can do; *proud*—Thinking highly of themselves on these accounts; *blasphemers*—Of God, and revilers of their fellow-creatures; *disobedient to parents*—Notwithstanding all the obligations they are under to them. “In the language of the Hebrews, parents signified superiors of every denomination. The disobedience of the Romish clergy to princes and magistrates, and even their dethroning princes, is well known. It

A. M. 4070. 3^h Without natural affection,
A. D. 66. ⁱ truce-breakers, ¹ false accusers,
^k incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are
good,
4 ¹ Traitors, heady, high-minded, ^m lovers of
pleasures more than lovers of God;

^h Rom. i. 31.—ⁱ Rom. i. 31.—¹ Or, *make-bates*, Tit. ii. 3.
^k 2 Pet. iii. 3.—² 2 Pet. ii. 10.—^m Phil. iii. 19; 2 Pet. ii.

may also signify their encouraging children to become monks and nuns, contrary to the will of their parents." *Unthankful*—To other benefactors, and to God for the blessings of providence and grace; *unholy*—Though they profess themselves to be devoted to God, and consecrated to his service by the most solemn rites.

Verses 3-5. *Without natural affection*—Even to their own children, as well as of piety toward their parents. "The clergy of the Church of Rome, being forbidden to marry, can have neither wives nor children openly; and so are without the affections natural to mankind. At least they dare not avow their having these affections. It may likewise be meant of the laity, who shut up their female children in nunneries, on pretence of superior sanctity; but in reality from interested motives." *Truce*, or rather, *covenant breakers*—For this sin the Roman Catholic clergy have been remarkable, having not long ago professedly held it as a principle of religion, that no faith is to be kept with heretics; and having set subjects free from their oaths of allegiance to their princes. But *ασπονδοι* may signify persons who, being offended, will enter into no treaty of reconciliation, and so may be translated *implacable*, as in Rom. i. 31. *False accusers*—Or *slanderers*, as *διδολοι* may be properly rendered; in which, as the word implies, they will imitate that diabolical malignity which renders the great enemy of mankind so justly odious. Thus the Romish clergy have imputed all manner of crimes to those who have resisted their corruptions. *Incontinent*—Or *intemperate* in their pleasures. *Fierce*—Against their opposers, and in their resentments cruel in their revenge. *Despisers of those that are good*—That is, of those who maintain the truth, and are real followers of Christ. Or, as *αφιλαθοι* may be translated, *without love to goodness, or good men*. *Traitors*—To those that place the greatest confidence in them; yea, such base traitors as to give up their brethren into the hands of persecutors, and even their nearest relations, who oppose their corrupt practices, to death. *Heady*—Rash in enterprising things which can only issue in the disturbance of society, or the ruin of those that undertake them. *High-minded*—Puffed up with such insolence and self-sufficiency as to despise any remonstrance which can be made to bring them to a wiser and more decent conduct. *Lovers of pleasure*—Namely, sensual pleasure, rather than lovers of God—And who will therefore sacrifice all considerations of religion to the gratification of their appetites. Indeed, the love of pleasure naturally extinguishes all sense of God

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5 Having a form of godliness, but A. M. 4070.
^a denying the power thereof: ^o from A. D. 66.
such turn away.

6 For ^p of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts;

13, &c.; Jude 4, 19.—¹ 1 Tim. v. 8; Tit. i. 16.—² 2 Thess. iii. 6; 1 Tim. vi. 5.—^p Matt. xxiii. 14; Tit. i. 11.

and love to him. "It is observable, that the apostle's description begins with mentioning extreme selfishness as the root, and concludes with the excessive love of sensual pleasure as the end, of all the corruptions that were to prevail in the latter times. Hence we may learn what a pernicious thing the excessive love of sensual pleasure is! It has been the source of those monstrous perversions of religion which took place among Christians in the dark ages. And, governed by it, many, in every age, destroy their health, their fortune, their reputation, the comfort of their families, and every thing valuable in life, for the sake of gratifying their appetites."—Macknight. *Having a form*—Or appearance; *of godliness*—In observing with exactness the rituals and external ordinances of religion, but not regarding, nay, even *denying* and blaspheming the inward power and reality of it. A prediction too evidently fulfilled even at this day, and that not only among the Papists. *From such*—Even from all in whom thou discernest a temper like that here described; *turn away*—Avoid all intimacy with them, lest they should avail themselves of it as an advantage for doing further mischief. Let it therefore evidently appear that thou givest them no countenance. Or, as some would render the original expression, *ταυτας αποτρεψ*, *these turn away*; that is, turn out of the church all teachers who have any resemblance to the persons I have mentioned. For they are introducing the corruptions which, in after times, their successors will carry to the height I have described.

Verses 6, 7. *For, &c.*—As if he had said, There is need to watch against such, because there are some of them already in the church; *for of this sort* are those artful deceivers who *creep into houses*—Insinuate themselves into families, and, having the appearance of godliness, *lead captive silly women*—Gain such influence over women of low rank and mean understandings as to obtain the direction of their consciences and purses; women who, whatever pretences they may make to sanctity, *are laden with sins*, and *led away with divers lusts*—Or desires, which these seducers know how to flatter, so as to make such persons their own property. "This, with the two subsequent verses, is thought by some a prophetic description of the practices of the Romish monks and friars in the dark ages, who, by hypocritical pretensions to extraordinary sanctity, and by auricular confession and other wicked arts, deluded and corrupted their female votaries. But practices similar to those began very early in the church, and, by a gradual progress, were at length, under the Romish hierarchy, formed into a regular system of

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A. M. 4070. 7 Ever learning, and never able
A. D. 66. ^a to come to the knowledge of the
truth.

8 ^r Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood
Moses, so do these also resist the truth: ^a men
of corrupt minds, ^a reprobate² concerning the
faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their

^a 1 Tim. ii. 4.—Exod. vii. 11.—1 Tim. vi. 5.—Rom. i. 28; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Tit. i. 16.—^r Or, of no judgment.—² Ex. vii. 12; viii. 18; ix. 11.—Phil. ii. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 6.

deceit. We may therefore suppose, that as in the prophecies which foretel the political state of the world, so in those concerning the apostacy, in which its religious state is represented the general course of things through a succession of ages is foretold, rather than the state of things in any particular age. This will be allowed, when it is considered that not the rise only, but the progress and downfall of the apostacy is foretold in these prophecies. So that their subject being a series of things which were to happen throughout a long course of years, and which were gradually to produce a widely-extended and confirmed state of corruption in the church, there is no reason for limiting their fulfilment to any particular period.—Macknight. *Ever learning—Pretending to hear with great eagerness, and, it may be, charmed with every appearance of fervour and novelty in their teachers, but, being tossed about with every wind of doctrine, they are never able to come to the experimental and practical knowledge of the truth—As it is in Jesus, or to attain any fixed and steady principles of religion.*

Verses 8, 9. *Now as Jannes and Jambres—Some ancient writers speak of these persons as the chief of Pharaoh's magicians, whose names, though not recorded by Moses, yet being handed down by tradition, are preserved in Jonathan's Chaldee Paraphrase on Exod. vii. 11; withstood Moses—We learn from Exod. vii. 11, 22, that Pharaoh's magicians imitated three of Moses's miracles by their enchantments; that is, by repeating a form of words known only to themselves, in which they invoked certain demons, and, as they fancied, constrained them to do the things desired. By thus pretending to work miracles equal to those of Moses, they resisted him in his attempts to persuade Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. So these also resist the truth—That is, the true and genuine gospel; namely, as he seems to mean, by false miracles. In the early ages of Christianity the heretical teachers are said to have been much addicted to the study of magic, and that some of the Gnostics pretended to have the secret books of Zoroaster. Clemens. Alexand. Strom., lib. v. p. 104. And we know that in later times the monks and friars have been great pretenders to miracles. Hence (verse 13) they are called γοητες, magicians. Men of corrupt minds—Impure notions and wicked inclinations; reprobate, ἀδοκιμοι, disapproved, with respect to the faith—And worthy of being rejected*

fully shall be manifest unto all men, A. M. 4070
A. D. 66. ^a as theirs also was.

10 ^a But ^b thou hast fully known my doctrine,
manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering,
charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto
me ^r at Antioch, ^a at Iconium, ^a at Lystra;
what persecutions I endured: but ^b out of

^a Or, thou hast been a diligent follower of.—Acts xiii. 45, 50.
^r Acts xiv. 2, 5.—Acts xiv. 19, &c.—^b Psa. xxxiv. 19; 2 Cor. i. 10; Chap. iv. 7.

as enemies to it. Or, as some render the clause, *void of judgment as to the faith*; quite ignorant, as well as careless, of true spiritual religion. *But they shall proceed no further—Or, as Doddridge renders the clause, they shall not proceed much further, in these artifices, and in gaining proselytes; for their folly shall be made manifest unto all—Avoia, their want of understanding.* The apostle might justly call the errors of the authors of the apostacy, and the base arts by which they established their authority, *foolishness*, because, though they thought themselves superlatively wise in the methods which they devised for obtaining power and wealth, their doctrines and practices were as void of reason as are the imaginations and actions of fools. *As theirs also was—To the Israelites, and even to the Egyptians themselves.* That is, "the vile arts by which the corrupters of Christianity established their errors being discovered, their folly and wickedness shall be very plain to the people, even as the folly and wickedness of Pharaoh's magicians were made plain to the Israelites, by the stop which God put to their enchantments. And thus, the truth being set in a more clear light, the wisdom and righteousness of God, in permitting these corruptions to take place for a while, will be demonstrated." They who are acquainted with the history of the ancient heretics, and of the Romish Church, and of the Reformation, need not be informed how exactly this whole prophecy hath been fulfilled.

Verses 10-13. *But thou hast a better pattern to follow; for thou hast fully known my doctrine—In all the branches of it; manner of life—My conduct toward God, his people, and all men; purpose—The end and design of my ministry, namely, the glory of God in the salvation of men, and not any honour, interest, or advantage of my own; faith—My fidelity in the discharge of my duty; long-suffering—When treated in the most injurious manner; charity—Or love rather, to all men, saints or sinners, not excepting even mine enemies and persecutors; patience—Under great and long-continued trials; persecutions—From Jews and Gentiles; afflictions—Τοις παθημασιν, sufferings; at Antioch—In Pisidia; at Iconium, at Lystra—See the margin; what persecutions I endured—Timothy being a native of Lystra, and Paul's disciple and companion when the apostle was stoned in that city, and dragged out of the streets as one dead, he may have been present on*

A. M. 4070. *them* all the Lord delivered me. A. D. 66. 12 Yea, and ° all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 ^d But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But ° continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them* ;

° Psa. xxxiv. 19 ; Acts xiv. 22 ; Matt. xvi. 24 ; Josh. xvii. 14 ; 1 Cor. xv. 19 ; 1 Thess. iii. 3.—^d 2 Thess. ii. 11 ; 1 Tim. iv. 1 ; Chap. ii. 16.

that occasion, and even one of those who stood round him when he revived, Acts xiv. 20. *But out of them all the Lord delivered me*—And therefore be not thou discouraged if thou meetest with similar trials; *yea, and all that will live godly*—That will conduct themselves by the strict rules of piety prescribed in the gospel of Christ, not turning aside to the right hand or the left, and having *the Spirit of Christ*, without which we are not his; *shall suffer persecution*—More or less: there is no exception. Therefore count the cost, reader. Art thou resolved to live godly in Christ Jesus, out of whom there is no godliness? Hence we infer, that either the apostle was mistaken in making this assertion, or those who think they are religious, and are not persecuted in some shape or other, deceive themselves. *But evil men and seducers*—Though they may escape persecution, are yet in a more wretched state, for they provoke God to give them up to the lusts of their own hearts, and so *shall wax worse and worse*—More corrupt in heart and life, and more obstinate in their opposition to the gospel and its faithful ministers; *deceiving and being deceived*—He who has once begun to deceive others, is both the less likely to recover from his own errors, and the more ready to embrace the errors of other men.

Verses 14, 15. *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned*—That is, continue to believe and obey them; *and hast been assured of*—Namely, of their absolute certainty and infinite importance; *knowing of whom thou hast learned them*—And what convincing evidence I have given thee that I have been commissioned by God to attest and teach them. *And that from a child*—*ἄπο βρεφους*, from an infant; *thou hast known the Holy Scriptures*—Of the Old Testament, which only were extant when Timothy was an infant. The apostle calls them holy or sacred *Scriptures*, or writings, because they were given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, through the instrumentality of holy men, because they treat on holy things, contain holy doctrines, precepts, and promises, and are designed and calculated to make people holy. It must be remembered, that Timothy's mother and grandmother, being pious Jewish women, had trained him up from his childhood in the knowledge and belief of the writings of Moses and the prophets. And their care in thus instructing him, being commended by the apostle, shows us that

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15 And that from a child thou hast known ^f the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 ^a All scripture ^b is given by inspiration of God, ^b and ^b is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness :

17 ⁱ That the man of God may be perfect, ^k thoroughly ^k furnished unto all good works.

° Chap. i. 13 ; ii. 2.—^f John v. 39.—^a 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. ^b Romans xv. 4.—ⁱ 1 Timothv vi. 11.—^k Or, *perfected*. ^k Chap. ii. 21.

little children ought to be made acquainted with the Scriptures as early as possible; and that they may derive much benefit even from that imperfect knowledge of them, and of the principles of religion, which they are capable of attaining in their tenderest years. *Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation*—Even the Scriptures of the Old Testament were able to make men thus wise, *through faith in the Messiah*, before he came. How much more are those of the Old and New Testaments, taken together, able, in God's hand, to make us more abundantly wise unto salvation, through faith in him actually come, even such a salvation as was not known before Jesus was glorified? See 1 Pet. i. 10-12.

Verse 16. *All Scripture*—Or the whole Scripture, received by the Jewish Church, *θεοπνευστος*, is *inspired of God*—Respecting the inspiration of the books of the Old Testament, I find two opinions, says Dr. Benson, on this passage: "1st, That the writers of the several books had all the thoughts, and even the very words, suggested to them by the Spirit of God: and that they were the penmen of the Spirit to commit to writing just what he dictated. 2d, Others think with more latitude; and allow, indeed, that Moses received *the Law* from God; and that the prophets were inspired by the Spirit to foretel future events, which lay out of the reach of human foresight; but that they were left to express themselves in their own words and phrases, in which they give a faithful account of what the Spirit dictated to them, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. But as to what was handed down by authentic tradition, or the facts with which they themselves were thoroughly acquainted, they could, as faithful historians, commit them to writing, and that without any extraordinary inspiration. And their account, as far as our present copies are exact, may be depended upon as satisfactory and authentic." He adds, "If the Spirit presided, strengthened their memories, and preserved them from mistakes, this last opinion may not be much amiss." See *Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 7, 8, where the subject of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures is more particularly considered. *Is profitable for doctrine*—All the great and important doctrines of religion necessary to be known in order to salvation, are there taught, and that more clearly and fully than elsewhere; and with an authority and influence to be found in no

other writings. *For reproof*—Or *conviction*, as *ελεγχω* rather signifies; and that not only of error in judgment, but of sin in practice, and of condemnation and wrath due to us on account of sin; as also the depravity of our nature; of our weakness and inability to save ourselves, and of righteousness and salvation for us in Christ. *For correction*—Or *amendment*, as *επινορθωσει* may be properly rendered; showing us clearly, 1st, What evils in temper, word, or work, are to be avoided: 2d, What graces and virtues must be possessed and practised; furnishing us, at the same time, with all proper and needful motives to holiness of heart and life, showing us where our strength lies. *For instruction*—Or *training and building persons up, in righteousness*—Leading them on from one degree of piety and virtue to another, with a progress which will continually advance in proportion to the regard they pay to these divine writings. For the Spirit of God not only once inspired those who endited them, but continually inspires and supernaturally assists those that read them in humility, simplicity, and faith, with earnest prayer to the Father of lights for a right understanding of

them, and for inclination and power to reduce their contents to practice. *That the man of God*—Not only every Christian minister, or public teacher of religion, but every man devoted to the service of God; *may be perfect*—May come to *the measure of the stature of Christ's fulness*, Eph. iv. 13, &c., where see the note, and on Col. i. 28; or may stand complete in the whole will of God; *thoroughly furnished unto all good works*—Fitted for discharging every part of his duty. Thus we see that the apostle's encomium on the Jewish Scriptures consists of two parts; their divine inspiration, and their usefulness for illustrating the gospel revelation; so that a Christian minister, who rightly understands them, is thereby fitted for every part of his work. Our Lord also, on various occasions, bare testimony to the Jewish Scriptures, and to their connection with the gospel. What then are we to think of those teachers who are at so much pains to disjoin the Christian revelation from the Jewish, as if the latter were not of divine original, and had no connection with the gospel; and, instead of illustrating and confirming the gospel, were rather an encumbrance to it?

CHAPTER IV.

The apostle (1.) Most solemnly charges Timothy to be diligent in his ministrations, as an apostacy from the truth was advancing, 1-5. (2.) Encourages him, from his own approaching but glorious and happy martyrdom, 6-8. (3.) Desires him to come to Rome as quickly as possible, and bring Mark and certain things with him, as his brethren there were generally gone, or sent off from him, 9-13. (4.) Cautions against Alexander the coppersmith; complains of the brethren's deserting him at his first trial; but trusts that God, who had stood by him, would always preserve and support him, 14-18. (5.) Concludes with salutations and his usual benediction, 19-22.

A. M. 4070. I ^a CHARGE thee therefore before
A. D. 66. God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,
b who shall judge the quick and the dead at
his appearing and his kingdom;

^a 1 Tim. v. 21; vi. 13; Chap. ii. 14.—^b Acts x. 42.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1-4. Having, in the preceding chapter, explained to Timothy the duties of his office, as an evangelist, the apostle now proceeds solemnly to charge him, in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be diligent and faithful in all the duties of the ministry; by preaching the true doctrine, confuting gainsayers, rebuking sinners, and exhorting both the teachers and people under his care to conduct themselves properly in every respect. His words are peculiarly solemn. *I charge thee, therefore*—This is an inference drawn from the whole preceding chapter; *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ*—Now and always present with us, observing our whole behaviour; *who shall judge the quick and the dead*—Bringing every work into judgment with every secret thing, and rendering unto every man according to his deeds, Rom. ii. 6; *at his appearing and his kingdom*—That is, at his coming, when he shall most manifestly exercise his kingly and judicial

2 Preach the word; be instant A. M. 4070.
in season, out of season; reprove, A. D. 66.
c rebuke, d exhort with all long-suffering and
doctrine.

^c 1 Tim. v. 20; Tit. i. 13; ii. 15.—^d 1 Tim. iv. 13.

power in the sight of all intelligent beings. *Preach the word*—The pure gospel doctrine, in all its branches. *Be instant*—Impertunate, pressing; insist on and urge the great truths and duties of the religion of Jesus; *in season, out of season*—That is, continually, at all times and places. The Greek, *εκαίρως, ακαίρως*, may be rendered, *when there is a good opportunity, and when there is no opportunity*; or, not only when a fair occasion is given, but even when there is none, one must be made. *Reprove*—*Ελεγξον*, convince the consciences of men, and endeavour to reclaim them from their erroneous principles and practices; *rebuke*—Them, for their impieties and immoralities, without fearing the face of any man; and exhort to zeal and diligence in the pursuit of every grace, and the performance of every duty; *with all long-suffering*—Though thou mayest not immediately see the desired success; *and doctrine*—That is, still continue to warn and teach. And the rather seize the present opportunity with

A. M. 4070. 3 ° For the time will come, when
A. D. 66. they will not endure 'sound doctrine;

° but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and ^b shall be turned unto fables.

5 * But watch thou in all things, ¹ endure afflictions, do the work of ^h an evangelist, ¹ make full proof of thy ministry.

6 For ¹ I am now ready to be offered, and

* Chap. iii. 1.—¹ 1 Tim. i. 10.—^h Chap. iii. 6.—¹ 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; Tit. i. 14.—* St. Luke Evangelist, epistle, verse 5 to verse 16.—¹ Chap. i. 8; ii. 3.—¹ Acts xxi. 8; Eph. iv. 11.

all earnestness; *for the time will come*—And is fast approaching; *when they*—Even the professors of Christianity; *will not endure sound doctrine*—Wholesome, salutary, healing doctrine—Doctrine calculated to save them from their errors and sins, and to heal their spiritual disorders. *But after their own lusts*—According to their own desires; *shall they heap to themselves teachers*—As smooth as they can wish; *having itching ears*—Fond of novelty and variety; which disposition the number of new teachers, as well as their empty, soft, or philosophical discourses will please. Such teachers and such hearers seldom are much concerned with what is strict and searching, or calculated to excite them to aspire after a conformity to the Lord Jesus. Not enduring sound doctrine, they will reject the sound preachers, and gather together all that suit their own taste. *And*—So greatly will their minds be perverted, that *they shall turn away their ears from the truth*—From the true, genuine doctrine of the gospel; *and be turned unto fables*—Unto vain, idle stories, and uncertain opinions and traditions. See on 1 Tim. i. 4.

Verses 5-8. *But watch thou*—Both over thyself and flock, and withstand the beginnings of all these corruptions; let thy mind be awake and watchful; *in all things*—Whatever thou art doing, let this be thy earnest, constant, persevering exercise. Observe, reader, the Scripture *watching* or *waiting* implies steadfast faith, patient hope, labouring love, unceasing prayer; yea, the mighty exertion of all the affections of the soul that a man is capable of: *endure afflictions*—Or *adversity*, as *κακοπαθησον* signifies. Expect ill-treatment from the enemies of the gospel, and other trials, and bear them patiently. *Do the work of an evangelist*—Which was next to that of an apostle. *Make full proof of thy ministry*—So perform all the duties of thy calling, as fully to approve thyself to be a faithful minister of Christ. *For, &c.*—And the rather do these things, considering how soon the world will lose whatever advantage it may now receive from my personal labours. *For I am now ready to be offered*—Or *poured out*, as *σπενδομαι* means, as a libation upon God's altar. See on Phil. ii. 17. *And the time of my departure is at hand*—So undoubtedly God had shown him. *I have fought*

the time of ^a my departure is at A. M. 4070.
A. D. 66. hand.

7 ° I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me ° a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me ° at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

¹ Or, *fulfil*, Rom. xv. 19; Col. i. 25; iv. 17.—¹ Phil. ii. 17. ^a Phil. i. 23; 2 Pet. i. 14.—¹ 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25; Phil. iii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 12; Heb. xii. 1.—¹ 1 Cor. ix. 25; James i. 12; Rev. ii. 10.—¹ Chap. i. 12.

α, rather *the, good fight*—Greek, *τον αγωνα τον καλον ηγωνισμαι*, *I have contended the good contention*; or, as Macknight renders it, *I have combated the good combat*. *I have finished my course*—Of duty and of suffering: or, *I have finished the race*; for he likens his labour in the gospel not only to fighting and wrestling, but also to a race, which was likewise one of the Olympic exercises. *I have kept the faith*—Committed to my trust, and with the strictest fidelity have endeavoured to preserve it free from all additions and corruptions. *Henceforth*—*λοιπον*, *what remains*; *there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness*—Namely, of that righteousness which God has imputed to me, and wrought in me, and enabled me to practise. Having compared his labours as an apostle to the exertions of the combatants, wrestlers, and racers, in the Grecian games, he represents his reward under the idea of a crown, because a crown was the reward bestowed on the victors in those exercises. It was not, however, a crown of leaves like theirs, but of righteousness, which he expected Christ to bestow on him, counting his faith to him for righteousness, and rewarding him for all the fruits brought forth by this righteousness. See on Phil. i. 11. *Which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day*—This text evidently proves, that the great and most glorious reward of faithful Christians is referred to the day of general judgment. But, as Doddridge observes, "it would be very precarious to argue from hence, that there shall be no prelibation and anticipation of this happiness in a separate state. And when the many texts, which have been so often urged in proof of that intermediate happiness, are considered, it is surprising that any stress should be laid on the objection which has been drawn from such passages as this." *And not to me only*—This increases the joy of Paul, and encourages Timothy; *but to all that love his appearing*—Which only a true Christian can do. Many of those Paul himself had gained, and he rejoiced to think, that through his having gained them, they should receive an unutterable and eternal reward of felicity and glory.

Verses 9-11. *Do thy diligence*—Endeavour by all means; *to come shortly unto me*—The apostle, now about to leave the world, wished to enjoy Timothy's

A. M. 4070. 10 For ^a Demas hath forsaken me, A. D. 66. ^r having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 ^a Only ^a Luke is with me. Take ^a Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And ^a Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and

^a Col. iv. 15; Philem. 24.—^r 1 John ii. 15.—^r Chapter i. 15.—^r Col. iv. 14; Philem. 24.—^r Acts xii. 25; xv. 37; Col. iv. 10.—^r Acts xx. 4; Eph. vi. 12; Col. iv. 7; Tit. iii. 12.

company and conversation for a little while, both that that evangelist might comfort him, and might be comforted and strengthened by him, so that he might suffer death courageously when called to do so. Accordingly, it is said by some, that he actually suffered martyrdom at Ephesus. *For, &c.*—As if he had said, I have the more need of thy company and assistance, because I have been deserted by some who ought to have acted in a very different manner: *Demas*—Once my fellow-labourer, (Philem. 24,) *hath forsaken me*—By calling the departure of Demas to Thessalonica a forsaking him, the apostle intimates that he departed without his permission. *Having loved this present world*—And gone where his secular views invited him. *Crescens*—Probably a preacher also, is gone with my consent to Galatia. *Titus to Dalmatia*—Having now left Crete. These either went with him to Rome, or visited him there. *Only Luke*—Of my fellow-labourers; *is with me*—For, from verse 21, where the salutations of some of the Roman brethren by name are mentioned, it appears that the apostle had many friends still in Rome, members of the church there, with whom he was allowed to have some intercourse, but his chief support was, that God was with him. Of the character of Luke, see on Col. iv. 14, and the preface to his gospel. *Take Mark and bring him*—Who, though he once departed from the work, is now profitable to me for the ministry—Mark, mentioned in this passage, is by some thought to be a different person from the writer of the gospel which bears his name.

Verse 13. *The cloak*—Perhaps the toga which belonged to him as a Roman citizen, or an upper garment, which might be needful as winter came on. The word *φαίλον*, however, so rendered, also signifies a bag, in which sense the Syriac translator understood it, paraphrasing the expression, a bag containing books; or a kind of portmanteau, the contents of which might be more important than the thing itself. *Which I left at Troas with Carpus*—Who was probably his host there; *when thou comest bring with thee, and the books, especially the parchments*—What the books here referred to were, commentators have not attempted to conjecture: but Dr. Benson fancies the parchments were the letters which he received from the churches, and the autographs of his own letters to the churches. For that

the books, *but* especially the parchments. A. M. 4070. A. D. 66.

14 ^r Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: ^a the Lord reward him according to his works:

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood ² our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, ^a but all *men* forsook me: ^b *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge.

^r Acts xix. 33; 1 Tim. i. 20.—^r 2 Sam. iii. 39; Psa. xxviii. 4; Rev. xviii. 6.—^r Or, *our preachings*.—^r Chap. i. 15.—^b Acts vii. 60.

he employed persons to transcribe his letters is probable from Rom. xvi. 22, where the name of the amanuensis of that epistle is inserted. In those fair copies the apostle wrote the salutations with his own hand, (1 Cor. xvi. 21; Gal. vi. 11; Col. iv. 18; 2 Thess. iii. 17,) and thereby authenticated them as his letters.

Verses 14, 15. *Alexander the coppersmith*—Or brasier; *did me much evil*—This seems to have been the person mentioned 1 Tim. i. 20: probably he was one of the Judaizing teachers, who violently opposed the true doctrine of the gospel. *The Lord reward him*—The Alexandrian, and six other MSS., the Syriac and the Vulgate versions, and some of the Fathers, read here, *αποδοσει, the Lord will reward him*: and it is probable the words ought to be considered as spoken prophetically. At least, as Doddridge observes, “what we know of Paul’s character must lead us to conclude, that if he did not mean the words as a mere prediction, he did not, however, wish evil to him as evil, but only that he might be so animadverted upon as to prevent the contagion of his bad example from spreading in the church, and to bring him to repentance and reformation, that so he might be preserved from final destruction.” *Of whom be thou ware also*—Be thou upon thy guard wherever thou happenest to meet with him; *for he hath greatly withstood our words*—Hath used every means in his power to prevent the progress and advancement of the true gospel.

Verse 16. *At my first answer*—*ἀπολογία, apology, or defence*, before the emperor, or, as is more generally thought, the prefect of the city in his absence; *no man*—None of the Christians here at Rome; *stood*—Appeared in court; *with me, but all*—Either through treachery or cowardice; *forsook me*—“Many circumstances make it astonishing that Paul should have been deserted by the Christians at Rome in this extremity. When he wrote his epistle to the church there, which must have been almost ten years before this, he speaks of their faith as celebrated through the world, Rom. i. 8. He salutes a vast number of illustrious persons by name, and mentions many of them as his particular friends, chap. xvi. 3–15; and we may assure ourselves that during the two years he spent there in his hired house, when access was granted to all that desired it, the

A. M. 4070. 17 ° Notwithstanding, the Lord
A. D. 66. stood with me, and strengthened
me; ^d that by me the preaching might be
fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might
hear: and I was delivered ° out of the mouth
of the lion.

° Matt. x. 19; Acts xxiii. 11; xxvii. 23.—^d Acts ix. 15; xxvi.
17, 18; Eph. iii. 8.—° Psa. xxii. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 9.

number, and probably the zeal of the Christian converts would be greatly increased, as indeed he expressly assures the Philippians that it was, and that some of Cesar's palaces were added to them, Phil. i. 12; iv. 22." How then did it happen that he was thus forsaken? The true answer seems to be, that the cruel persecution which Nero had raised against the Christians at Rome, (in which they were worried in the skins of wild beasts, wrapped up in pitched clothes, and then chained to stakes, and set on fire to give light in the streets by night,) had taken place before this; and it is probable that many of the excellent persons above mentioned had suffered death for their religion; and that others, according to our Lord's advice, had retired to a distance from Rome, while some were so terrified that they concealed themselves; or at least had not courage to appear with him before the tribunal. For these last mentioned the apostle prays, *May it not be laid to their charge*—He was sensible of the danger to which his friends would have exposed themselves by appearing with him at his trial; he knew likewise the infirmity of human nature; and therefore he made great allowance for their yielding in such circumstances, and prayed that they might be forgiven, as Christ prayed his Father to forgive those who crucified him.

Verses 17, 18. *Notwithstanding*—I was not left entirely destitute; for, though men forsook me, *the Lord stood with me*—According to his promise, Luke xxi. 15; and *strengthened me*—With that inward fortitude of mind which no human support could have inspired; *that by me the preaching*—The gospel which we preach; *might be fully known*—Πληροφορηθη, literally, *might be carried with a full sail*; that is, fully and boldly declared. That the apostle could thus courageously bear witness to the gospel when all his friends forsook him, and his enemies were so fiercely raging against him, was a glorious testimony to the honour of Christianity. *And that all the Gentiles might hear*—This implies that he made his defence in a manner which he was persuaded would be taken notice of and reported abroad, much to the honour of that sacred cause which was dearer to him than his life. *And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion*—By the lion Nero is generally thought to be meant, or rather his prefect, Helius Cesarianus, to whom Nero committed the government of the city in his absence, with power to put whomsoever he pleased to death. But the expression may be understood proverbially, as denoting an escape from the greatest danger; in

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18 ' And the Lord shall deliver me A. M. 4070.
from every evil work, and will pre- A. D. 66.
serve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom; ^{to} whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute ^b Prisca and Aquila, and ⁱ the household of Onesiphorus.

^f Psa. cxxi. 7.—^g Rom. xi. 36; Gal. i. 5; Heb. xiii. 21.
^h Acts xviii. 2; Rom. xvi. 3.—ⁱ 2 Tim. i. 16.

which sense it is used Psa. xxii. 21. *And the Lord*—Whose power and faithfulness are always the same; *shall deliver me from every evil work*—From all sin, and especially from doing any thing inconsistent with the honour of the gospel, and the salvation of my own soul; which is of far greater consequence than delivering me from death. *And preserve me to his heavenly kingdom*—An infinitely better kingdom than that of Nero.

Verses 19–22. *Salute Prisca*—This word is a contraction of the name Priscilla; or, as Estius supposes, Priscilla may be the diminutive of Prisca. *Erastus abode at Corinth*—When I came from thence, being chamberlain of the city, Rom. xvi. 23. He is likewise mentioned, Acts xix. 22, as one who administered to Paul. *But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick*—It has been very justly argued from this text, that a power of working miracles did not always reside in the apostles; and indeed if it had, one can hardly imagine that any good and useful man would have been sick and died under their notice; which would have been quite inconsistent with the scheme of Providence. Timothy's frequent infirmities afford a further argument to the same purpose. *Do thy diligence to come before winter*—Sailing being then dangerous. Some, comparing Heb. xiii. 23 with this text, have concluded that Timothy did come, and was seized at Rome, and confined longer than Paul himself. But it seems much more probable that the epistle to the Hebrews was written during Paul's first imprisonment, and consequently several years before this. *Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens*—Though these persons, like the other Roman brethren, did not appear with the apostle at his first answer, they did not flee from the city, nor desert him altogether; but visited him in his prison, and desired him to send their salutation to Timothy. Linus is said, by some of the ancients, to have been the first bishop of Rome, after the apostles Paul and Peter. But Theodoret speaks of this only as a tradition. Claudia is said to have been a British lady, whom Paul was the instrument of converting, and that she first carried the gospel into Britain. But of this there is no evidence. According to tradition, the Apostle Peter was now in Rome, and suffered martyrdom at the same time with St. Paul. But seeing Paul says, verse 11, *Only Luke is with me*, and verse 16, *At my first answer no one appeared with me*; also, seeing Peter's salutation was not sent to Timothy, his being in Rome at the time this letter was written may justly be doubted. If he suffered martyrdom along

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A. M. 4070. 20 * Erastus abode at Corinth: but
A. D. 66. 1 Trophimus have I left at Miletum
sick.

21 = Do thy diligence to come before winter.
Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus,
and Claudia, and all the brethren.

* Acts xix. 22; Rom. xvi. 23.—† Acts xx. 4; xxi. 29.

with Paul, as the ancients affirm, he must have
come to Rome after Paul wrote his second letter
to Timothy. *Grace be with you*—This being a
benediction distinct from the one bestowed on Ti-

22 = The Lord Jesus Christ be with A. M. 4070.
thy spirit. Grace be with you. A. D. 66.
Amen.

† The second *epistle* unto Timotheus, ordained the
first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was
written from Rome, when Paul was brought be-
fore Nero the second time.

= Verse 9.—= Gal. vi. 18; Philem. 25.

mothy in the preceding clause, it must have been
designed for such of the brethren where Timothy
was, as maintained the truth of the gospel in pu-
rity.

PREFACE
TO THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TITUS.

TITUS was originally a Gentile, and converted to Christianity by St. Paul, as appears from the apostle's calling him, (chap. i. 4,) "his own son after," or according to, "the common faith;" though the particular time of his conversion cannot be ascertained. The earliest account which we find of him (for Luke does not once mention his name in the Acts) is in Gal. ii. 1, where the apostle informs us he took him with him from Antioch to Jerusalem, to attend the council that was held there, to consider of the question concerning the circumcision of the converted Gentiles, fourteen years after Paul's own conversion. At which time, it appears, the Judaizers in Jerusalem urged the necessity of having Titus circumcised; but Paul would not suffer him to submit to that rite, that he might not seem to abridge the liberty of the Gentile converts. Some years after this, the apostle sent him to Corinth, as appears from 2 Cor. ii. 13, where his piety and disinterested and zealous preaching of the gospel procured him a kind reception. Coming from thence to Paul, in Macedonia, he brought him such intelligence, concerning the state of the Corinthian church, as gave him the highest satisfaction. And, as Titus had expressed a particular regard for the Corinthians, the apostle thought proper to send him back again to them, that he might edify them by the exercise of his ministry among them, and excite them to finish, without delay, the collection for the poor saints in Judea, which they had begun during Titus's former visit to them, 2 Cor. vii. 6, 15; viii. 6, 16, 17; xii. 18. The apostle, it appears, at the same time made him the bearer of his second epistle to them. After this, we hear no more mention of him till he is spoken of, in this epistle, as having been with Paul in Crete, where, it appears, the apostle had preached the gospel with great success; (probably after his first, and before his second, imprisonment at Rome;) Christian churches having been formed in several cities of that island. To which success, it is probable, the labours of Titus had contributed no little, and that he was therefore much beloved by, and had great authority over, the new converts there. On this account, and also because the apostle knew his fidelity and ability for such an office, not judging it proper to remain in the island himself, he left Titus there to superintend these churches, and regulate their affairs. This circumstance shows the high esteem and great affection which the apostle had for Titus; as does also the manner in which he speaks of his discharging the commission he gave him to the Corinthians, and his terming him his "brother, partner, and fellow-helper," in his second epistle to the members of that church, chap. ii. 13; viii. 23.

Although learned men have thought it probable that this epistle was written during the apostle's last progress through the Asiatic churches, some time before his second imprisonment at Rome, and, consequently, that it was the last of his epistles, except the second to Timothy; yet nothing can be certainly determined, either as to its date or the place from which it was sent; for, though the spurious postscript supposes it to have been written from Nicopolis, yet the contrary is plainly intimated, chap. iii. 12: as the apostle does not say, I propose to winter "here," (which would have been most natural, if he had resided there when he was writing,) but "there;" which shows he was at that time in some other place. It is plain, however, Titus was at Crete when he received intelligence left there, as has been observed, to settle the churches in that island, and ordain elders to minister and preside in them. Accordingly, the greatest part of the epistle is taken up in giving him

PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

directions for the more successful discharge of this office among the Cretans; and particularly for his behaviour toward those corrupt Judaizing teachers, who endeavoured to pervert the faith, and disturb the peace of the Christian church everywhere.

This epistle is very similar, as to its tenor and style, to the two epistles to Timothy, and they cast much light upon one another; and are worthy the serious attention of all Christian ministers and churches in all ages. This has four parts: I. The inscription, chap. i. 1-4. II. The instruction of Titus to this effect: 1. Ordain good presbyters: (5-9:) 2. Such as are especially needful at Crete: (10-12:) 3. Reprove and admonish the Cretans: (13-16:) 4. Teach aged men and women; (chap. ii. 1-5;) and young men, being a pattern to them; (6-8;) and servants, urging them by a glorious motive: (9-15:) 5. Press obedience to magistrates, and gentleness to all men; (chapter iii. 1, 2;) enforcing it by the same motive: (3-7:) 6. Good works are to be done; foolish questions avoided; heretics to be shunned; 8-11. III. An invitation of Titus to Nicopolis, with some admonitions, 12-14. IV. The conclusion, 15.

THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TITUS.

CHAPTER I.

Here Paul, after asserting his apostolic character, and saluting Titus, (1,) Reminds him of the special reasons for which he left him in Crete, 1-5. (2,) Directs him on what principles he should act in the ordination of those elders, who were to take the oversight of particular churches, 6-9. (3,) He cautions him against seducing teachers, whom it was necessary zealously to confute, and represents the bad national character of the Cretians, directing him to rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith, 10-16.

A. M. 4069. **PAUL**, a servant of God, and an
A. D. 65. apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and ^a the acknowledging of the truth ^b which is after godliness ;

2 ¹ In ^o hope of eternal life, which A. M. 4069.
God, ^d that cannot lie, promised ^o be- A. D. 65.
fore the world began ;
3 ^f But hath in due times manifested his

^a 2 Timothy ii. 25.—^b 1 Timothy iii. 16 ; vi. 3.—^c Or, For.
^e 2 Tim. i. 1 ; Chap. iii. 7.

^d Num. xxiii. 19 ; 1 Tim. ii. 13.—^e Rom. xvi. 25 ; 2 Tim. i. 9 ; 1 Pet. i. 20.—^f 2 Tim. i. 10.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *Paul, a servant of the one living and true God*—In some of his other epistles, Paul calls himself *a servant of Jesus Christ* ; but this is the only one in which he calls himself *a servant of God* : an appellation which some think he took because the Judaizing teachers in Crete affirmed that he had apostatized from God, by receiving into his church the uncircumcised Gentiles, and thereby freeing them from obedience to the law of Moses, as a term of salvation. *And an apostle of Jesus Christ*—By this title he distinguishes himself from other pious and holy men, who were all servants of God ; and asserts his apostleship, not to raise himself in the estimation of Titus, but to make the false teachers in Crete, and all in every age who should read this letter, sensible that every thing he ordered Titus to inculcate was of divine authority. *According to the faith of God's elect*—That is, God's true people ; the propagation of which faith was the proper business of an apostle. *And the acknowledging of the truth*—That is, the doctrine of the gospel here termed the truth, to distinguish it from the errors of heathenism, and the shadows of the Mosaic law ; and because it teaches the true, and the only true way of salvation for Jews and Gentiles ; *which is after godliness*—Which in every point agrees with and supports the true, vital, spiritual worship and service of God ; and indeed has no other end or scope. These two verses contain the sum of Christianity, which Titus was always to have in his eye.

Verses 2-4. *In hope*—Which doctrine lays a foundation for, and shows us how we may attain a well-grounded and lively hope ; *of eternal life*—The grand motive and encouragement of every apostle and every servant of God. *Which God, that cannot lie*—Nor deceive any of his creatures, hath not only, as in the former dispensation, intimated to us, but expressly *promised*—To all obedient believers ; *before the world began*—Or, *before the times of the ages*, as Macknight renders προ χρονων αιωνων, observing, “the promise here referred to is that which God made to Adam and Eve, and their posterity, at the fall, when in passing sentence on the serpent, he said of the seed of the woman, *It shall bruise thy head*. The same promise was renewed in the covenant with Abraham : *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*.” That this included a promise of eternal life to all believers has frequently been shown. It is true, “supposing the word αιωνιος, in this clause, to signify *eternal*, the literal translation of the passage would be, *before eternal times*. But that being a contradiction in terms, our translators, contrary to the propriety of the Greek language, have rendered it, *before the world began*. As Locke observes on Rom. xvi. 25, the true, literal translation is, *before the secular times*, referring us to the Jewish jubilees, by which times were computed among the Hebrews, as among the Gentiles they were computed by *generations of men*.” *But hath in due times*—Or, *in his own times*, as the phrase καιροισι ιδιοις properly signifies. God's own times are fittest

A. M. 4060. word through preaching, which is
A. D. 65. committed unto me, according to

the commandment of God our Saviour;
4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one

¹ 1 Thess. ii. 4; 1 Tim. i. 11.—¹ 1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3; iv. 10. ² 2 Cor. ii. 13; vii. 13; viii. 6, 16, 23; xii. 18; Gal. ii. 3. ³ 1 Timothy i. 2.—¹ Rom. i. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 13; 2 Peter i. 1. ⁴ Eph. i. 2; Col. i. 2; 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2.—¹ 1 Cor. xi. 34.—² Or, left undone.

for his own work. What creature dares ask, Why no sooner? Manifested his word—His gospel, containing that promise, and the whole truth which is after godliness; through preaching—The public declaration thereof; which is committed unto me—Or, wherewith I am intrusted. According to the commandment—Or sovereign pleasure; of God our Saviour—And who dares exercise this office on any inferior authority? By affirming that Christ intrusted him with the preaching of the gospel according to the commandment of God, or as it is expressed 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1, by the will of God, the apostle carried his own authority to the highest pitch. To Titus, mine own son—Begotten of God by my preaching, and a true follower of me, and my assistant in the Lord's work. See on Phil. ii. 22. After the common faith—Common to me and all my spiritual children. Grace, mercy, and peace, &c.—See on 1 Tim. i. 2.

Verse 5. For this cause left I thee in Crete—Crete is one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean, being in length, from east to west, about 250 miles, in breadth about 50, and in circuit about 600; and anciently it must have been very populous, being famous for its 100 cities. It is now called Candia, from its chief city, which bears that name. In the year 1204 the Venetians took Canea, the second greatest city in Crete, and with it the whole island. That city they held till the year 1645, when the Turks conquered it, and almost entirely expelled the Venetians from Crete; and they have kept possession of it ever since. After the gospel was planted in Crete by the apostle and his assistant Titus, it took such deep root, and spread itself so widely through the island, that it has subsisted there ever since; and is at present the religion of the natives, who are in general of the Greek Church. These, on payment of a stated tribute to the Turks, are allowed the exercise of their religion without molestation. That thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting—That is, that thou shouldst perfect what was left unfinished at my departure, or mightest settle the affairs which I had not time to settle

wife, having faithful children, not
A. M. 4060
A. D. 65. accused of riot, or unruly.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God: not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

¹ Acts xiv. 23; 2 Timothy ii. 2.—¹ 1 Timothy iii. 2, &c. ² 1 Tim. iii. 12.—¹ 1 Tim. iii. 4, 12.—² Matthew xxiv. 45; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.—³ Lev. x. 9.—⁴ 1 Tim. iii. 3, 8.—⁵ 1 Tim. iii. 2.—⁶ Or, good things.—⁷ 2 Thess. ii. 15.—⁸ 1 Tim. i. 15; iv. 9; vi. 3.—⁹ Or, in teaching.—¹ 1 Tim. i. 10; vi. 3.

myself; and ordain elders—Pastors or teachers, the same with bishops, verse 7; in every city—Where there are churches; as I had appointed—Or commanded thee. The apostle proceeds, in the four next verses, to show what ought to be the character and qualifications of the persons fit to be ordained.

Verses 6-9. If any be blameless—As to his conduct, shunning the appearance of evil, and walking in all the ordinances and commandments of God; the husband of one wife—See on 1 Tim. iii. 2; having faithful, or believing children—As τέκνα πιστά may be properly rendered; that is, not infidels, but such as embrace the Christian faith; not accused of riot—ἀσωτιασιν of luxury, or intemperance; or unruly—ἀνυποτακτα, refractory or disobedient. The apostle required that the children of the person who was to be ordained an elder should be believers in Christ, and of a sober, exemplary behaviour, because the infidelity and vices of children never fail to reflect some blame on their parents. And the children of ministers ought certainly, from that consideration, as well as in order to the salvation of their own souls, carefully to avoid every irregularity, and even impropriety of conduct. For a bishop—Or elder, as he is called, verse 5; must be blameless—In order to his being useful; as the steward of God—One intrusted by God with the care of immortal souls, and with the dispensation of the mysteries of the gospel; not self-willed—ἑαυτασθεν, literally, pleasing himself; but all men for their good to edification; not soon angry—Or easily provoked, as οργιλον means; not given to wine, &c.—See on 1 Tim. iii. 2-7; sober—Or prudent, as σωφρονα may be properly rendered. It implies, especially, the proper government of our angry passions; so that on all occasions we behave with prudence; temperate—In the use of every sensual pleasure; one who has so the command of himself that he keeps all his appetites under due restraint. Holding fast the faithful word—That is, the word of the truth of the gospel. There is a great beauty, says Macknight, in the word ἀνερχομενος, as here used. It signifies the holding fast the true

A. M. 4069. 10 For ^bthere are many unruly and
A. D. 65. vain talkers and ^cdeceivers, ^despecially
ly they of the circumcision :

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, ^ewho
subvert whole houses, teaching things which
they ought not, ^ffor filthy lucre's sake.

12 ^gOne of themselves, *even* a prophet of
their own, said, The Cretians *are* always liars,
evil beasts, slow bellies.

^b 1 Tim. i. 6. — ^c Rom. xvi. 18. — ^d Acts xv. 1. — ^e Matt.
xxiii. 14. — ^f 1 Tim. vi. 5. — ^g Acts xvii. 28. — ^h 2 Cor. xiii.
10. — ⁱ Chap. ii. 2. — ^j 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4.

doctrine, in opposition to those who would wrest it
from us; *as he hath been taught*—*Kara την διδασχην*,
according to the teaching, namely, of the apostles;
that by sound, or salutary doctrine, he may be able both
to exhort—Believers to zeal and diligence in the per-
formance of their duty; *and to convince gainsayers*—
Those that oppose the truth, of their errors and sins.

Verses 10, 11. *For there are many unruly*—Sub-
ject to no order; *and vain talkers*—*Ματαιολογοι*, per-
sons who utter a multitude of foolish and trifling
things, especially concerning genealogies and fables;
and deceivers—*ἁρπαγαται*, deceived in their own
minds, or deceivers of the minds of others; who de-
lude their disciples with false opinions, in order to
reconcile their consciences to wicked practices; *spe-
cially they of the circumcision*—Namely, the Jewish
teachers, who, though converted to Christianity,
taught the necessity of observing the Jewish law,
together with faith in Christ, Acts xxi. 20. *Whose
mouths must be stopped*—Namely, by conviction from
reason and Scripture; *who subvert whole houses*—
Overthrow the faith of whole families by their false
doctrine, and as he seems to mean, carry them over
to Judaism; *teaching things which they ought not*—
Which are most false and mischievous; *for filthy
lucre's sake*—For the sordid purpose of drawing
money from their disciples.

Verses 12-14. *One of themselves*—That is, one of
their own countrymen, who could not be unac-
quainted with their conduct, or disposed to belie
them; *even a prophet of their own*—This was the
poet Epimenides, who, among the Romans, was re-
puted to have foretold future events. Cicero, speak-
ing of him, (*De Divinat.*, lib. i.,) says he was *futura
præsciens, et vaticinans per furorem*; one who fore-
knew and foretold things future by ecstasy. Besides,
as all poets pretended to a kind of inspiration, the
names *prophet* and *poet* were used as synonymous
both by the Greeks and Romans. *The Cretians are
always liars, &c.*—Epimenides said this in his book
concerning oracles, a passage which Glassius hath
quoted entire, p. 2075. According to Bishop War-
burton, (*Div. Legat.*, vol. i. p. 159,) the Cretians were
universally hated, and branded as liars, by the other
Greeks, because, by showing in their island the
tomb of Jupiter, the father of gods and men, they
published what the rest of the Greeks concealed in
their mysteries, namely, that their gods were dead
men. *Evil beasts*—Or *wild beasts*, rather, as *θηρια*

b

13 This witness is true: ^hwherefore ^{A. M. 4069.}
rebuke them sharply, that they may ^{A. D. 65.}
be ⁱsound in the faith;

14 ^kNot giving heed to Jewish fables, and
^lcommandments of men that turn from the truth.

15 ^mUnto the pure all things *are* pure: but
ⁿunto them that are defiled and unbelieving
is nothing pure; but even their mind and con-
science is defiled.

¹ Isaiah xsix. 13; Matt. xv. 9; Col. ii. 22. — ^m Luke xi
39-41; Rom. xiv. 14, 20; 1 Cor. vi. 12; x. 23, 25; 1 Tim.
iv. 3, 4. — ⁿ Rom. xiv. 23.

signifies, fierce, savage; *slow bellies*—Lazy gluttons,
as averse to action as wild beasts are after gorging
themselves with their prey. So that in these words
the poet suggests "a remarkable contrast, to show
what a mixture there was of fierceness and luxury
in the characters of the Cretians. Savage beasts are
generally active and nimble, but these men, while
they had the fury of lions and tigers, indulged them-
selves so much in the most sordid idleness and in-
temperance that they grew, as it were, all belly. As
for their proneness to falsehood, it is well known that
κρητιζειν, to talk like a Cretian, was a proverb for ly-
ing; (as *κορινθιαζειν*, to live like a Corinthian, was
for a luxurious and debauched life;) and it is remark-
able that Polybius scarce ever mentions this nation
without some severe censure." *This witness is
true*—Namely, in the general, though some particu-
lar persons may be found of a different character.
Wherefore rebuke them sharply—*Ἀποτομος*, with a
cutting severity. From this Blackwall infers, "that
it is a vain pretence that only gentle and soft expres-
sions are to be applied to people that renounce good
principles, and corrupt the gospel." But it ought
to be observed, that St. Paul speaks of reproving
vice, not *error*. Besides, though Titus was to re-
prove the Cretians sharply, "the sharpness of his
reproofs was not to consist in the bitterness of the
language which he used, nor in the passion with
which he spake. Reproofs of that sort have little
influence to make a person sound, either in faith or
practice. It was to consist in the strength of the
reasons with which he enforced his reproofs, and in
the earnestness and affection with which he deliver-
ed them; whereby the consciences of the offenders
being awakened, would sting them bitterly." *Not
giving heed to Jewish fables*—See 1 Tim. i. 4; *and
commandments of men*—Of Jewish and other teach-
ers; *that turn from the truth*—Forsake the true
doctrine of the gospel. "It appears, from the fol-
lowing verse, that the apostle, in saying this, had in
view the precepts of the Judaizers concerning meats;
clean and unclean, which, although originally the
precepts of God, were now abolished under the gos-
pel. Therefore, if these things were any longer
enjoined as obligatory, they were not enjoined by
God, but by the *precepts of men*." See Doddridge
and Macknight.

Verses 15, 16. *Unto the pure*—Namely, believers
whose hearts are purified by faith, Acts xv. 9; *all*

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A. M. 4069. 16 They profess that they know
A. D. 65. God; but ° in works they deny him,

being abominable, and disobedient, A. M. 4069.
and unto every good work ° reprobate. A. D. 65.

° 2 Tim. iii. 5; Jude 4.—† Rom. i. 28.

° Or, void of judgment.

things are pure—All kinds of meats are lawful to be used; *but unto them that are defiled*—Who are still under the guilt and power of sin; *and unbelieving*—Destitute of true, saving faith, to purify them; *nothing is pure*—Nothing they do, enjoy, or possess: they are still defiled with guilt, and are exposed to condemnation and wrath from God. The apostle joins *defiled* and *unbelieving*, to intimate that nothing can be clean without true faith. For *even their mind*—Their understanding, whereby they should distinguish between what is lawful and what is unlawful, and their conscience, whereby they should judge of their own actions; *is defiled*—Blinded, perverted, and polluted with past guilt and present depravity; and consequently so are they, and all they

do. *They profess that they know God*—And glory in their relation to him as his peculiar people, and boast of having the true knowledge of his will from the Mosaic revelation; see Rom. ii. 17; *but in works they deny him*—Live in contradiction to the very law they profess to know, as if they were utterly ignorant of him and it; *being abominable*—Worthy to be abhorred and avoided by all; *and disobedient*—To the plainest dictates of duty to God and man; *and unto*—Or, with respect to; *every truly good work reprobate*—*ἄδοκμοι*, without discernment; neither judging truly, nor acting rightly: or *disapproved* and condemned, when brought to the standard of God's word, though almost among the first to condemn others.

CHAPTER II.

Here the apostle directs Titus, (1.) To inculcate upon professing Christians, whether elder or younger, such duties as became sound doctrine, and to exemplify them in his own practice, 1-8. (2.) To exhort servants to conduct themselves in a manner suitable to their station, and so as to adorn their Christian profession, 9, 10. (3.) To enforce these duties from the holy nature, design, and tendency of the gospel, the joyful prospect which it opens before believers of eternal happiness, the love of our Redeemer, and the design of his death endured for us, 11-14, with all becoming authority, 15.

A. M. 4069. BUT speak thou the things which
A. D. 65. become ° sound doctrine:

in behaviour as becometh ° holiness; A. M. 4069.
not ° false accusers, not given to much A. D. 65.

2 That the aged men be ° sober, grave, temperate, ° sound in faith, in charity, in patience;

wine, teachers of good things;

3 ° The aged women likewise, that they be

4 That they may teach the young women to be ° sober, ° to love their husbands, to love their children,

° 1 Tim. i. 10; vi. 3; 2 Tim. i. 13; Chap. i. 9.—† Or, vigilant.
° Chap. i. 13.—† 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10; iii. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

° Or, holy women.—† Or, make-bates, 2 Tim. iii. 3.—† Or, wise.—† 1 Tim. v. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. The apostle, having directed Titus to ordain elders in every city, and described the character and qualifications of the persons he was to invest with that office in the church; also having laid open the bad character and evil practices of the Judaizing teachers and their disciples in Crete, and ordered him to rebuke them sharply, he now proceeds to give him a short view of the duties of his office as superintendent both of the teachers and of the people in that island. *But speak thou, &c.*—As if he had said, Though false teachers dwell upon fables, traditions, and the commandments of men, which disorder and poison the souls of the hearers, do thou inculcate *the things which become*—Or agree with; *sound*, wholesome, salutary doctrine—Calculated to restore and preserve spiritual health; to invigorate all the faculties of the soul, and keep them in a healthy state. *That the aged men be sober*—*Νηφαλις*, vigilant, as veteran soldiers, not to be easily surprised; *grave*—Or *serious*, as *σμενος* may be

rendered; *temperate*—Or *prudent*, as *σωφρονας* signifies; see on chap. i. 8; *sound in the faith*—Sincere and steadfast in their belief of, and adherence to, all the great doctrines of the gospel; *in charity*—*Ἀγαπη*, love, to God and man; *patience*—A virtue particularly needful for, and becoming them.

Verses 3-6. *The aged women likewise*—All of them in general, and not merely such as were employed by the church in teaching the young of their own sex the doctrines and precepts of Christianity; *that they be in behaviour*—*Ἐν κατασκευῇ*, in their deportment, including their dress, as the word implies; *as becometh holiness*—Or *holy persons*, as *ιεροπρεπεις* may be rendered, that is, such as is agreeable to their holy profession, and will manifest the holiness of their hearts; *not false accusers*—Slanders, or evil speakers; *not given to much wine*—If they use a little for their many infirmities; *teachers*—For their age and experience call them to be so; *of good things*—Only, and not of any thing of a contrary nature. *That they may teach the young women*—

A. M. 4069. 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, °obedient to their own husbands, † that the word of God be not blasphemed.

6 Young men likewise exhort to be °sober-minded.

7 ° In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrines showing uncorruptness, gravity, † sincerity,

8 † Sound speech that cannot be condemned; † that he that is of the contrary part † may be

° 1 Cor. xiv. 34; Eph. v. 22; Col. iii. 18.—† Rom. ii. 24.
 ° Or, discreet.—† 1 Tim. iv. 12.—† Eph. vi. 24.—† 1 Tim. vi. 3.—† Neh. v. 9; 1 Timothy v. 14.—† 2 Thess. iii. 14.
 † Eph. vi. 5; Col. iii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2; 1 Pet. ii. 18.

These Timothy was to instruct himself; Titus, by the elder women; to be sober—Or wise. The original expression, *να σωφρονίζωσι τας νεας*, is, literally, *That they may render the young women wise*, or prudent, namely, in the performance of the duties of their station; to love their husbands, their children—In a due manner, with a tender, temperate, holy, wise affection. O how hard a lesson! To be discreet—Particularly in the love of their children; chaste—Particularly in the love of their husbands; keepers at home—Whenever they are not called out by works of necessity, piety, and mercy; good—Well-tempered, sweet, soft, obliging; obedient to their husbands—Whose will, in all things lawful, is a rule to the wife; that the word of God—The doctrine of the gospel, and the Christian religion; be not blasphemed—Or evil spoken of, particularly by unbelieving husbands, who usually lay all the blame of what they think wrong in their wives, on their religion. Young men exhort to be sober-minded—Or, rather, prudent and discreet, as *σωφρονειν* signifies.

Verses 7, 8. In all things—In all these and other respects not here mentioned; showing thyself a pattern of good works—Of every thing amiable and excellent; of every disposition and practice which thou enjoimest to others. Titus himself was then young. In doctrine—Or in thy teaching, namely, in public; uncorruptness—As to the matter of it; or without any mixture of error; gravity—Or seriousness, as to the manner of delivering it; weightiness, solemnity; sound—Or wholesome; speech—Even in private conversation; that cannot be condemned—Or found fault with on any principles of reason or religion: or, as some render it, that cannot be confuted; that he who is of the contrary part—An unbeliever, or an opposer of the truth; may be ashamed—Of his unbelief of, and opposition to it; having no evil thing to say of you—Of thee, of the elders thy assistants, or of any, whether old or young, who are under thy care, but may be obliged, with all his prejudices, to acknowledge that thou art a worthy president of a worthy and useful society of people.

Verses 9, 10. Exhort servants—See the notes on the passages referred to in the margin. To please them—Their masters; well in all things—Lawful, or wherein it can be done without sin; not answering again—Though blamed unjustly. This honest

ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. A. M. 4069. A. D. 65.

9 Exhort ° servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well ° in all things; not ° answering again;

10 Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; ° that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

11 For ° the grace of God † that bringeth salvation † hath appeared to all men,

° Ephesians v. 24.—° Or, gainsaying.—° Matthew v. 16; Philippians ii. 15.—° Romans v. 15; Chapter iii. 4, 5.
 † Or, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared.
 † Luke iii. 6.

servants are most apt to do. Not purloining—Secretly stealing any part of their masters' goods, not taking or giving any thing without their masters' leave: this, fair-spoken servants are most apt to do. But showing all good fidelity—And honesty in every thing, great and small; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour—May render it amiable and honourable, even in the eyes of their heathen masters, and of others, when they shall observe its influence on all its possessors, even on those in the lowest stations in life. This is more than St. Paul says of kings. How he raises the lowness of his subject! So may they the lowness of their condition!

Verses 11, 12. For the grace of God—The free, unmerited favour of God, which is the primary meaning of the word grace, see on Rom. xi. 6, and the influence of the divine Spirit, which the word grace also signifies; see 2 Cor. xii. 9; Heb. xiii. 9; which bringeth salvation—The original expression, *η χαρις τε θεου, η σωτηριος*, is literally, *the grace of God, the saving grace*; that is, which is saving in its design and tendency, and which actually saves all who truly receive it, even in the present world, from the ignorance and error, guilt and depravity, weakness and wretchedness, in which they formerly lay involved, into the favour and image of God, and a state of fellowship with him, hereby giving them a title to, a meetness for, and an anticipation of, eternal salvation; hath appeared—*επεφανη*, hath been manifested, or hath shone forth, even like the luminaries of heaven, as the word signifies; namely, in and by the gospel, which has not been kept concealed in a corner, as the Jewish law was, being confined to one particular people of little note in the world, but was commanded by its author to be preached to every creature, Mark xvi. 15; and even in the apostle's days, had been made known in a great measure to all nations, for the obedience of faith, Rom. xvi. 26; or to men of all nations and conditions, to barbarians as well as to Jews, Greeks, and Romans, to servants as well as masters, to bond as well as free. As if the apostle had said, (connecting this verse with the preceding,) It concerns all persons, in whatever situation or condition, and especially all members of the visible church, to perform their several duties faithfully and diligently, because the doctrine of the gos-

A. M. 4069. 12 Teaching us, * that denying
A. D. 65. ungodliness, * and worldly lusts, we
should live soberly, righteously, and godly,
in this present world ;

* Luke i. 75.—† 1 Pet. iv. 2.—‡ 1 Cor. i. 7.

pel, (which is the effect of God's grace, and in a peculiar manner displays, offers, and invites men to receive it, and is the means whereby that grace is communicated, and whereby it saves men,) is published indifferently to all nations, as well as Jews, and therein to persons of all ranks and conditions. Or, if this interpretation be not thought to answer fully to the universality of the apostle's declaration, *the grace of God hath appeared to all men*, there is no sufficient reason why we may not understand him as speaking of that unmerited love and favour he hath manifested by the works of creation, (which display his goodness, as well as his wisdom and power, to the whole universe,) and by the dispensations of his providence, and of those enlightening, awakening, convincing, quickening, and drawing influences of the Spirit of grace, which certainly are not entirely withheld from any child of man. See on John i. 4-9. *Teaching*—As a master his pupils, as they are able to receive his instructions, (so the word παιδευσα signifies,) even all who are unbelieving and disobedient ; *that denying*—*Ἀρνησαμενοι*, *having renounced* ; *ungodliness*—Whatever is contrary to the knowledge, fear, and love of God ; *and worldly lusts*—*Ἐπιθυμιας*, *desires*, such as are founded in worldly men, and have the things of the present world for their object, as riches, honours, pleasures, including not only desires of unlawful things, but those which, though fixed on lawful objects, are inordinate and excessive. These must be resisted and renounced, as contrary to the sobriety and righteousness enjoined in the next clause, and utterly inconsistent with that spiritual and heavenly mind which Christianity is intended and calculated to produce. This is the negative part of religion. It has also a positive part, which is, 1st, *To live soberly*—Greek, *σωφρονως*, *temperately, prudently*, and in all purity and holiness. "Sobriety, in the Scripture sense, is rather the whole temper of a man, than a single virtue in him. It comprehends all that is opposite to the *drowsiness* of sin, the *folly* of ignorance, and the *unholiness* of disorderly passions. Sobriety is no less than all the powers of the soul being consistently and constantly *awake*, duly governed by heavenly prudence, and entirely conformable to holy affections."—Wesley. *Righteously*—Righteousness, distinguished here from *godliness*, consists in abstaining from injuring any one in his person, reputation, or fortune ; in discharging all the duties belonging to the relations in which a man stands to others, and to the station in which he is placed ; in being true and just in all his dealings ; in performing his covenants and promises faithfully ; and, in short, in rendering to every man his due, and doing to all as he would they should do to him ; *and godly*—*Orpiously*, as persons devoted to God in heart and life,

13 * Looking for that blessed A. M. 4069.
* hope, and the glorious * appearing A. D. 65.
of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ ;
14 * Who gave himself for us, that he might

* Acts xxiv. 15.—* Col. iii. 4.—† Gal. i. 4.

fearing him with a reverential, awful, filial, and watchful fear ; loving him with a love of esteem, desire, gratitude, and complacency, because of his loveliness and loving-kindness ; being zealous for his glory, and doing every thing in order to it ; obedient to his will in all things, great and small, and that from a sense of duty to him ; resigned and patient under the dispensations of his providence ; aspiring after, and earnestly pursuing, a conformity to him, and the everlasting enjoyment of him ; and, in order to all this, using every means of grace he hath appointed, and waiting upon him in all his ordinances ; *in this present world*—Notwithstanding the many snares, difficulties, and dangers, the temptations, trials, troubles, pains, and pleasures of it. Or, *in this present age*, as *ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰωνί* properly signifies ; that is, we must be thus godly and righteous in this ungodly and unrighteous age, and sober, as above explained, in this age, in which examples of intemperance, imprudence, and the disregard of such sobriety everywhere abound. No wonder that the apostle attributes this religion, in these various branches of it, to the free grace of God !

Verses 13, 14. *Looking*—With eager desire and lively expectation ; *for the blessed hope*—That is, for the blessedness for which we hope ; the grace of hope being here put for the object of it, future and eternal felicity. *And the glorious appearing*—Very different from his former appearance in a state of poverty, reproach, and suffering ; *of the great God and our Saviour*—The original expression, *επιφανειαν της δοξης του μεγαλυ Θεου και Σωτηρος ημων*, are literally, *the appearing, or manifestation, of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ* ; or, *of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ*. If the words be taken in the former sense, the apostle may be considered as alluding to our Lord's words, Luke ix. 26, where the Lord Jesus is spoken of as *coming in his own glory and in his Father's, and of his holy angels* ; and, (Matt. xvi. 27,) *the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father with his angels*. Beza, however, is of opinion, that one person only is spoken of, namely, Jesus Christ, to whom he thinks the title of the great God is given in this verse ; and with him Whitby agrees, both because the article is wanting before *Σωτηρος*, *Saviour*, and because, as God the Father is not said properly to appear, so the word *επιφανεια*, *appearing*, never occurs in the New Testament but when it is applied to Jesus Christ. But to this Macknight answers, "1st, That the article wanting before *Saviour* may be supplied, as our translators have done here before *επιφανεια*, *appearing*, and elsewhere, particularly Eph. v. 5, *In the kingdom, του Χριστου και Θεου, of Christ and of God* : and, 2d, That the apostle does not speak of the *appearing of the Father*, but of the *appearing of the*

A. M. 4069. redeem us from all iniquity, * and A. D. 65. purify unto himself * a peculiar people, ^b zealous of good works.

^a Heb. ix. 14. — ^b Exod. xv. 16; xix. 5.

glory of the Father; agreeably to what Christ himself declared, that at his return to judgment he will appear surrounded with the glory of his Father." Whitby, however, as an additional reason for thinking that Christ is only spoken of, observes, that "not only all the ancient commentators on the place do so interpret this text, but the Ante-Nicene Fathers also; Hippolytus speaking of the appearance of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Clemens of Alexandria proving Christ to be both God and man, our Creator, and the Author of all our good things, from these very words of St. Paul." *Who gave himself for us*—Namely, to die in our stead; *that he might redeem us*—Miserable bond-slaves; *from all iniquity*—As well from the power and the very being, as from the guilt of our sins; *and purify to himself*—From all pollution of flesh and spirit, (see on 2 Cor. vii. 1.) *a peculiar people*—Who should thankfully own themselves his property, and express their gratitude for such inestimable favours, by being not only careful to avoid the practice of evil, but *zealous of good works*—Active in all the duties of life, and in every office of righteousness and goodness to each other. "This is said in allusion to Exod. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6, where God calls the Jews *a peculiar and a special people to himself*, because

15 These things speak, and ^c exhort, and rebuke with all authority. A. M. 4069. A. D. 65. ^d Let no man despise thee.

^b Eph. ii. 10; Ch. viii. 8. — ^c 2 Tim. iv. 2. — ^d 1 Tim. iv. 12.

he had made them his property by *redeeming* them from the bondage of Egypt, and had distinguished them from the rest of mankind as his, by rites and ordinances of his own appointment. Christ hath made believers *his peculiar people* by giving himself for them, to *redeem* them from all iniquity, and to *purify them to himself*, a people *zealous*, not of rites and ceremonies, but of *good works*. This being the great end of Christ's death, how dare any person, pretending to be one of Christ's people, either speak or think lightly of good works, as not necessary to salvation?"—Macknight.

Verse 15. *These things*—Namely, concerning the universality of divine grace, and the excellent purposes for which it is given, the coming of Christ to judgment, the end for which he died during his first appearing on earth, and concerning the character of his people as zealous of good works; *speak and exhort*—Show them their duty, and exhort them to comply with it. *And rebuke*—All opposers, or *confute* (as *ελεγε* also means) such as teach otherwise; *with all the authority* due to truth, and as one that knows he has a divine commission to support him. *Let no man despise thee*—That is, let none have just cause to despise thee: yet they surely will. Men who know not God, will despise a true minister of his word.

CHAPTER III.

The apostle directs Titus (1.) To inculcate obedience to civil magistrates, and a good behaviour toward all men, as enforced by the consideration of the marvellous change made by converting grace on true believers, whether originally Jews or Gentiles, 1-7. (2.) Particularly to enforce the necessity of being diligent in the performance of all good works, as being excellent in themselves, and useful to mankind, 8. (3.) To avoid all idle disputes, to censure erroneous persons, and excommunicate them if obstinate, 9-11. (4.) Speedily to visit him at Nicopolis, along with Apollon and Zenas, 12-15.

A. M. 4069. PUT them in mind ^a to be subject A. D. 65. to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, ^b to be ready to every good work,

^a Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 13. — ^b Col. i. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 21; Heb. xiii. 21.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1-3. *Put them*—All the Cretian Christians; *in mind to be subject*—Passively, not resisting; *to principalities*—Supreme rulers; *and powers*—Subordinate governors; and *to obey magistrates*—Actively, as far as conscience permits. It is probable that the reason why the apostle enjoined this so particularly was, because the Judaizing teachers in Crete affirmed, that no obedience was due from the worshippers of the true God to magistrates who were idolaters, and because by that doctrine they

^c To speak evil of no man, ^d to be no brawlers, ^e gentle, showing all ^f meekness unto all men. A. M. 4069. A. D. 65.

^c Eph. iv. 31. — ^d 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. — ^e Phil. iv. 5. — ^f Eph. iv. 2; Col. iii. 12.

were beginning to make not only the Jewish, but the Gentile believers, bad subjects, and liable to be punished as evil-doers. *To be ready to every good work*—In every relation which they sustain; *to speak evil of no man*—Neither of magistrates, nor of any others. "The word *βλασφημεῖν*, besides *evil-speaking*, denotes all those vices of the tongue which proceed either from hatred or from contempt of others, and which tend to hurt their reputation, such as railing, reviling, mocking speeches, whisperings, &c." *To be no brawlers*—Greek, *μαχηρὸς εἶναι*, not to be con-

A. M. 4069 3 For ^a we ourselves also were
A. D. 65. sometimes foolish, disobedient, de-
ceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures,
living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating
one another.

4 But after that ^b the kindness and ¹ love of

^a 1 Corinthians vi. 11.—^b Chapter ii. 11.—¹ Or, pity.
¹ Timothy ii. 3.

tentious, or quarrelsome, to assault none; but *gentle*—*Επεικεις*, yielding, when assaulted, and often giving up their own right rather than contend; *showing*—In their tempers, words, and actions; *all meekness*—A mild, inoffensive, and kind behaviour; *unto all men*—Even enemies, and such as we ourselves once were. For we ourselves also—Or, even we ourselves, though now new creatures in Christ Jesus; *were sometimes*, ποτε, formerly, foolish—*Ανοητοι*, ignorant, of God and divine things; unreasonable, particularly in rejecting the Lord Jesus, though demonstrated to be the true Messiah by the most incontrovertible evidences; and imprudent, or destitute of true wisdom, (as the word also implies,) being enemies to ourselves, in that we were *disobedient* to the divine commands, though *holy, just, and good*; and refused to hearken to the glad tidings of salvation announced in the gospel of his grace. The cause of this unreasonable and foolish conduct was, that we were *deceived* by the grand enemy of our souls, the subtle serpent that lies in wait to deceive; deluded by the allurements of this insnaring world, and *erred*, or *wandered*, (as the word *πλανομενοι* means,) from the right way of truth and righteousness into by-paths of error and sin, promising ourselves liberty; but *erring*—*Δουλευοντες*, enslaved to, *divers lusts*—*Επιθυμιας*, desires, irregular and inordinate; (see on chap. ii. 12;) and *pleasures*—Which perished in the using, but nevertheless were alluring us forward to everlasting miseries. Such was the state of our understanding, will, and affections. But what were our tempers? Such was our conduct toward God and ourselves; but what was it toward our fellow-creatures? The apostle tells us: *living in malice*—Instead of exercising benevolence and love toward all men; and *envy*—Grieving at the good enjoyed by others, instead of rejoicing therein, as it was our duty to have done; *hateful*—Ourselves, while under the tyranny of such detestable passions, worthy to be abhorred by God and man; and *hating one another*—On account of little clashings and oppositions in our temporal interests, while we forgot the great ties and bonds which ought to have endeared us to each other. Dr. Whitby, arguing from Acts xxiii. 1; 2 Tim. i. 3; Phil. iii. 6, pleads that the above description could not be applicable to Paul himself, even while he was in his unconverted state; and with him Dr. Macknight agrees; forgetting, it seems, the malicious and vengeful passions which evidently dwelt in him while he was *Saul the persecutor*, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the best people upon earth, the disciples of the Lord Jesus; *binding and delivering into prisons*

ⁱ God our Saviour toward men ap- A. M. 4069
peared, A. D. 65.

5 ^k Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by ¹ the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

^k Rom. iii. 20; ix. 11; xi. 6; Gal. ii. 16; Eph. ii. 4, 8, 9; 2 Tim. i. 9.—¹ John iii. 3, 5; Eph. v. 26; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

both men and women, and being exceedingly mad against them, punishing them oft in every synagogue, pursuing them into strange cities, and persecuting them even unto death, Acts ix. 1; xxii. 4; xxvi. 11. On account of which conduct, when the eyes of his understanding were opened by the wonderful miracle of grace which the Lord Jesus wrought for him, he always reckoned himself the *chief of sinners*. But besides the persecuting spirit which he manifested toward the Christians, when he had a just view of his temper and behaviour in other respects, and became acquainted with the purity of God's holy law, he was so convinced of the depravity of his nature, and of the imperfection of his best obedience, that, notwithstanding all he says in the passages above quoted by Whitby, he could undoubtedly, as Dr. Doddrige justly observes, "apply what he here wrote to much of his own character while an enemy to Christianity." The reader will easily see that the duty inculcated in this passage is highly reasonable, and of peculiar importance, namely, that we should be ready to show that mercy to others which God hath shown to us; and that, from a recollection of the errors and sins which we were chargeable with in our unconverted state, we should exercise compassion toward those who are still ignorant and out of the way, but who may hereafter be brought to the saving knowledge of the truth, and be created anew in Christ Jesus, as we have been.

Verses 4-7. *But after that the kindness*—*Χρηστοτης*, the goodness, the benignity, και φιλανθρωπια, and *philanthropy*, love toward man, of God our Saviour, appeared—*Ετεφαν*, was manifested, or shone forth, namely, through the preaching of the gospel. The Father is here called *God our Saviour*, as is evident from verse 6, where the same person is said to have poured out the Holy Ghost on believers, *through Jesus Christ our Saviour*. Indeed, the title of *our Saviour* justly belongs to the Father, because he formed the scheme of our salvation, and sent his Son into the world to accomplish it; on which account the title of *Saviour* is given to the Son likewise. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done*—The best of which were so defective and polluted by sin while we were in our unregenerate state, that, instead of meriting acceptance, they needed forgiveness. *But according to his mercy*—His compassion for us in our state of sin and misery, and his free, unmerited love; *he saved us*—From our state of ignorance and guilt, of depravity, weakness, and misery. Observe, reader, the apostle does not say, *he will save us*, but, *he hath saved us*, true believers in Christ being already enlightened, justified,

A. M. 4069. 6 ^a Which he shed on us ² abundant-ly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

7 ^a That being justified by his grace, ^o we should be made heirs ^p according to the hope of eternal life.

8 ^a *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be care-*

^a Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Joel ii. 28; John i. 16; Acts ii. 33; x. 45; Rom. v. 5.—^o Gr. richly.—^p Rom. iii. 24; Gal. ii. 16; Chap. ii. 11.—² Rom. viii. 23, 24.—¹ Tim. i. 15; Chap. i. 9.

and made new creatures, and therefore in a great measure saved. See on Eph. ii. 8; 2 Tim. i. 9. *By the washing of regeneration*—That is, by regeneration itself, the thing signified, and not merely by baptismal water, the outward and visible sign; which regeneration cleanses the soul from the filth of sin, (as water washes the body,) implying the *renewing influences of the Holy Ghost*: see on Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 27; Eph. v. 26, 27. *Which he shed on us abundantly*—Πλουτως, richly, through our believing with our heart unto righteousness, on *Jesus Christ our Saviour*—In virtue of whose sacrifice and intercession it has been imparted to us, sinful and guilty children of men. *That being justified*—Acquitted from the guilt of sin, and accounted righteous; *by his grace*—His mere mercy, his unmerited favour, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; see on Rom. iii. 24–28; *we should be made heirs*—All who are justified being adopted into God's family, born of God's Spirit, and made his children, and therefore his heirs, Rom. viii. 17; *according*—Agreeably; *to the hope of eternal life*—With which we are inspired, and for which his promises, in and through Christ Jesus, made to all such, lay a firm foundation, 2 Tim. i. 1; Tit. i. 2.

Verse 8. *This is a faithful saying*—A saying of infallible truth and infinite importance; (see on 1 Tim. i. 15;) *and these things I will that thou affirm constantly*—Βεβαιωμα σε διαβεβαιωσθαι, I will that thou strenuously, zealously, and continually assert, as a matter of unspeakable moment; *that they who have believed in the living and true God*—Or rather, *who have believed God*, (as the words οι πεπιστευκοτες τω Θεω signify,) namely, with respect to the revelation which he has made of his will; *might be careful*—Ινα φρονιζωσι, may think, consider, contrive, prepare, and take care; *to maintain*—Greek, προισσθαι, to excel, take the lead, and go before others; in *good works*—Of all kinds which they have ability and opportunity to perform, namely, works of piety toward God, and of justice and mercy for the good of men. Though the apostle does not lay these for the foundation of men's confidence and hope of eternal life, yet he brings them in, as we see here and elsewhere, in their proper place, and then mentions them, not slightly, but as affairs of great importance. He insists that all believers should fix their thoughts upon them, use their best contrivance, their utmost en-

b

ful ¹ to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

9 But ^a avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; ¹ for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is a heretic, ^a after the first and second admonition, ² reject;

11 Knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, ^v being condemned of himself.

^a Verses 1, 14; Chap. ii. 14.—¹ 1 Tim. i. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 23; Chap. i. 14.—² 2 Tim. ii. 14.—² 2 Cor. xiii. 2.—^v Matt. xviii. 17; Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14; 2 Tim. iii. 5; 2 John 10.—^v Acts xiii. 46.

deavours, not barely to practise, but to excel, to be eminent and distinguished in them, because, though they do not procure our reconciliation with God, yet they are good—Καλα, amiable and honourable, as the word means, namely, to the Christian profession, and bring glory to God; and are profitable to men—To those who do them, and to those who are the objects of them: to the former, as being the means of exercising, and thereby increasing, their grace, and preparing them for a greater reward in the everlasting kingdom of their God and Saviour; and to the latter, as lessening their miseries and increasing their happiness in a variety of ways.

Verse 9. *But avoid foolish questions*—Questions of no consequence; and *genealogies*—See on 1 Tim. i. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 23; and *contentions, &c.*, about the law—About the observance of the ceremonial law, or some little things contained therein; *for they are unprofitable, &c.*—Not only consuming to no purpose that time which is capable of being much better improved, but also tending to discompose men's minds, to alienate the affections of Christians from each other, and to render them indifferent to the proper duties of life.

Verses 10, 11. *A man that is a heretic*—Greek, αιρετικον, a party or schism-maker, namely, in the church, among the true, genuine people of God; or one that causes divisions among those that are united in Christian fellowship; see on Rom. xvi. 17; *after the first and second admonition*—From these and the elders of the church, given with proper solemnity; *reject*—Avoid, and declare him unfit to be any longer looked upon as a member of your community. “This is the only place in the whole Scripture where this word *heretic* occurs; and here it evidently means a man that obstinately persists in contending about foolish questions, and thereby occasions strifes and animosities, schisms and parties, among the faithful. This, and this alone, is a heretic in the Scripture sense. And his punishment likewise is here fixed. *Shun*, avoid, leave him to himself, have no fellowship with him. As for the Popish sense of the word, ‘A man that errs in fundamentals,’ although it crept, with many other things, early into the church, yet it has no shadow of foundation either in the Old or New Testament.”—Wesley. *Knowing that such a one*—Who is so fond of his own darling notions, that he will ruin the peace of the

A. M. 4069. 12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or ^a Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and ^a Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

14 And let ours also learn ^b to ^c maintain good

^a Acts xx. 4; 2 Tim. iv. 12.—^b Acts xviii. 24.—^c Verse 8.
^a Or, profess honest trades, Eph. iv. 28.

church, and will not submit to thy remonstrances, and those of the wiser and better part of the society; *is subverted*—Or *perverted*, as *εξετραπηται* may be properly rendered; and *sinneth*—In making such obstinate efforts to diffuse his notions, and form a party to himself; *being condemned of himself*—Convinced in his own conscience that he acts wrong, as he cannot but see it to be evil to cause strife, animosity, contention, and disunion among those that fear God, and were, before he thus troubled them, united in Christian love. “In the first age, when the doctrines of the gospel were delivered by the apostles in person, under the guidance of inspiration, and when the true meaning of the doctrines was not liable to any doubt, because it was ascertained by the apostles themselves, if any teacher taught differently from them, and made a party in the church in opposition to them, he must have done these things contrary to his conscience, either from the love of money, or the lust of power, or from an immoderate propensity to sensual pleasures.”—Macknight; who observes further, “This method of treating heretics is worthy of attention; for the Spirit of God doth not order heretics to be banished, and their goods confiscated; far less doth he order them to be imprisoned, tortured, and burned, if they will not retract their errors. He doth not even give allowance to rail at or speak evil of them. Such methods of treating heretics never proceeded from the college of the apostles, but from the synagogue of Satan. To disown a wicked man as a Christian brother, and to avoid all familiar society with him, and to cast him out of the church by a public sentence of excommunication, is what the church and every society hath a right to do, agreeably to our Lord’s rule, (Matt. xviii. 15, 17,) and is all that should be done in such a case.”

Verse 12. *When I shall send Artemas to thee, or Tychicus*—To succeed thee in thy office; *be diligent to come unto me*—Tychicus is often mentioned in St. Paul’s epistles, but of Artemas we know nothing: only from this passage it appears that he was a faithful and able teacher, and fit to supply Titus’s place

works for necessary uses, that they ^{A. M. 4069.} be ^{A. D. 65.} not unfruitful.

15 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

¶ It was written to Titus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.

^c Romans xv. 28; Philippians i. 11; iv. 17; Colossians i. 10; 2 Peter i. 8.

in Crete. *At Nicopolis*—There was a city of this name in Macedonia, on the confines of Thrace; also one in Epirus, and another in Pontus. The one in Epirus was built opposite to Actium, and named Nicopolis, or *the city of victory*, in memory of the victory which Augustus obtained over Antony and Cleopatra. It is probable that this was the Nicopolis here referred to: many think the Nicopolis in Macedonia was intended. *For I have determined to winter there*—This manner of speaking shows that the apostle was at liberty when he wrote this epistle, and consequently that it was written in the interval between his first and second imprisonment, and not from Nicopolis; for he was not there when he wrote it, but only expected to be there by and by. See the preface.

Verses 13–15. *Bring*—Or send forward; *Zenas the lawyer*—Zenas is mentioned in this passage only, and called *νομικον*, *the lawyer*, because, according to Jerome’s interpretation, which is also that of Dr. Benson, he had formerly been a teacher of the law among the Jews; see Matt. xxii. 35, where the same appellation is given to one of that profession. He might possibly, however, as others think, be a Roman lawyer; and *Apollos*—It is probable that Zenas and Apollos were to pass through Crete, either in their way to the apostle, or to some place whither he had sent them. He therefore desired Titus to help them forward on their journey by supplying them with such necessaries as they were in want of, that they might not be retarded. *And let ours also*—All our brethren in Crete, whether ministers or private members of the church; *learn*—By thy admonition and example; *to maintain good works*—Works of charity and bounty; *for necessary uses*—For the relief of the poor brethren, that they may not want any necessary; *that they*—The Cretian believers; *be not unfruitful*—Unserviceable to those among whom they dwell. Perhaps, at some former period, they had not assisted Zenas and Apollos as they ought to have done. *Greet them that love us in the faith*—That is, for the faith’s sake, and with such a love as Christianity requires.

PREFACE
TO THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
PHILEMON.

ONESIMUS, a servant, or slave rather, to Philemon, an eminent person in Colosse, having run away from his master, came to Rome, where, hearing some of the discourses, as is probable, which Paul delivered in his own hired house, he became a sincere convert to the faith of the gospel. After his conversion, he abode with the apostle for some time, and served him as his son in the gospel, with the greatest assiduity and affection. But being made sensible of his fault in running away from his master, and of its being his duty to return to him, the apostle sent him back with this letter, in which, "with the greatest softness of expression, warmth of affection, and delicacy of address, he not only requests Philemon to forgive and receive him again into his family, but to esteem and put confidence in him as a sincere Christian." And when we consider the earnestness with which the apostle solicited Onesimus's pardon, and the benevolence and generosity of Philemon's disposition, we cannot doubt that the latter readily received him again, and even gave him his freedom, in compliance with the apostle's insinuation, verse 21, that "he would do even more than he had asked." This certainly must have been the case, if this Onesimus was the person of the same name mentioned by Ignatius, in his epistle to the Ephesians, as one of their bishops, as Grotius thinks he was.

Some have thought this letter not worthy to be ranked among the epistles of St. Paul, as being written upon an occasion of no great moment. But it must be acknowledged to contain instructions of great importance to both ministers and people. For therein, as Chrysostom has observed, the apostle has left to the former an excellent example of charity, in endeavouring to mitigate the resentment of one in a superior station toward his inferior, who had injured him, and to restore the inferior to the favour of the other, which he had lost through his unfaithfulness; and that not only by arguments drawn from reason, but by generously binding himself to repay all the loss which the superior had sustained by the injury of the inferior. It also sets before all ministers, even those of the highest dignity in the church, a proper example of attention to the people under their care, and of affectionate concern for their welfare, which, if it were imitated, would not fail to recommend them to the esteem and love of their people; consequently it would give them a greater capacity of doing them good. To these uses of this epistle, Macknight adds that it is therein intimated, "1. That all Christians are on a level. Onesimus, the slave, on becoming a Christian, is the apostle's son, and Philemon's brother. 2. That Christianity makes no alteration in men's political state. Onesimus, the slave, did not become a freeman by embracing Christianity, but was still obliged to be Philemon's 'slave for life,' unless his master gave him his freedom. 3. That slaves should not be taken nor detained from their masters without their masters' consent, verses 13, 14. 4. That we should not contemn persons of low estate, nor disdain to help the meanest, when it is in our power to assist them; but should love and do good to all men, verses 15-17. 5. That, where an injury hath been done, restitution is due, unless the injured party gives up his claim. 6. That we should forgive sinners who are penitent, and be heartily reconciled to them, verses 17-19. 7. That we should never despair of reclaiming the wicked, but do every thing in our power to convert them. Indeed, if this epistle had served no other purpose but to show the world what sort of man the Apostle Paul

PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

was in private life, it would justly have merited a place in the canon of Scripture. For, in it the writer hath displayed qualities which by men are held in the greatest estimation; such as consummate prudence, uncommon generosity, the warmest friendship, the most skilful address, and the greatest politeness as well as purity of manners; qualities not to be found either in the enthusiast or in an impostor." "Indeed," as Doddridge observes, "it is impossible to read over this admirable epistle, without being touched with the delicacy of sentiment, and the masterly address, that appear in every part of it. We see here, in a most striking light, how perfectly consistent true politeness is, not only with all the warmth and sincerity of the friend, but even with the dignity of the Christian and the apostle. And if this letter were to be considered in no other view than as a mere human composition, it must be allowed a master-piece in its kind. As an illustration of this remark, it may not be improper to compare it with an epistle of Pliny, that seems to have been written upon a similar occasion; (lib. ix. lit. 21;) which, though penned by one that was reckoned to excel in the epistolary style, and though it has undoubtedly many beauties, yet must be acknowledged, by every impartial reader, vastly inferior to this animated composition of the apostle."

As to the date of this epistle, it appears from verses 1, 10, 13, 23, that it was written when St. Paul was a prisoner, and when he had hopes of obtaining his liberty; (verse 22;) and as Timothy joins him in this epistle, and also in that to the Colossians, it is probable it was written about the same time with the latter, especially as in both epistles Epaphroditus, Mark, Demas, and Luke join in the salutations; and Onesimus, the bearer of this, was one of the messengers by whom the epistle to the Colossians was sent, Col. iv. 9. It must therefore have been written at Rome, about the end of A. D. 63, or in the beginning of 64.

THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
PHILEMON.

After an endearing salutation, Paul, (1.) highly commends and thanks God for Philemon's steady faith in Christ and fervent love to the saints, particularly the poor, 1-7. (2.) In a most obliging and affecting manner recommends Onesimus, formerly a runaway slave, but now a noted convert to Christ, and returning to his master, 8-22. (3.) Concludes with salutations and a benediction, 23-25.

A. M. 4068. PAUL, ^a a prisoner of Jesus Christ, A. D. 64. and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon *our* dearly beloved, ^b and fellow-labourer,

2 And to *our* beloved Apphia, and ^c Archippus ^d *our* fellow-soldier, and to ^e the church in thy house :

3 ^f Grace to you, and peace from God *our* Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

^a Ephesians iii. 1; iv. 1; 2 Timothy i. 8; Verse 9. ^b Philippians ii. 25.—^c Colossians iv. 17.—^d Philippians ii. 25.

Verses 1-3. *Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ*—To whom, as such, Philemon could deny nothing. Paul does not call himself an apostle, because he wrote to Philemon only in the character of a friend, to request a favour rather than to enjoin what was fit, verses 8, 9; *and Timothy*—Who was now with Paul at Rome, though, it is probable, not in prison; *our brother*—So the apostle calls him, to add dignity to his character; *unto Philemon, our dearly beloved*—That is, the dearly beloved of us both; *and fellow-labourer*—In the gospel. This shows that Paul and Philemon were personally known to each other. *And to our beloved Apphia*—Thought by some of the fathers to be Philemon's wife, to whom also the business about which Paul writes in part belonged; *and Archippus our fellow-soldier*—In that holy warfare in which we are engaged. This person, Lightfoot thinks, was Philemon's son. The apostle, by addressing this letter not only to Philemon, but to these persons also, and to all the believers that met in his house, and by wishing them all manner of felicity, interested the whole of Philemon's family to aid him in his solicitation for Onesimus. *Grace to you, &c.*—See on Rom. i. 7.

Verses 4-6. *I thank my God, &c.*—This epistle, which infinitely transcends all the wisdom of this world, gives us an admirable specimen how Chris-

4 ^g I thank my God, making men- A. M. 4068. tion of thee always in my prayers, A. D. 64.

5 ^h Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual ⁱ by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

^g Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19.—^h Eph. i. 2.—ⁱ Eph. i. 16; 1 Thess. i. 2; 2 Thess. i. 3.—^j Eph. i. 15; Col. i. 4; Phil. i. 9, 11.

tians ought to treat of secular affairs from higher principles; *making mention of thee in my prayers*—See Rom. i. 9; *Hearing of thy love and faith*—By telling Philemon that he thanked God always in his prayers for his increasing faith and love, he, in a very delicate manner, prepared him for listening to the request he was about to make in behalf of Onesimus. For it was telling him, in an indirect manner, that his own benevolent disposition would lead him to pardon Onesimus, although he had greatly offended him." *That the communication of thy faith may become effectual, &c.*—That is, that thy liberality to the saints, proceeding from thy faith, or the fruits of thy faith communicated to them, in the many good offices which thou dost, may be effectual for bringing others to the acknowledgment of those good things which are in thee and thy family; *in, or toward, Christ Jesus*—Or, as others understand the verse, the apostle prayed that Philemon's endeavours to communicate his faith in Christ to others, or to bring them to believe in Christ as he did, might be rendered effectual through the evident excellence of his own example and that of his family, inducing them to entertain a favourable opinion of that religion which produced such beneficial effects on the conduct of those who embraced it.

A. M. 4068. 7 For we have great joy and con-
A. D. 64. solation in thy love, because the bow-
els of the saints ² are refreshed by thee, brother.

8 Wherefore, ¹ though I might be much bold
in Christ to enjoin thee that which is conven-
ient,

9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee,

² 2 Cor. vii. 13; 2 Tim. i. 16; Verse 20.—¹ 1 Thess. ii. 6.

Verse 7. *For we have great joy and consolation*—Timothy and I are greatly rejoiced and comforted; *in, or by, thy love*—To God and his people; *because the bowels of the saints*—That is, the saints themselves, to whom it seems Philemon's house was open; *are refreshed by thee, brother*—So the apostle terms him; not merely because he was a believer in Christ, but because he was one whom he tenderly loved. "The refreshment of which the apostle speaks was produced by the relief which Philemon's works of charity brought to them in their distresses. And the saints who were thus refreshed were not those only who lived in Philemon's neighbourhood, but those also who were driven from their homes for the name of Christ, or who went about preaching the gospel. Perhaps also the apostle meant that the knowledge of Philemon's charitable actions gave great joy even to the saints who had no need of his good offices."—Macknight.

Verses 8, 9. *Wherefore*—Because we are so well assured of thy benevolent disposition, and thy constant readiness to do every good in thy power; *though I might be much bold in Christ*—Might take great freedom in virtue of my relation to him, and the authority he has given me; *to enjoin thee* and others *that which is convenient*—Proper and reasonable to be done. *Yet for love's sake, &c.*—That is, instead of using my authority; *I rather beseech thee*—By that love which thou bearest to the saints and me. In how handsome a manner does the apostle just hint at, and immediately drop, the consideration of his power to command, and tenderly entreat Philemon to hearken to his friend, his aged friend, and now a prisoner for Christ! to Paul, his spiritual father; Paul, grown old in the service of the gospel, and now also confined with a chain for preaching it; considerations which must have made a deep impression on Philemon, who, being himself a sincere Christian, could not but wish to gratify one who, at the expense of unspeakable labour and suffering, had done the greatest service to mankind, by communicating to them the knowledge of God, of Christ, and of the gospel.

Verses 10-14. *I beseech thee*—There is a beautiful emphasis in the repetition of these words, which he had introduced in the preceding verse; *for my son*—The son of my age. The order of the original words is this; *I entreat thee for a son of mine, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus*—On this Macknight remarks as follows: "Onesimus's name at the end of the sentence has a fine effect, by keep-

being such a one as Paul the aged, A. M. 4068.
² and now also a prisoner of Jesus A. D. 64.
Christ.

10 I beseech thee for my son ² Onesimus,
° whom I have begotten in my bonds :

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofit-
able, but now profitable to thee and to me :

² Verse 1.—Col. iv. 9.—¹ 1 Cor. iv. 15; Gal. iv. 19.

ing the reader in suspense. This every person of taste must perceive. The apostle would not so much as mention Onesimus's name till he had prepared Philemon for hearing it; and when he does mention it, instead of calling him a *fugitive slave*, or even a *slave* simply, he calls him *his own son*, to show that he had a tender affection for him, and was much interested in his welfare. And then, by telling Philemon that he had begotten him in his bonds, he insinuated that Onesimus was not discouraged from becoming a Christian by the apostle's bonds. Being, therefore, a firm believer, he was not unworthy of the pardon the apostle solicited for him. Indeed, in this beautiful passage there is a group of the most affecting arguments closely crowded together. On the one hand we have Philemon's own reputation for goodness; his friendship to the apostle, his respect for his character, reverence for his age, (now it is supposed about sixty or sixty-three,) compassion for his bonds, and at the same time an insinuation of that obedience which Philemon owed to him as an apostle. On the other hand we have Onesimus's repentance and return to virtue, his profession of Christianity, notwithstanding the evils to which it exposed him, and his being the object of his spiritual father's tender affection. In short, every word contains an argument. Philemon therefore must have been exceedingly affected by this moving passage." *Who in time past was to thee unprofitable*—We have just seen with what endearment the apostle called Onesimus *his son*, begotten in his bonds, before he mentioned his name; here we see with what fine address, as soon as he had mentioned it, he touches on his former misbehaviour, giving it the softest name possible, and instantly passing on to the happy change that was now made upon him, so disposing Philemon to attend to his request, and the motives whereby he enforced it: *but now profitable*—No one should be expected to be a good servant before he is a good man. The apostle manifestly alludes to his name *Onesimus*, which signifies *profitable*. *To thee and to me*—Or rather, *even as to me*. To show the sincerity of Onesimus's repentance, the apostle mentions the experience which he himself had had of his benevolent disposition, in the many affectionate services which he had received from him during his confinement. After such a proof Philemon could have no doubt of Onesimus's piety and fidelity. "It has been justly observed, that it was strange Onesimus, who had been so wicked in the pious family of Philemon, amidst all the religious opportunities he enjoyed there, should

A. M. 4068. 12 Whom I have sent again : thou
A. D. 61. therefore receive him, that is, mine
own bowels :

13 Whom I would have retained with me,
that in thy stead he might have ministered
unto me in the bonds of the gospel :

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing ;
that thy benefit should not be as it were of
necessity, but willingly.

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for

† 1 Cor. xvi. 17 ; Phil. ii. 30.—† 2 Cor. ix. 7.—† Gen.
xlv. 5, 8.

meet with conversion in his rambles at Rome. Instances have often happened somewhat of a similar nature; but it is very unjustifiable, and may probably be fatal, for any to presume on the like extraordinary interpositions of providence and grace in their favour."—Doddridge. *Whom*—How agreeable and useful soever he might have been to me here; *I have sent back to thee again; thou therefore receive him*—Into thy family with readiness and affection. Receive him, did I say? nay rather, receive, as it were, *my own bowels*—A person whom I so tenderly love, that he may seem, as it were, to carry my heart along with him whithersoever he goes. Such is the natural affection of a father in Christ toward his spiritual children. As Bengelius observes, by laying aside his apostolical authority, St. Paul had brought himself to a level with Philemon; and now to exalt Onesimus, and to display that dignity which a man acquires by becoming a sincere Christian, he calls him, not *his son* simply, but *his own bowels*; or, as it is expressed verse 17, *his very self*. *Whom I would have retained, that in thy stead, &c.*—That he might have performed those services for me, which thou, if present, wouldst gladly have performed thyself. Thus the apostle insinuates to Philemon the obligation he was under to assist, with his personal services, him who was his spiritual father; and more especially while he was confined with a chain for preaching the gospel of Christ. *But without thy mind*—That is, without thy express consent; *would I do nothing*—In this affair. From this we learn, that however just our title may be to beneficent actions from others, they must not be compelled to perform them; they must do them voluntarily; *that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity*—Or by constraint, for Philemon would not have refused it; *but willingly*—"If Onesimus had remained with the apostle in Rome, and Philemon had pardoned him at the apostle's intercession, that favour would not have appeared so clearly to have been bestowed voluntarily, as when Onesimus returned and put himself in his master's power, and was received again into his family. The apostle, therefore, sent him back to Philemon, that his receiving him might be known to have proceeded from his own merciful disposition."—Macknight.

Verses 15, 16. *For perhaps he therefore departed*
--Δια τούτο εχάρισθη, for this reason he was sepa-

a season, that thou shouldest receive A. M. 4068.
him for ever ; A. D. 64.

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee
ought, put that on mine account ;

* Matt. xxiii. 8 ; 1 Tim. vi. 2.—† Col. iii. 22.—* 2 Cor.
viii. 23.

rated; a soft expression, to denote Onesimus's running away from his master; for it contains an insinuation that this had happened providentially; *for a season*—Προς ὥραν, for an hour, a little while; *that thou shouldest receive him*—ἵνα αὐτόν αὐτὸν ἀπέχης, mightest have or possess him; *for ever*—That is, as Dr. Doddridge paraphrases the clause, "That he might not only be dear and useful to thee during all the remainder of his life, as a servant, whose ear is, as it were, bored to the door of thy house, (to allude to the Hebrew custom, Exod. xxi. 6,) but that he might indeed be a source of eternal delight to thee in that infinitely better world, where all distinctions between masters and their slaves shall cease, even that world of complete liberty and everlasting friendship."—The apostle here made the same kind of apology for Onesimus which Joseph made for his brethren, (Gen. xlv. 5.) *Now therefore be not grieved; for God did send me before you to preserve life*. The providence of God often brings good out of evil. Yet we must not for that reason do evil that good may come. *Not now as a servant*—Or *slave*, as he was formerly, when ignorant and wicked, much less as a fugitive slave, to be long frowned upon; *but above a slave*, or even a common *servant*—As standing in another, a much more dear and honourable relation; *as a brother beloved, especially to me*—Whom he has attended with great assiduity in my afflictions; *but how much more unto thee*—To whom he belongs; *both in the flesh*—As a dutiful servant; *and in the Lord*—As a fellow-Christian. That Philemon might not be offended at him for calling his fugitive slave *his brother*, the apostle acknowledges him for his own brother also, as being now a son of God, and an heir of life eternal.

Verses 17-20. *If thou count me therefore a partner*—Κοινωνόν, a companion, one having fellowship with thee in Christ, or a sharer with thee in the blessings of the gospel, the dearest bond of friendship; *receive him as myself*—Even as thou wouldst receive me, if I could have the satisfaction of paying thee a visit in person. *If he hath wronged thee*—Ἐὰν τι ἥδικησῃ, if he hath injured thee in any thing; *or oweth thee ought*—We cannot infer from this that Onesimus had robbed his master: it seems to be no more than a soft way of expressing the loss which Philemon had sustained by being deprived of

A. M. 4068. 19 I Paul have written *it* with
A. D. 64. mine own hand, I will repay it:

albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: * refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21 † Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for

* Verse 7.—† 2 Cor. vii. 16.—* Phil. i. 25; ii. 24.—† 2 Cor. i. 11.—^b Col. i. 7; iv. 12.—^c Acts xii. 12, 25.

his slave's service; *put that on my account*—Charge it to me. *I have written this with my own hand*—And do thereby, as it were, give thee legal security for it; *I will repay it*—If thou requirest it; *albeit I do not say, &c.*—That is, not to say to thee, that as I was the instrument of thy conversion to Christ; *thou owest unto me even thine own self besides*—Besides pardoning Onesimus, thou owest to me, under God, thy very existence as a Christian, or the present and everlasting salvation of thy soul. What an immense obligation! Yet rather than be constrained to solicit Onesimus's pardon on account of that obligation, he would himself pay to Philemon every thing Onesimus owed him. How ungrateful would Philemon have showed himself if he had refused to grant the apostle's desire. *Yea, brother*—Let me prevail upon thee in this request; *let me have joy of thee in the Lord*—Let me obtain this kindness from thee for the Lord's sake, which will much rejoice me. *Refresh my bowels*—Give me the most exquisite and Christian pleasure; *in the Lord*—In a matter so agreeable to the will of Christ. The word *αναπαύω*, rendered *refresh*, "is very emphatical. It literally signifies, *to appease, or quiet*, which strongly intimates the commotion he felt, through the ardour of his concern for Onesimus; and seems to represent the eagerness of his desire for his re-establishment in Philemon's family, by the appetite of hunger."—Doddridge.

Verses 21, 22. *Having confidence in thy obedience*—That thou wilt comply with my request; *I wrote*—Rather, *I have written*; *to thee*—With great freedom; *knowing that thou wilt do more than I say*—Wilt show Onesimus more kindness than I have expressed. Some commentators think the apostle here insinuates to Philemon, that it would be proper for him to give Onesimus his freedom, and many are of opinion that he actually did so. *But withal*—*Αμα δε, but at the same time*, that I beseech thee to pardon Onesimus, I request thee also to *prepare me a lodging*—In Colosse. "The apostle," says Macknight, "having experienced the advantage of having a hired house of his own in Rome, where he preached the gospel to all who came to him, very prudently desired Philemon to provide for him such another house in Colosse, and not a lodging in Philemon's

* I trust that * through your prayers A. M. 4068.
I shall be given unto you. A. D. 64.

23 There salute thee ^b Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 * Marcus, ^d Aristarchus, * Demas, ^f Lucas, my fellow-labourers.

25 * The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.

^d Acts xix. 29; xxvii. 2; Coloss. iv. 10.—^e Coloss. iv. 14.
^f 2 Tim. iv. 11.—^g 2 Tim. iv. 22.

own house, as some suppose. It seems he proposed to stay a while in Colosse, and wished to have a house in some frequented part of the city, to receive conveniently all who might be desirous of information concerning his doctrine." Theodoret observes, that the apostle's resolution to visit Philemon soon, signified to him in this letter, naturally added weight to his solicitation in behalf of Onesimus. *For I trust*—*Ελπίζω, I hope*; *that through your prayers I shall be given unto you*—Shall be restored to liberty. The efficacy which in Scripture is ascribed to prayer, is a great encouragement to the people of God to have recourse to it in all their straits, agreeably to the exhortation and example of Christ and his apostles. But to render prayer effectual, it must, as James observes, (chap. i. 6,) be offered *in faith*; that is, in a full persuasion of the wisdom and power, goodness and faithfulness of God, and a confidence in him that, when we ask with sincerity, earnestness, and importunity, what is according to his will, or what his word authorizes us to ask, he will grant our petitions, as far as will be for our good and his glory. See 1 John v. 14, 15. On this passage, Whitby justly observes, that if the apostle believed the prayers of angels and departed saints were effectual for procuring blessings to God's people on earth, it is strange that he hath not, throughout the whole of his epistles, so much as once addressed any prayers to them, or directed others so to do.

Verses 23–25. *There salute thee Epaphras, &c.*—Respecting these persons, see on Col. iv. 10, 12, 14. In that chapter, verse 10, *Aristarchus* is called the apostle's fellow-prisoner; but as that particular is not mentioned here, it is not improbable that he had obtained his liberty about the time when this letter was written. *Demas* afterward forsook the apostle, namely, during his second imprisonment, from love to this present world, 2 Tim. iv. 10. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*—That is, his unmerited favour, and the influences of his Spirit; *be with your spirit*—Imparting that wisdom and power, that peace and comfort, which nothing but the communications of his grace can give. As the word *υμῶν, your*, is plural, it signifies that the apostle's wish did not respect Philemon alone, but all the persons mentioned in the inscription of this letter.

PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

HEBREWS.

AS most of the principal doctrines of the gospel are more expressly asserted and more fully explained in this epistle to the Hebrews than in any other of the inspired writings, it is peculiarly important that its authenticity and divine authority should be established. In order to this, it is only necessary to show that it was written by St. Paul, whose inspiration and apostleship are universally acknowledged, and consequently the divine authority of all his official writings. Now that he was the author of this epistle seems to be satisfactorily proved by the following arguments, advanced by Dr. Whitby and many others.

First, from the words of St. Peter, (2 Epist. iii. 15, 16,) "As our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you," it is evident, 1. That Paul had written to them to whom St. Peter was then writing, namely, to the believing Jews in general, (2 Peter i. 1,) many of whom were dispersed in divers countries, as mentioned 1 Peter i. 1. 2. That he had written to them a certain letter, distinct from all his other epistolary writings, as appears from those words, "as also in all his epistles," that is, his other epistles. Since then none of the ancients say that this epistle was lost, it must be that which bears the name of "the epistle to the Hebrews." Some indeed have thought, the epistle intended by St. Peter might be that written to the Romans, in which St. Paul speaks to the Jews by name, chap. ii. 17. But, 1. That passage is plainly addressed to the unbelieving Jews, and concerned them only: whereas, St. Peter writes to the brethren, chap. iii. 12; the beloved, verses 1, 14, 17; to them who had "received like precious faith," chap. i. 1. He therefore could not mean the Jews, of whom St. Paul speaks in the epistle to the Romans.

A second argument to prove that St. Paul was the author of this epistle is taken from these words, "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you: They of Italy salute you," chap. xiii. 23, 24. For it was customary with St. Paul, when he wrote to the churches, to call Timothy his brother: see 2 Cor. i. 1; Col. i. 1; 1 Thess. iii. 2; Philemon 1. Timothy was a prisoner at Rome in the seventh year of Nero, and set at liberty the eighth, says Dr. Lightfoot, Harm., pp. 139, 140. Of which here the author of this epistle gives notice, and says, he would come with him to them; that is, to the Jews in Judea, to whom we shall soon see this epistle was written. Now Timothy, we know, was still the companion of St. Paul. Lastly, he desires them to pray for him, which is frequently done by St. Paul in most of his epistles, but is never done in any of the catholic epistles. And, in requesting their prayers, he adds a circumstance which more fully characterizes him; "Pray for me," says he, "that I may be restored to you the sooner." Now Paul had been sent bound from Judea to Rome, and therefore his return from Rome to Judea was properly a restoring of him to them. And that he was thus restored to them, we learn from Chrysostom declaring, that, being set at liberty, he went to Spain, thence to Judea, and so back to Rome.

Thirdly. That this epistle was written or composed by St. Paul, may yet more strongly be concluded from the authority of the ancients; for that they did deliver this as the epistle of St. Paul, and that they were not rash in so doing, we learn from the words of Origen. Now among the ancients we may reckon Clemens Romanus, the companion of, and co-worker with, St. Paul; who, as Eusebius

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and St. Jerome observe, entertained many sentiments which are in this epistle, and used many expressions, word for word, taken thence; which show that this epistle was not new, and that it is duly reckoned among the writings of this apostle. Clemens Alexandrinus cites those words of St. Paul, "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6; adding, that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," chap. xi. 1; *κατα τον θειον αποστολον*, "according to the divine apostle." And again he saith, *Ο θειος αποστολος*, "The divine apostle fears not to say, 'Remember the former days, in which being enlightened, ye suffered a great fight of affliction,'" Heb. x. 32. And so he proceeds to cite the apostle's words to the end of the chapter, and then gives the substance of chap. xi., and the exhortation in the beginning of chap. xii., verses 1, 2. And that this divine apostle was St. Paul, we are assured from these words: "Paul also writing to the Hebrews, relapsing from the faith unto the law, saith, 'Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat,'" Heb. v. 12. In the third century Origen, citing the very words now mentioned, and the following words, "For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness," (verses 13, 14,) saith, "He that wrote this was the same Paul who said to the Corinthians, 'I have fed you with milk, and not with meat,'" &c., 1 Cor. iii. 2. In his Philocalia he says, "The Apostle Paul, who said to the Corinthians, 'These things happened in a figure, and they were written for us on whom the ends of the ages are come,' (1 Cor. x. 11,) doth also, in another epistle, use these words relating to the tabernacle, 'Thou shalt make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the mount,'" Heb. viii. 5. And that "the apostle who said, 'Jerusalem which is above is free, and is the mother of us all,' (Gal. iv. 26,) said also in another epistle, 'Ye are come to mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,'" &c., Heb. xii. 22, 23. In his exhortation to martyrdom he hath these words, *Φησι πε ο Παυλος*, "St. Paul, speaking somewhere to them who suffered from the beginning, and exhorting them to suffer patiently the trials which afterward fell upon them for the word, saith, 'Call to remembrance the former days, in which ye, being enlightened, suffered a great fight of afflictions.' 'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience,'" Heb. x. 32-36. And in his answer to Africanus, having cited these words from this epistle, "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword," (Heb. xi. 37,) he says, "If any person, being pressed with these words, should fall into the opinion of those who reject this epistle as not one of St. Paul's, he would use other words to demonstrate to him that it was the epistle of St. Paul." He also adds, that "the sentiments contained in it are admirable, and in no respect inferior to the writings of the apostles, as he who diligently reads them must confess. In a word, when this epistle was denied by the Arians in the fourth century, because they were not able to resist the conviction it affords of our Lord's divinity, Theodoret says, "They ought at least to revere the length of time in which the children of the church have read this epistle in the churches, namely, as long as they have read the apostolic writings; or, if this be not sufficient to persuade them, they should hearken to Eusebius, of whom they boast as of the patron of their doctrine; for he confesses this was St. Paul's epistle, and declares that all the ancients had this opinion of it."

That this epistle was written and directed to the Jews dwelling in Judea and Palestine, though not so as to exclude the believing Jews of the dispersion, was the opinion of the ancients. This may be argued from its being inscribed to the Hebrews, rather than to the Jews. It must have been written to the Hebrews, or converts from Judaism to Christianity, who inhabited some one particular country, both because the bearer of it, whoever he was, could not deliver it to all the Jews dispersed through the whole world, and because its author directs them to pray that he might be restored to them, and promises to come and visit them. And this country, most probably, was Judea, where the converts from Judaism to Christianity were almost incessantly persecuted by their unbelieving brethren, who tenaciously adhered to the constitution and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, which Christianity superseded; the title, therefore, "To the Hebrews," must determine the place, and point out the Jews that dwelt in Judea, a sense which the Holy Ghost puts upon the name "Hebrews," where it is said, "There was a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews," Acts vi. 1; by the "Hellenists" meaning the Jews that dwelt in foreign countries among the Greeks, and by the "Hebrews," those that dwelt in Judea.

But it cannot be reasonably concluded from hence that this epistle was written in Hebrew, or in

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Syriac; for the gospel of St. John, and his first epistle, the catholic epistles of James, Peter, and Jude, were also written to the Jews, and yet were written in Greek, that being a tongue so well known to the Jews, that in all their discourses with the Roman governors, who used the Greek tongue, we never read, either in Scripture or Josephus, that the Jews spake to them, or they unto the Jews, by an interpreter; nor are there any of the ancients who pretend to have seen any Hebrew copy of this epistle. That it was written in Greek, appears not only from the passages of Scripture so often cited in it from the Septuagint, even where they differ from the Hebrew, (chap. i. 6; iii. 8-10; viii. 8-10; x. 37, 38,) but also from chap. vii. 2, where we read thus, *πρωτον μεν ερμηνευομενος βασιλευς δικαιοσυνης*, "first being interpreted king of righteousness, and afterward king of Salem, which is king of peace;" for both the word "Melchisedec," and "king of Salem," being in the first verse, should have been there interpreted, had this been the addition of the interpreter; for so we find it is throughout the New Testament, where the interpretation immediately follows the Hebrew word or phrase, as Mark v. 41, "Talitha cumi, which is by interpretation, Daughter, arise," (see Mark xv. 22; Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34; John i. 38, 41; ix. 7; xix. 17; Acts iv. 36; ix. 36; xiii. 8,) whereas here the word "Melchisedec" is in the beginning of the first verse, and the supposed addition of the interpreter is added where the word is not; so "king of Salem" is in the first verse not interpreted, and when it is repeated then comes the interpretation, which plainly shows that it is not made to give the sense, but to explain the mystery contained in the words, namely, that "Christ" was "our peace," (Eph. ii. 14,) and "his sceptre" was "a sceptre of righteousness," chap. i. 8.

The want of St. Paul's name has been mentioned by some as a reason for doubting its being originally written by him, or for supposing our present Greek copy is only a translation of an epistle which was written in Hebrew. But this can be no sufficient reason for calling in question his being the author of it. For in our canon of the New Testament, there are epistles universally acknowledged to be the productions of an inspired apostle, notwithstanding his name is nowhere inserted in them; for instance, the three epistles of the Apostle John, who for some reasons, now not known, hath omitted his name in all of them; his first epistle beginning exactly like the epistle to the Hebrews, while in his other epistles he calls himself simply, "the presbyter," or "elder." It is true, Paul commonly inserted his name in the beginning of his letters. Yet in this to the Hebrews, he deviated from his usual manner, probably for the following reasons:—1. Because the doctrines which he set forth in it, being wholly founded by him on the Jewish scriptures, the faith of the Hebrews in these doctrines was to stand, not on the authority of the writer who taught them, but on the clearness of the testimonies which he produced from the Scriptures, the propriety of his application of these testimonies, and the justness of the conclusions which he deduced from them. 2. As Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles, in writing to the Hebrews he did not assume his apostolical character, because it was little respected by the unbelieving Jews and the Judaizing Christians, who traduced him as one who taught the Jews, living in foreign countries, to forsake Moses, Acts xxi. 21. For which reason, instead of writing to the Hebrews with the authority of an apostle, he, in the conclusion of his letter, "besought them to suffer the word of exhortation," (chap. xiii. 22,) and protested, that in the whole of the doctrine delivered to them, he had maintained a good conscience, verse 18. Indeed, if he had prefixed his name to this epistle, as he did to the epistles addressed to the Gentile Christians, and termed himself an "apostle of Christ," it might have so awakened the prejudices conceived against him by the Jewish converts, as to have caused them to throw his letter aside unperused.

As for the date of this epistle, it seems evident that it was written after that to the Colossians and to Philemon; for there he is said to be "Paul the prisoner;" here we find him "set at liberty," and hoping to come quickly to those to whom he writes: those epistles, therefore, being written in the sixty-fourth year of Christ, this must at least have been written in the following year. Again, in the epistle to the Colossians we have mention of Timothy, but nothing of his bonds; here we have mention both of his imprisonment and his deliverance, which may well cast this epistle into the year above mentioned.

The manifest design of St. Paul in this epistle was to confirm the Jewish Christians in the faith and practice of the gospel of Christ, from which they were in danger of apostatizing, either through the insinuations or ill treatment of their persecutors, or to recover such as had apostatized. I. As the zealous defenders of the Mosaic law would naturally insist upon the divine authority of Moses,

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the distinguishing glory and majesty which attended its first promulgation by the ministry of angels, and the special privileges with which it invested those who adhered to it, and by arguments and insinuations of that kind would endeavour to shake the faith of those Jews who had embraced Christianity, and to prevail on them to renounce it, and return to Judaism, the apostle shows that in all these several particulars the gospel was infinitely superior to the law; which topic he pursues from chap. i.—xi. 1. He reminds the believing Hebrews of the extraordinary favours shown them by God, in giving them a revelation by his own Son, whose glory was far superior to that of angels, (chap. i. throughout,) very naturally inferring from hence, the danger of despising Christ on account of his humiliation, which, in perfect consistence with his dominion over the world to come, was voluntarily submitted to by him for wise and important reasons, particularly to deliver us from the fear of death, and encourage the freedom of our access to God, chap. ii. 2. With the same view he further magnifies Christ as superior to Moses, their great legislator; and from the punishment inflicted on those who rebelled against the authority of Moses, he infers the danger of contemning the promises of the gospel, chap. iii. 1–13. And as it was an easy transition, while treating on that subject, to call to mind that rest in Canaan to which the authority wherewith Moses was invested was intended to lead the Israelites, the apostle, 3. Cautions them against the sin of unbelief, as what would prevent their entering into a state of rest far superior to what the Jews ever enjoyed, (chap. ii. 14; iv. 11,) a caution which is still further enforced by awful views of God's omniscience, and a lively representation of the high-priesthood of Christ, of whose divine appointment, gracious administration, and previous suffering, he goes on to discourse, promising further illustrations of so important a topic, chap. iv. 12, 14. 4. He declares that he would advance to sublimer truths, without dwelling upon the first principles, for the sake of those who might have apostatized from the truth, and whose case he represents as very hopeless, (chap. vi. 1–9,) and then, for the establishment and comfort of sincere believers, he sets before them the consideration of the goodness of God, and his fidelity to his promises, the performance of which is sealed by the entrance of Christ into heaven as our forerunner, chap. vi. 10, to the end. 5. Still further to illustrate the character of our Lord, he enters into a parallel between him and Melchisedec, as agreeing in title and descent; and from instances wherein the priesthood of Melchisedec excelled the Levitical, he infers that the glory of the priesthood of Christ surpassed that under the law, chap. vii. 1–17. 6. From these premises, which plainly manifested the defects of the Aaronical priesthood, he argues that it was not only excelled, but consummated, by that of Christ, to which it was introductory and subservient; and, of consequence, that the obligation of the law was henceforth dissolved, chap. vii. 18, to the end. Then, 7. Recapitulating what he had already demonstrated concerning the superior dignity of Christ's priesthood, he thence illustrates the distinguished excellence of the new covenant, as not only foretold by Jeremiah, but evidently enriched with much better promises than the old, (chap. viii., throughout,) explaining further the doctrine of the priesthood and intercession of Christ, by comparing it to what the Jewish high-priest did on the great day of atonement, chap. ix. 1–14. And, 8. Having enlarged on the necessity of shedding Christ's blood, and the sufficiency of the atonement made by it, (chap. ix. 15, to the end,) and proved the legal ceremonies could not, by any means, purify the conscience, and from thence argued the insufficiency of the Mosaic law, and the necessity of looking beyond it, (chap. x. 1–15,) the apostle urges the Hebrews to improve the privileges which such a High-Priest and covenant conferred on them, to the purposes of approaching God with confidence, a constant attendance on his worship, and most benevolent regards to each other, chap. x. 15–25. Having thus obviated the insinuations and objections of the Jews to the gospel of Christ, as inferior to the Mosaic dispensation, by showing its transcendent excellence in a clear and convincing light, for the satisfaction and establishment of the believing Hebrews, the apostle proceeds,

II. To awaken their attention, and fortify their minds against the storm of persecution, which had come, and was further likely to come upon them, for the sake of the Christian faith. To this end he reminds them of the extremities they had already endured in defence of the gospel, and of the fatal consequences which would attend their apostacy, (chap. x. 26, to the end,) calling to their remembrance the renowned examples of faith and fortitude which had been exhibited by holy men mentioned in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, (chap. xi. 1–29,) concluding his discourse with glancing on many illustrious worthies whom he does not name; and, besides those recorded in Scripture, referring also to the case of several who suffered under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, ch. xi. 30; xii. 2

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III. Having thus executed his design in the argumentative part of the epistle, he applies the whole, by exhorting the Hebrew Christians to sustain and improve the afflictions to which they were exposed, and to exert themselves vigorously to promote the united interests of peace and holiness, chap. xii. 3-14, cautioning them against disparaging the blessings of the gospel, and making them a sacrifice either to any secular views, or sensual gratifications; representing the incomparable excellence of these blessings, and the wonderful manner in which they were introduced, which even the introduction of the Jewish economy, glorious and magnificent as it was, did by no means equal, chap. xii. 15-29; exhorting them to brotherly affection, purity, compassion, dependance on the divine care, steadfastness in the profession of the truth, and to a life of thankfulness to God, and benevolence to man, from the consideration of the inestimable privileges derived to us from Christ, which ought always to encourage us resolutely to endure any infamy and suffering which we may meet with in his cause, chap. xiii. 1-16; concluding the whole with recommending to them some particular regards to their pious ministers, entreating their prayers, and adding some salutations, and a solemn benediction, chap. xiii. 17, to the end. See Whitby, Macknight, and Doddridge.

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THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
 TO THE
HEBREWS.

CHAPTER I.

In this chapter, (1.) The apostle represents to the Hebrews, to whom he writes, the great favour God had done them in giving them a new revelation by his own Son; whose character he describes, and whose humiliation, in order to the expiation of our sins, and his exaltation to the right hand of God, as a reward of his sufferings and for our sakes, he transiently notices, 1-3. (2.) From several passages of the Old Testament he proves him to be superior to angels, and even to be the true God, the Creator of all things, 4-14.

A. M. 4068. **G**OD, * who at sundry times and * in
 A. D. 64. divers manners spake in time

past unto the fathers by the pro- A. M. 4068.
 phets, A. D. 64.

* Nativity of Christ, epistle, verse 1 to verse 37.

* Num. xii. 6-8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *God, &c.*—After the manner of the best writers, the apostle begins this most instructive epistle with proposing the subjects of which he is about to discourse; namely, four important facts, on which the authority of the gospel, as a revelation from God, is built; and which, if well established, should induce unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles, to renounce their infidelity and embrace the gospel. Of these facts, the first is, that the same God, who gave the former revelations to the fathers of the Jewish nation, hath in these last days given the gospel to all mankind. This the apostle mentions first of all, to show the agreement of the gospel with the former revelations. For if there were any real opposition between the Jewish and Christian revelations, the authority of one or of both of them would be destroyed; whereas these revelations agreeing in all things, they mutually explain and support each other. Thus in this verse; *God, who at sundry times*—The creation was revealed in the time of Adam; the last judgment in the time of Enoch; the coming of the Messiah in the time of Abraham, and the following patriarchs; the offices he should sustain, and the process he should go through in accomplishing man's redemption, in the time of Moses, of David, of Isaiah, and the other prophets; and so at various times more explicit knowledge was given. But the word *πολυμερως* rather signifies *in sundry parts, parcels, or degrees*, in opposition to a complete revelation; or the gradual discovery of the mind and will of God, by communications, one after another, as the church could bear the light of them. Thus to Adam, victory over the grand enemy of mankind by the Seed of the woman,

was promised: to Abraham, that all mankind should be blessed in him and his seed: to Jacob, that the promised Seed of the woman and of Abraham should be a peaceful Prince, unto whom *the gathering of the people should be*: by Moses, that he should be an extraordinary Prophet, the disobeying of whom would be punished with certain destruction: by David, that he should be a Priest of a higher order than that of Aaron, and a King in Zion, whose dominion should extend *from sea to sea, yea, to the ends of the earth*, Psa. lxxii. 1, 8: by Isaiah, that he should be *the Child born, the Son given, and yet the mighty God, of the increase of whose government and peace there should be no end*; that he should go through great scenes of suffering, (chap. liii.,) but should expiate sin, and conquer death: by Jeremiah, that he should be *the Lord our righteousness*: by Ezekiel, *the one Shepherd of God's people*, chap. xxxiv. 23: by Zechariah, that he should build the spiritual temple, bear the glory, and be a Priest upon his throne; from whence, according to Joel, he should pour out his Spirit in an extraordinary measure upon his disciples: by Haggai and Malachi, that he should come to the temple, built after the return from Babylon, and that awful judgments should follow his coming upon such as rejected him. If (says Dr. Owen) we consider the whole progress of divine revelation from the beginning of the world, we shall find that it comprehends four principal parts or degrees, with such as were subservient to them. The *first*, made to Adam, was the principle of faith and obedience to the antediluvian fathers, and to this were subservient all the consequent particular revelations before the flood. The *second*, to Noah after the flood, contained the renewal of the covenant, and establishment of

A. M. 4068. 2 Hath ^bin these last days ^cspoken
A. D. 64. unto us by his Son, ^dwhom he hath

appointed heir of all things, ^eby whom A. M. 4068.
also he made the worlds; A. D. 64.

^b Deut. iv. 30; Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10.—^c John i. 17; xv. 15; Chap. ii. 3.—^d Psa. ii. 8; Matt. xxi. 38; xxviii. 18;

John iii. 35; Rom. viii. 17.—^e John i. 3; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 16.

the church in his family, whereunto were subservient the revelations made to Melchizedec (Gen. xiv. 19) and others, before the calling of Abraham. The *third*, to Abraham, implied a peculiar restriction of the promise to his seed, and a fuller illustration of the nature of it confirmed in the revelations made to Isaac, Jacob, and others of their posterity. The *fourth*, to Moses, comprehended the giving of the law, and erection of the Jewish Church in the wilderness; to which was principally subservient the revelation made to David, which was peculiarly designed to perfect the Old Testament worship. To which we may add the revelations made to Solomon, and the prophets in their respective days; particularly those who, before and during the captivity, pleaded with the people about their defection by scandalous sins and false worship: and Ezra, with the prophets that assisted in the reformation of the church after its return from Babylon, who in an eminent manner excited the people to expect the Messiah. These were the principal parts and degrees of divine revelation, from the foundation of the world to the coming of Christ, at least until his forerunner, John the Baptist. And by thus reminding the Hebrews, that the will of God was not formerly revealed to his church all at once, by Moses or any other, but by several parts and degrees, by new additions of light, as in his infinite wisdom he saw meet, the apostle clearly convinces them of their mistake in obstinately adhering to the Mosaic institutions. It is as if he had said, Consider the way whereby God revealed his will to the church hitherto. Hath it not been by parts and degrees? Hath he at any time shut up the progress of revelation? Hath he not always kept the church in expectation of new discoveries of his will? Did he ever declare that he would add no more to what he had commanded; or make no alteration in what he had instituted? So far from it, that Moses, when he had finished all his work in the Lord's house, told the people God would raise up another prophet like unto him, that is, who should reveal new laws and institutions as he had done, whom they were to hear and obey on the penalty of utter extermination, Deut. xviii. 15, &c. But in opposition to this gradual revelation, the apostle intimates that now, by Jesus the Messiah, the Lord had begun and finished the whole revelation of his will, according to their own hopes and expectations.

And in *divers manners*—By dreams, visions, audible voices, the appearances of angels, of the Lord in a human form, by Urim and Thummim, and the immediate inspiration of his Spirit, 2 Pet. i. 21; 1 Pet. i. 11. Or, the expression, *divers manners*, may refer to the different ways in which the prophets communicated the different revelations which they received to the fathers. They did it in types and figures, significant actions, and dark sayings, as well

as in plain language: whereas the gospel revelation was spoken by Christ and his apostles in one manner only, namely, in plain language; and to this one entire and perfect revelation the various, partial, imperfect revelations made before are opposed. *Spake in time past*—Παλαι, of old, or anciently. The word, taken *absolutely*, comprises the whole space of time from the giving of the first promise to the end of the Old Testament revelations. Taken as relating to the Jews, it includes the ages intervening between the giving of the law and the death of the last prophet, Malachi, namely, the space of twenty-one jubilees, or near one thousand one hundred years, after which, as the Jews confess, the Spirit of prophecy was taken from Israel. The word *spake* is put for every kind of divine communication: *unto the fathers*—The ancestors of the Jewish nation; *by the prophets*—The mention of whom is a virtual declaration that the apostle received the whole Old Testament as of divine authority, and was not about to advance any doctrine in contradiction to it. Indeed, as he was writing to the Hebrews, many of whom were prejudiced against him as a person who departed from Moses and the prophets, it was an instance of great wisdom in him to signify, at the very beginning of his epistle, that he believed the revelations given by them of old. Thus, by removing one great cause of prejudice from those to whom he wrote, he would open the way for their receiving the doctrines contained in his epistle, a summary of which we have in the two next verses.

Verse 2. *Hath in these last days*—Namely, the last of the Jewish Church and state, which were then drawing to their final abolition. Or the times of the Messiah may be intended, as 2 Tim. iii. 1. Here we have the second fact of which the apostle proposed to discourse, namely, that the person by whom God hath revealed the gospel is his Son, appearing in the human nature; a person far superior to the highest creatures, even a person properly divine; from which it is reasonable to infer, that the revelation made by him to mankind is more perfect than that made to the Jews by angels, and that the dispensation founded thereon is a better and more permanent dispensation than the law. In saying, *God hath spoken to us*, the apostle chiefly intends the members of the Jewish Church. The Jews of those times were very apt to think if they had lived in the days of the former prophets, and had heard them deliver their message from God, they would have received it with cheerful obedience. Their only unhappiness, as they thought, was, that they were born out of due time, as to prophetic revelations, Matt. xxiii. 30. Now the apostle, aware of this prejudice, informs them that God, in the revelation of the gospel, had spoken to themselves what they so much desired; and that if they did not attend to this word, they must needs be self-condemned. Besides that,

A. M. 4068. 3 ' Who being the brightness of his
A. D. 61. glory, and the express image of his
person, and ^g upholding all things by the word

^f John i. 14; xiv. 9; 2 Corinthians iv. 4; Colossians i. 15.
^g John i. 4; Col. i. 17; Rev. iv. 11.—^h Chap. vii. 27; ix. 12.

the care and love which God had manifested toward them, in speaking to them in this immediate manner, requiring the most indisputable obedience, especially considering how far this mode excelled what he had before used toward their fathers. For this revelation, by the Son of God, is more perfect than any preceding one, because, 1st, It is more *clear*, even respecting things formerly revealed; as, for instance, God's spiritual nature, (John iv. 24,) and some of his attributes, particularly his love; the fall and depravity of man; his redemption; the person, offices, and work of the Redeemer; the salvation that is through him, particularly as it is future and eternal; that it is attained by faith, the fruits of which, and the spirituality of God's law, are set in a clearer point of view in the gospel than formerly. 2d, More *full*, giving us explicit information of things hardly intimated before, as the abolition of the Jewish dispensation, the temporary rejection of their nation because of their unbelief, a general and solemn judgment; that the consequences of it will be eternal; that the heavens and the earth shall be destroyed, and a new heaven and new earth shall be prepared for the habitation of the righteous. So that whereas the former dispensations might be compared to starlight, or moonshine, this last revelation is called *the day-spring from on high visiting us*, (Luke i. 78, 79,) and *the Sun of righteousness arising upon us*: and no wonder, considering that the messenger of this new covenant is the Son of God, to whom God's will was known not by dreams, visions, voices, &c., or in any of the ways before mentioned, but, as St. John speaks, he was in the bosom of the Father; that is, was intimately and perfectly acquainted with his eternal mind and counsels, being his wisdom, word, and truth, and therefore fully qualified to give mankind a revelation every way perfect and complete.

Whom he hath appointed heir of all things—That is, of the whole creation; of all creatures, visible and invisible, which were all made *for him*, as well as *by him*, Col. i. 16. The apostle's grand design throughout this epistle being to engage the Hebrews to constancy and perseverance in their attachment to the gospel, with its fundamental doctrines, he takes his main argument for that purpose from its immediate author, the promised Messiah, the Son of God. Him, therefore, in this chapter he describes at large, declaring what he is *absolutely*, in his person and offices; and *comparatively*, with respect to other ministerial revealers of the mind and will of God, principally insisting on his excellence and pre-eminence above angels. After the name of *Son*, his inheritance is mentioned. God appointed him the heir long before he made the worlds, Eph. iii. 11; Prov. viii. 22. Crellius, a noted Socinian, with whom some other Socinians have agreed, allowed that

of his power, ^h when he had by him— A. M. 4068.
self purged our sins, ⁱ sat down on — A. D. 64.
the right hand of the Majesty on high;

14, 16.—ⁱ Psa. cx. 1; Eph. i. 20; Chap. viii. 1; x. 12; xii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

Christ hath the highest dominion and empire over men and angels. But still they would persuade us that all this was spoken of him as a mere man, as the son of Mary. But how a mere man, or mere creature, should have this empire over all men and angels, and all creatures in the universe, or even should know them all, and have power over death, is impossible to understand as the mystery of the incarnation, or that of the Trinity. But to guard us against this error, the inspired writers have taken care to inform us that he existed before he was born of Mary; before Abraham, John viii. 58; *before all things*, Col. i. 17; that he was loved by the Father, and had glory with him *before the foundation of the world*, John xvii. 5, 24. Nay, and, as the apostle here asserts, that *the worlds were made by him*. It is true, the word *aiwas*, here used by the apostle, may be rendered *ages*, or *dispensations*; yet in Heb. xi. 3, it must mean, as it is rendered, *worlds*. And we know, from John i. 2, 3, 10; Col. i. 16; Eph. iii. 9; 1 Cor. viii. 6, and verse 10 of this chapter, that the Son of God did in fact make the worlds; and agreeably to the apostle's words here, (*God hath spoken unto us by his Son, by whom he made the worlds*,) in their plain and literal meaning, he was the Son of God when the worlds were made by him. Accordingly, He, *without whom was not any thing made that was made*, is called *the only-begotten of the Father*, John i. 1-14, where see the notes. Therefore, *the Son*, as the Son, was *before all worlds*: and his glory reaches from everlasting to everlasting, though God spake by him to us only *in these last days*. This is the third fact of which the apostle proposes to discourse, namely, that the Author of the gospel, in consequence of his having made the worlds, is Heir, or Lord, and Governor of all. And although, after becoming man, he died, yet, being raised from the dead, he had the government of the world restored to him in the human nature. To the faithful this is a source of the greatest consolation; because if the world is governed by their Master, he certainly hath power to protect and bless them; and every thing befalling them will issue in good to them. Besides, being the Judge as well as the Ruler of the world, he hath authority to acquit them at the judgment, and power to reward them for all the evils they have suffered on his account. This, that the author of the gospel is the Son of God, is the main hinge on which all the apostle's subsequent arguments throughout the epistle turn, and this bears the stress of all his inferences; and, therefore, having mentioned it, he proceeds immediately to that description of him which gives evidence to all he deduces from this consideration.

Verse 3. *Who being the brightness*—*Απεναντα*, *the effulgence*, or out-beaming, or splendour; *of his*—The Father's; *glory*—In Scripture, the *glory of*

A. M. 4068. 4 Being made so much better than
A. D. 61. the angels, as ^k he hath by inherit-

ance obtained a more excellent name A. M. 4068.
than they. A. D. 64.

^k Eph. i. 21 ;

Phil. ii. 9, 10.

God signifies the perfections of God. See Rom. i. 23 ; and in and by the Son of God, the glorious nature and attributes of the Father have shone forth probably to angels, at least to men ; as on mount Sinai, when his voice shook the earth, (chap. xii. 26,) in the tabernacle and temple. Compare Exod. xxiv. 10 with John i. 18, and 1 Tim. vi. 16. The divine glory, which was manifested to Isaiah in the vision recorded chap. vi. 1-4, is expressly said, John xii. 41, to have been the glory of Christ. This glory indeed was veiled in flesh when he became incarnate, yet he still possessed it, and it shone forth, in some degree, on many occasions, especially at his transfiguration, and even in his whole ministry ; infinite wisdom manifesting itself in his discourses ; almighty power in his miracles ; unspeakable love in his benevolent actions ; and holiness unparalleled in his spirit and conduct daily. So that he was fitly denominated *the Holy One of God*. And the express image—Stamp or delineation ; of his person—Or substance, as *υποστασις* signifies. That is, he is one who has the whole nature of God in him, as he is his eternal Son ; and declares and represents, in a most conspicuous manner, the divine properties to our faith and contemplation as incarnate : whatever the Father is, is exhibited in the Son as a seal in the stamp on wax. For the word *χαρακτηρ*, here rendered *express image*, properly signifies an image made by engraving, such as that on a seal ; also the image which the seal makes on wax by impression. Phavorinus says, it is *διανησις δηλωσα την υποστασιν, a form, or draught, manifesting the substance whence it was taken*. And the word *υποστασις*, rendered *person*, he says, is *ουσια μετα των ιδιωματαων, the substance with the properties*. So that the clause here, according to him, is a *draught manifesting, or exhibiting the substance and properties of God*. "According to the Greek commentators on the place," says Whitby, "it is the same with our Lord's being in the form of God before he took our nature on him." See on Phil. ii. 6 ; Col. i. 15, where this is explained at large. And *upholding*—*φειρων, sustaining, or preserving and governing ; all things*—Visible and invisible. This expression is parallel to 1 Col. i. 17, *τα παντα εν αυτω συνεστηκε, by him all things consist*. According to Pierce, the meaning of both passages is, that as the Son gave being to all things, so he maintains them in being. *By the word of his power*—That is, by his powerful word : in the same divine manner in which all things were created ; for he only spake, and they were done. *When he had by himself*—By the sacrifice of himself, (chap. ix. 26,) without any Mosaic rites or ceremonies ; *purged our sins*—*καθαρισμον ποιησαμενος, having effected a purification of them, or made atonement to satisfy the demands of divine justice*. In order to which it was necessary he should for a time divest himself of his glory. This is the fourth fact treated

of in this epistle, namely, that the Author of the gospel laid down his life a sacrifice for sin ; of which, when offered, God declared his acceptance, by setting Jesus at his own right hand. The gospel, therefore, hath a priesthood and sacrifice more efficacious than the priesthood and sacrifices of the law taken together. For an expiation made by a person so great in himself, and so dear to God as his own Son, and made by the appointment of God, could not but be acceptable to him ; consequently it must be a sure foundation for that hope of pardon, by which the gospel encourages sinners to repent. *Sat down*—The Jewish priests stood while they ministered : Christ's being said to sit down, therefore, denotes the consummation of his sacrifice : *on the right hand of the Majesty*—Of God ; *on high*—In the highest heavens. The apostle's meaning is, that our Lord, after his ascension, was invested in the human nature with that visible glory and power which he enjoyed with God before the world, as mentioned by himself, John xvii. 5. Our Lord's sitting down at the right hand of God is affirmed in this epistle no less than five different times, because it presupposes his resurrection from the dead, and implies his being put in possession of the highest authority in heaven, under the Father. Consequently it is a clear proof that he is really the Son of God. It must be observed, that in this chapter the apostle describes Christ's glory chiefly as he is the Son of God ; afterward, chap. ii. 6, &c., the glory of the man Christ Jesus. He speaks indeed briefly of the former before his humiliation, but copiously after his exaltation ; as from hence the glory he had from eternity began to be evidently seen. Both his purging our sins, and sitting on the right hand of God, are largely treated of in the seven following chapters.

Verses 4-6. *Being made*—Rather being ; (for the word *made* is not implied in the original expression, *γενομενος*;) *so much better*—Higher ; *than the angels*—As the Jews gloried exceedingly in the law of Moses, on account of its being delivered by the ministry of angels, the apostle proves, by passages from the Jewish Scriptures, that the Son is superior in nature and dignity to all the angelical hosts. How much more then may we glory in the gospel, which was given, not by the ministry of angels, but by the very Son of God. *As he hath by inheritance obtained*—Greek, *κεκληρονομηκην, he hath inherited ; a more excellent name than they*—Namely, the name of *Son* ; a name which he is said to inherit, because he really is God's Son, and that in a sense in which no creature, man or angel, is his son. 1st, Not by adoption, regeneration, or title, as patriarchs, prophets, or any other saints might be his sons : for he is distinguished from all these, Mark xii. 6. 2d, Not by the resurrection merely, by which the saints will hereafter be manifested to be the sons of God, Luke xx. 36. For he was distinguished from Moses and

A. M. 4068. 5 For unto which of the angels
A. D. 64. said he at any time, ¹Thou art my
Son, this day have I begotten thee? And
again, ²I will be to him a Father, and he shall
be to me a Son?

6 ¹And again, when he bringeth in ²the first-
begotten into the world, he saith, ³And let

¹ Psa. ii. 7; Acts xiii. 33; Chap. v. 5.—² 2 Sam. vii. 14; 1 Chron. xxii. 10; xxviii. 6; lxxxix. 26, 27.—³ Or, *When he bringeth again.*

Elias on the mount of transfiguration, who had both entered the immortal state, Matt. xvii. 6. 3d, Not by creation, as Adam was, (Luke iii. 38,) and angels are God's sons; for he is here represented as having a right to the name of *Son* by inheritance, which the angels have not. Hence he is termed *the only-begotten of the Father*; an expression which excludes from that honourable relation angels, and all other beings whatever. *For unto which of the angels*—Although sometimes termed in Scripture the sons of God, because created by him; *said he at any time, Thou art my Son*—God of God, Light of Light, the eternal Word of the eternal Father; *this day have I begotten thee*—Namely, in and from eternity; which, by its unalterable permanency of duration, is one continued unsuccessive day. See the note on Psa. ii. 7. "It is true, because the angel said to his mother, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*; some contend that these words, *Thou art my Son, &c.*, are a prediction of our Lord's miraculous conception. But on that supposition the argument taken from the name falls: for instead of proving Jesus superior to angels, his miraculous conception does not make him superior to Adam, who was as much the immediate work of God as Christ's human nature was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost. Besides, he is said (John iii. 17) to have been the Son of God before he was sent into the world;" and verse 2 of this chapter, when the worlds were made by him. See Macknight.

And again, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son*—I will own myself to be his Father, and him to be my Son, by eminent tokens of my peculiar love. "The former clause relates to his natural Sonship by an eternal inconceivable generation, the other to his Father's acknowledgment and treatment of him as his incarnate Son: indeed this promise related immediately to Solomon, but in a far higher sense to the Messiah; applied to whom, it hath a very different meaning from what it had when applied to Solomon."—Wesley. Understood of the Messiah, it is a prediction that God would, in the most public manner, declare Jesus his Son by voices from heaven uttered on different occasions, and by the descent of the Holy Ghost on him after his baptism, and by his resurrection from the dead. Whereas the same promise spoken concerning Solomon, means only that he was to be the object of God's especial affection

all the angels of God worship him. A. M. 4068
A. D. 64. 7 And ²of the angels he saith,

¹Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

8 But unto the Son *he saith*, ¹Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of ²righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom;

¹ Rom. viii. 29; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5.—² Deut. xxxiii. 43, LXX.; Psa. xcvi. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 22.—³ Gr. *unto.*—⁴ Psa. civ. 4.—⁵ Psa. xlv. 6, 7.—⁶ Gr. *rightness, or, straightness.*

and care. Accordingly it was so explained in the revelation to David himself, 1 Chron. xxii. 9; *I will give him rest from all his enemies round about. And again*—That is, in another passage of Scripture; *when he bringeth in the first-begotten*—Him who is before all creatures, Prov. viii. 24, 25; more excellent than all, Gen. xlix. 3; and *Heir or Lord of all*, Psa. ii. 6, 8. The appellation *first-begotten* includes that of *Son*, together with the rights of primogeniture, which the first-begotten Son of God enjoys, in a manner not communicable to any creature; *into the world*—Namely, at his incarnation; *he, God, saith, Let all the angels of God worship him*—So much higher was he, when in his lowest estate, than the highest angel! "In the Hebrew text it is *cal Elohim*, which in our Bibles is rendered *all ye gods*. But the expression is elliptical, and may be supplied as the writer of this epistle hath done; *all ye angels of God*—In the 97th Psalm, whence it is commonly thought this quotation is made, the establishment of the kingdom of Christ is foretold, together with its happy influence in destroying idolatry. Because, in a few instances, the word *Elohim, gods*, denotes *idols*, this clause is translated by some, *Worship him, all ye idols*. But how can idols, most of whom are nonentities, worship the Son?"

Verses 7-9. *Of the angels*—Speaking of them; *he*—David; *saith, Who maketh*—Or rather, *who made*; *his angels spirits, &c.*—That is, the greatest thing said of angels is, that they are beings not clogged with flesh, and who are zealous and active in the service of God like flames of fire. The expressions intimate not only their office, but also their nature, which is very excellent; the metaphor being taken from the most swift, subtle, and efficacious things on earth; but, nevertheless, infinitely below the majesty of the Son. *For unto the Son he saith*—Of him the psalmist speaks in more exalted language, expressive of his sovereign, universal, and everlasting dominion, saying, *Thy throne*—That is, *thy reign*, which the word throne implies; *O God, is for ever and ever*—These words are quoted from the 45th Psalm, which, in the opinion of "some commentators, was composed concerning Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter. But could Solomon, with any propriety, be addressed by the title of *God*? Or could it be said of him that his kingdom, which lasted only forty years, was eternal? It was not even eternal in his posterity; and with respect to his *loving righteousness, and hating wickedness, it but*

A. M. 4068. 9 Thou hast loved righteous-
A. D. 64. ness, and hated iniquity; there-
fore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed
thee with the oil of gladness above thy fel-
lows.

10 And, O Thou, Lord, in the beginning
hast laid the foundation of the earth; and

¹ Isa. lxi. 1.—² Psa. cii. 25, &c.

ill applies to one who, in his old age, became an en-
courager of idolatry, through the influence of
women. This Psalm, therefore, is applicable only
to Christ. Further, Solomon's marriage with Pha-
raoh's daughter being expressly condemned as
contrary to the law, (1 Kings xi. 2,) to suppose that
this Psalm was composed in honour of that event,
is certainly an ill-founded imagination. The rab-
bins, in their commentaries, affirm that it was writ-
ten wholly concerning the Messiah. Accordingly,
they translate the title of the Psalm as we do, *A
Song of Loves: the LXX., ωδη υπερ τῆς αγαπητης, a
song concerning the Beloved: a title justly given to
the Messiah, whom God, by voices from heaven,
declared his beloved Son.*—Macknight. Pierce
says, "They who imagine this Psalm is an epithala-
mium upon Solomon's marrying Pharaoh's daugh-
ter, must suppose that it is here foretold that Solomon
was to have a numerous progeny by her, whom he
should set up for princes up and down the world, by
one of whom he should be succeeded, verse 16, *In-
stead of thy father shall be thy children, when thou
mayest make princes in all the earth.* But this
cannot be true; for besides that we read not of any
children Solomon had by Pharaoh's daughter, it is
certain that Rehoboam, who succeeded him, was
the son of Naamah, an Ammonitess, 2 Chron. xii.
13. And so far was he from being able to set his
sons to rule over other countries, that it was with
great difficulty his successors kept two tribes of the
twelve steadfast to them. The whole tenor of the
Psalm directs us plainly to understand it of some
excellent prince, who was highly favoured of God,
and not of such a degenerate one as Solomon be-
came, God also having testified his displeasure
against him. Further, how unlikely is it that verse
2 should be understood of Solomon? Nothing
could be more suitably said of Christ than what we
there meet with: *Grace is poured into thy lips,
therefore God hath blessed thee for ever: but was
such language fit to be used concerning a man who
became a most notorious idolater? Was not the
promise conditional that was made to Solomon of
blessedness, and had he not forfeited it by breaking
the condition? The last verse of the Psalm seems
also very unlikely to belong to Solomon: I will
make thy name to be remembered in all genera-
tions; therefore shall the people praise thee for
ever and ever. Certainly a greater than Solomon
is here: and the primitive Christians were much in
the right, who universally agreed in applying the
Psalm to Christ, and him only." See notes on Ps. xlv.*

A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy

the heavens are the works of thy hands. A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest:
and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up,
and they shall be changed: but thou art the
same, and thy years shall not fail.

¹ Isa. xxxiv. 4.

kingdom—That is, thy reign, of which the sceptre
is the ensign, is full of justice and equity. Or, thy
government is exercised for maintaining truth and
righteousness in the world. *Thou hast loved right-
eousness, &c.*—Thou art infinitely pure and holy;
therefore God—Who, as thou art Mediator, is *thy
God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness*—
With the Holy Ghost, the fountain of joy; *above
thy fellows*—Above all the children of men. For
God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him, John
iii. 34. In other words, God bestowed on him, as a
prophet, priest, and king, endowments, whereby he
excelled all his associates (as *μετοχοι* signifies) in
those offices. "Anciently, kings, priests, and pro-
phets were consecrated to their several offices by
the ceremony of solemn unction with perfumed oil,
called in the Psalm *the oil of gladness*, because it oc-
casioned great joy, both to the person anointed, and
to those who were present at the ceremony. Where-
fore the Son, being appointed of God to the high
offices of universal King, Priest, and Prophet among
men, he is called, by way of eminence, the Lord's
Messiah, Christ, or Anointed One. But the oil with
which God anointed or consecrated him to these of-
fices was not any material oil, nor was the unction
external, but internal, with the Holy Ghost. We
may therefore understand the Psalm as a prediction
of the descent of the Holy Ghost on Jesus at his
baptism, whereby was signified God's giving him
the Spirit without measure."

Verses 10-12. *And thou, Lord, in the beginning,
&c.*—These words, with those contained in the two
following verses, are quoted from Psa. cii. 25-27,
where they are evidently spoken of the God of Is-
rael, the living and true God. "Some have thought
they are here addressed to the Father, and not to the
Son. But, as the former passages are directed to
the Son, it is reasonable to suppose this is so like-
wise: especially as it would not have been to the
apostle's purpose to quote it here, if it had been ad-
dressed to the Father. By affirming that these
words were spoken to the Son, the apostle confuted
the opinion of those Jews who held that the angels
assisted in making this mundane system; an error
which was afterward maintained by some heretics
in the Christian Church. *They*—Permanent as they
seem, and though firmly founded; *shall at length
perish*—Of the perishing of the earth and aerial
heavens, Peter speaks, 2 Epist. iii. 10-13, where he
also foretels that there shall be new heavens and a
new earth, formed for the habitation of the righteous,
after the old creation is destroyed. *But thou re-
mainest*—*Διακρείς, continuest* in undecaying glory;

A. M. 4068. 13 But to which of the angels said
A. D. 64. he at any time, " Sit on my right
hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

* Psa. cx. 1.—† Gen. xix. 16; xxxii. 1, 2, 24; Psa. xxxiv. 7;

as a vesture—*Περίβολαιον*, a mantle, upper garment, or cloak; *shall* thou fold them up—With infinite ease; and they shall be changed—Into new heavens and a new earth; or thou shalt remove them out of their place, and introduce a new scene of things with as much ease as a prince lays aside one robe and puts on another. But thou art eternally the same, and thy years shall not fail—Through everlasting ages, nor can thy perfections admit any possible diminution.

Verse 13. *But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou, &c.*—In this interrogation a vehement negation is included; He said not at any time to any of the angels, as he said to his Son in the human nature, Psa. cx. 1. *Sit thou on my right hand*—Reign thou over the universe; *till, &c.*—He never spake these words, or the like, concerning them; there is no testimony to that purpose recorded in the whole book of God, the only means of such knowledge, and rule of our faith in such things. Our Lord (Matt. xxii. 43) spake of it to the Pharisees as a thing certain, and allowed by all the Jewish doctors, that David wrote the cxth Psalm (from which this quotation is made) by inspiration of the Spirit, concerning Christ. This passage, therefore, is rightly applied to Christ by the writer of this epistle. See note on Psa. cx. 1. *I make thine enemies thy footstool*—The eastern princes used to tread on the necks of their vanquished enemies, in token of their utter subjection, Josh. x. 24. And some of the more haughty ones, in mounting their horses, used their enemies as a footstool. This passage, therefore, is a prediction of the entire conquest of evil angels and wicked men, Christ's enemies. *Are they not all ministering spirits, &c.*—The apostle having proved the pre-eminence of the Son, as Mediator of the new covenant, above all the angels, from the attributes of honour and glory that are ascribed to him in the Scripture, that he might not appear to argue merely in a negative manner, from what is not said concerning them, he adds here such a description of their natures and office, or employment, as shows that indeed no such thing can be

14 * Are they not all ministering A. M. 4068.
spirits, sent forth to minister for them A. D. 64.
who shall be † heirs of salvation?

† xi. 11; ciii. 20, 21.—‡ Romans viii. 17; Titus iii. 7.

rightly affirmed concerning them, as he had before manifested to be spoken and recorded concerning the Son: 1st, As to their nature, they are *πνεύματα*, spirits, or spiritual substances; not qualities, or natural faculties, as the Sadducees imagined: and 2d, As to their offices, they are *πνεύματα λειτουργικά*, ministering spirits. So they are termed Psa. ciii. 21. *Bless the Lord all ye his hosts, λειτουργοί αυτου, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. And how they execute their office we here learn. They are εις διακονιαν αποσπλομενα, sent forth unto a ministry: δια της μελλοντας κληρονομειν σωτηριαν, on account, or for the sake of those that shall be heirs of salvation*—Perhaps this is said in allusion to the Hebrew name of angels, which properly signifies messengers. The word *all* is here emphatical, denoting that even the highest orders of angels, dominions, thrones, principalities, and powers bow the knee and are subject to Jesus; ministering in the affairs of the world according to his direction. But although the Scriptures speak of *all* the angels as thus ministering, the word *all* does not imply that every individual angel is actually employed in this way, but that every one is subject to be so employed. It must be observed also, that the expression is not, *sent forth to minister to*, but *dia, for*—Or on account of; *them who shall be heirs of salvation*. And herein the harmony subsisting between both parts of God's family is still preserved. As in the service of the church the ministers thereof do not, properly speaking, minister to man, but to the Lord in the behalf of men, (Acts xiii. 2,) so is it with these spirits also; they are sent forth to minister for the good of men, but properly it is the Lord to whom they minister. *His servants they are, not ours*: rather, they are our *fellow-servants*. As all the servants of a king, though otherwise they greatly differ, agree in this, that they are all servants to the same person. Wherefore this passage affords no ground for believing that every heir of salvation has a guardian angel assigned him. Of the ministry of angels for the benefit of the heirs of salvation we have many examples both in the Old and in the New Testament.

CHAPTER II.

In this chapter, (1,) The apostle infers, from the dignity of Christ, the author of the gospel, the duty of earnestly attending and steadfastly adhering to it, 1-4. (2,) He enlarges further on Christ's pre-eminence above the angels, notwithstanding his sufferings for a time, 5-10. (3,) Shows that his sufferings were necessary, in order to our salvation and his own mediatorial glory; and that his assumption of our nature, not of the angelic, was necessary to the discharge of his priestly office for us, 9-18.

A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the

¹ Gr. run out as

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *Therefore, &c.*—The foregoing display of the greatness of the Son of God being designed to convince mankind of the great excellence and importance of that gospel of which he is the author, and of the great guilt of disobeying, neglecting, or apostatizing from it, the apostle now proceeds to caution his readers against these evils, solemnly warning them of the awful consequences thereof, and urging them to pay the utmost attention to the things which they had heard from Jesus and his apostles, that is, to the contents of the gospel in general, whether historical, doctrinal, preceptive, promissive, or comminatory. *Therefore, says he, δια τωτο, on this account, because the Son, by whom God has spoken to us in these last days, and given us his gospel, is so glorious a person, infinitely superior even to the holy angels, and much more to every merely human messenger formerly sent by God to men; we ought to give the more earnest heed to it—More than the Israelites gave of old to the law, which had not such an immediate author, and more than we ourselves have formerly given to the gospel itself, when we were less acquainted with its excellence and importance. We ought to take heed that we neither forfeit nor lose our interest in it; to the things which we have heard—So the apostle expresses the doctrine of the gospel with respect to the way and manner whereby it was communicated, namely, by preaching, an ordinance which he magnifies, making it, as everywhere else, the great means of begetting faith in men, Rom. x. 14, 15. So that he insists upon and recommends to them, not only the things themselves, wherein they had been instructed, but also the way whereby they were made acquainted with them: this, as the means of their believing, as the ground of their profession, they were diligently to remember and attend to. The apostle says we ought, joining himself with them to whom he wrote, to manifest that the duty he exhorted them to was of general concern to all to whom the gospel was preached, so that he laid no singular burden on them; and that he might not as yet discover to them any suspicion of their inconstancy, or make them suppose that he entertained any severe thoughts concerning them; apprehensions whereof are apt to render exhortations suspected, the minds of men being very ready to disregard what they are persuaded to, if they suspect that undeserved blame is the ground of the exhortation. *Lest at any time we should let them slip*—Namely, out of our minds; lest we should lose the remembrance of them, or the impression they once made upon us. The Greek, μη ποτε παραρρωμεν, is literally, lest we should run out, namely, as leaky vessels which let the water, poured into them one way, run out many ways. The word relates to the persons, not to the things, because it contains a crime.*

b

things which we have heard, lest at any time we should ¹ let them slip. A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

leaking vessels.

It is our duty to retain the word which we have heard, and therefore it is not said that the water flows out, but that we, as it were, pour it out, losing that negligently which we ought to have retained. And, says Dr. Owen, "there is an elegant metaphor in the word; for as the drops of rain falling on the earth water it and make it fruitful, so does the celestial doctrine make fruitful unto God the souls of men upon whom it descends: and hence, with respect to the word, of the gospel, Christ is said to come down as the showers on the mown grass, *Psa. lxxii. 6*; and the apostle calls preaching the gospel, *watering men, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7*; and compares them to whom it is preached, *to the earth that drinketh in the rain, Heb. vi. 7*. Hence men are here said to pour out the word preached, when, by negligence, they lose, instead of retaining, the benefit of the gospel. So when our Lord compares the same word to seed, he illustrates men's falling from it by all the ways and means whereby seed, cast into the earth, may be lost or become unprofitable." It may not be improper to observe here, that as water is lost gradually out of a leaky vessel, so the remembrance of, and faith in, the truths of the gospel, with the enlightening, quickening, renewing, strengthening, and comforting influence produced by them, are usually lost gradually, perhaps also insensibly. We lose, 1st, Our remembrance of them; 2d, Our love to and relish for them; and, 3d, The effect produced by them, perhaps both the internal graces and the external virtues flowing therefrom. The apostle says, *lest at any time we should let them slip*. Some lose their grace in a time of peace and prosperity, some in a time of persecution and adversity, and some in the hour of peculiar temptation: for God in his wisdom suffers such an hour to come upon the church for its trial, and upon every member of it, that they may be conformed to their Head, who had his special seasons of temptation. In this trying time many lose the good effects of the word they have heard, either wholly or in some measure. They are cast into a negligent slumber by the opiates of temptation, and when they awake and consider the state of their hearts and lives, they find that the whole efficacy of the word is lost. The ways also, it ought to be observed, whereby this woful effect is produced, are various; as, 1st, The love of the world, which made Demas a leaky vessel, *2 Tim. iv. 10*; and choked the fourth part of the seed in the parable, *Matt. xiii. 22*. 2d, The love of sin; a vile affection or corrupt passion will make the spiritual vessel full of chinks, so that it will not retain the spiritual water. Again, 3d, False doctrine, formality in worship, contentions and divisions among the serious professors of religion, will easily produce, if yielded to, the same unhappy effect. Let the reader, thus warned, be upon his guard in these and such like respects.

A. M. 4068. 2 For if the word ^a spoken by an-
A. D. 64. gels was steadfast, and ^b every trans-
gression and disobedience received a just recom-
pense of reward;

^a Deut. xxxiii. 2; Psa. lxxviii. 17.—^b Num. xv. 30, 31.

Verses 2-4. For if the word spoken by angels—The law delivered by their ministry. It is nowhere affirmed that the law was given by angels, but that the people received it, *εις διαταγας αγγελων*, by the disposition, administration, or deputation of angels, Acts vii. 53; and that it was *διαταγεις*, ordained, appointed, or promulgated, by angels, (Gal. iii. 19,) and here that it was spoken by them. From hence it is evident, that not the original, authoritative giving of the law, but the ministerial ordering of things in its promulgation, is that which is ascribed to them. As Chrysostom observes, they excited the thunderings, the lightnings, the smoke, the earthquake, and the sounding of the trumpet which preceded God's giving the law. And perhaps also an angel effected the articulate voices which conveyed the words of the ten commandments to the ears of the people; or an angel was employed to repeat, in a loud and terrible voice, the words which God pronounced, *I am the Lord thy God*, with what follows, Exod. xx. 2, &c. The apostle having just insisted (chap. i.) on a comparison between Christ and the angels, his argument is greatly corroborated when it is considered, that the law was the word spoken by angels, but the gospel was delivered by the Son, who is so far exalted above them; was steadfast—*Βεβαιος*, firm, a sure covenant between God and the people; and every transgression and disobedience—The word *παπαβαια*, transgression, signifies the leaping over the bounds which the law had set, by doing the things forbidden by it; *παρακοη* is the refusing to do the things it enjoins; received a just recompense of reward—That is, a just punishment. But how could every sin and transgression be said to receive a just retribution, seeing it is certain that some sins, under the law, were not punished, but expiated by atonements? In answer to this, it must be observed, that every sin was contrary to the doctrine and precepts of the law, and therefore punishment was assigned to every sin, though not executed on every sinner. Besides, the sacrifices of atonement manifested punishment to have been due, though the sinner was relieved against it. But the sins especially intended by the apostle were, in fact, such as were directly against the law, as it was the covenant between God and the people; for which there was no provision made of any atonement or compensation. But the covenant being broken, the sinners were to die without mercy; and thus to be utterly exterminated by the hand of God, or that of man, by his appointment. The expression, *ινδικος μισθοποδοσι*, rendered, a just recompense of reward, signifies a recompense proportionable to the crime, according to the judgment of God, which is infinitely just and equal, and implies that they who commit sin are worthy of death, Rom. i. 32; and particularly refers to the temporal punishment of cutting

3 How shall we escape, if we ne- A. M. 4068.
glect so great salvation; ^d which at the A. D. 64.
first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was
^e confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

^e Chap. x. 28, 29.—^d Matt. iv. 17.—^c Luke i. 2.

them off from the land of the living, according to the dispensation of the law to which the Israelites were subject.

How shall we escape—Severe punishment; if we neglect—*Αμελησαντες*, not caring about, not embracing and improving; so great salvation—That is, both the doctrine of salvation, the gospel which brings us tidings of it, shows us our want of it, offers it to us, and is the most powerful means of bringing us to enjoy it; and salvation itself, declared by this doctrine, and announced and exhibited in this gospel. The greatness of this salvation may be inferred with certainty from the great dignity and glory of its Author, as set forth in the preceding chapter, and from the great things he hath done and suffered to procure it for lost mankind; the great price paid for it, (1 Pet. i. 18, 19,) and the great power exerted to put us in possession of it, Eph. i. 19. But, independently of these considerations, it is evidently great, unspeakably great, in its own nature; being, 1st, A deliverance from a state of great ignorance and folly, with respect to things spiritual and divine, Tit. iii. 3; of great guilt and depravity, weakness and misery, which, were it not for this salvation, would be eternal; 2d, A restoration (so the word *σωτηρια*, rendered salvation, also signifies) to the favour and friendship, image and nature of God, and communion with him; blessings lost by the fall—blessings of infinite value, and intended to be of everlasting duration; and, (which likewise is implied in the same expression,) 3d, A preservation, notwithstanding all the subtlety and power, malice and diligence of our spiritual enemies, continually exerted to effect our destruction, to eternal life, felicity, and glory; or the being kept by the power of God, through faith, unto final, eternal salvation, of both body and soul, 1 Pet. i. 5. A salvation this unspeakably, yea, infinitely greater than that wrought for the Israelites of old, when God delivered them from Egyptian bondage, and established them in the quiet possession of Canaan. Which at the first began to be spoken—To be preached in a clear and distinct manner; by the Lord—The Son of God, the Lord of angels. Jesus is called the Lord, chiefly because, as the Maker and Governor of the world, he is Lord of all, Acts x. 36; consequently he is able both to reward those who obey him, by bestowing on them eternal salvation, and to punish with everlasting destruction those who disobey him; and was confirmed—Further declared, and its truth attested; unto us—Of this age, even every article of it; by them that heard him—The apostles, who had been themselves both eye-witnesses and ministers of the word. "Matters of fact which were transacted before our own time, and whereof we could not be ourselves eye-witnesses,

A. M. 4068. 4 ' God also bearing *them* witness,
A. D. 64. * both with signs and wonders, and with

^f Mark xvi. 20.—^g Acts ii. 22, 43.—^h Or, *distributions*.

are readily believed upon the report of others. And when the reporters are persons of credit and reputation, and report nothing but what they declare themselves to have seen and certainly known, and they are likewise many, and exactly concur in their testimony, and nothing is alleged against them by any others, and particularly by such as were concerned to invalidate their account if possible, we think we have all the reason in the world to receive their testimony. All which circumstances do evidently concur in the confirmation of the gospel."—Pierce. *God also bearing them witness*—As to the truth and importance of their doctrine; *both with signs and wonders*—Many and marvellous. "The apostle having observed, in verse 2, that the law spoken by angels was confirmed by the miracles which accompanied its delivery, he judged it proper to mention that the gospel was equally confirmed by the great miracles which accompanied the preaching, both of Jesus Christ himself and of the apostles. Wherefore such of the Hebrews as had not heard Jesus preach the great salvation, were nevertheless bound to give heed to the things which he had preached, since they were sufficiently declared and proved to them by the apostles and other ministers of the word, who had heard him preach these things."—Macknight. *With divers miracles and gifts*—*Μερισμοίς, distributions; of the Holy Ghost*—In his extraordinary operations, imparted in different degrees to different persons; *according to his own will*—"Moses wrought many signs, wonders, and miracles; but the distributions of the Holy Ghost he knew nothing of. They were peculiar to the gospel dispensation, and consisted of the internal gifts of *wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, faith, the discernment of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues*." These are called distributions of the Holy Ghost, because God by his Spirit divided them to every one as he pleased, 1 Cor. xii. 11. "The miracles," says Pierce, "which were wrought by the first preachers of the gospel, were an attestation from God of the truth of what they delivered. And indeed we must entertain very strange and unworthy apprehensions of the blessed God, if we can suppose that he would countenance a notorious imposture, by enabling those who published it to the world to perform, in confirmation of it, so many miracles as they did, things that were vastly above the power and ability of men. It is true there were other confirmations of our Saviour's character and commission, particularly the concurrence of all that was foretold by the old prophets concerning the Messiah. But this does by no means hinder these miracles to be an attestation from God, and accordingly to deserve our utmost regard."

And now let the reader consider how those will excuse their conduct to God, their own consciences, or the assembled world of men and angels in the day of final judgment, who neglect this salvation; a

divers miracles, and ² gifts ^b of the Holy Ghost, ¹ according to his own will? A. M. 4068. A. D. 64.

^b 1 Cor. xii. 4, 7, 11.—^c Eph. i. 5, 9.

salvation which has so glorious an Author, which is so unspeakably great and excellent in itself, has cost such an immense price, and to attest and confirm which God's almighty power has been exerted in so extraordinary a manner in signs and wonders innumerable; yea, "has waked and worked for ages." But who are they that may properly be said to neglect this salvation? Surely not those merely who disbelieve and reject the gospel, which proclaims, displays, and offers it; or who oppose and persecute the preachers and professors of it; but those who, as the expression used here by the apostle means, make light of it, have little or no care or concern about it, and consequently take no pains to become partakers of it. All do and will neglect this salvation who do not, 1st, See their want of it, and their undone state without it; who are not convinced of its absolute necessity and great excellence; 2d, Who do not earnestly and perseveringly desire it, and hunger and thirst for the enjoyment of it; 3d, Who do not diligently seek it in the use of the means which God has appointed, the private and public means of grace, such as hearing, reading, and meditating on the word of God, prayer, watchfulness, self-denial, and taking up the daily cross; 4th, Who do not humble themselves before God in true, genuine repentance, and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance; 5th, Who do not embrace the gospel in all its branches, its truths, precepts, and promises; its doctrines, privileges, and duties; and the Lord Jesus, its blessed Author, in all his offices and characters, in faith, love, and new obedience. Nay, and, 6th, They, in some measure at least, neglect this salvation who, having experienced one part of it, as, for instance, a sense of pardon and the divine favour, yet do not go forward with zeal and diligence in pursuit of what remains, namely, perfect holiness, and eternal glory. And these, 7th, Most of all neglect this salvation who, having begun in the Spirit, end in the flesh; who fall from grace, and turn from the holy commandment delivered to them; whose case the apostle represents in a just but awful light, chap. vi. 4-8; x. 26-31; xii. 25-27. From which passages the reader may learn how the neglecters of this salvation in general, and apostates, or backsliders, in particular, may expect to escape. The truth, with respect to this, is, 1st, That mankind in general being by nature and practice in a lost state, a state of ignorance and sin, of guilt, condemnation, and wrath, of depravity, weakness, and misery; and this salvation being provided for their recovery, they who neglect it of course remain in that lost estate, unenlightened, unpardoned, unchanged, unholy, and unhappy. They sin against the remedy, the only remedy which the wisdom of God hath found out for man's restoration, and therefore must perish without remedy. This is not all; they have, 2d, To expect a superadded and increased misery for neglecting the glorious salvation provided for them; provided at so great an ex-

A. M. 4068. 5 For unto the angels hath he not
A. D. 64. put in subjection ^k the world to come
whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying,
^l What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or

^k Chap. vi. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 13.—^l Job vii. 17; Psa.

pense of love and sufferings, and with so great an apparatus of grace and mercy. This passage proves this point to a demonstration; as do also the other paragraphs above referred to. Observe, reader, the greatness of the salvation—its eternity—the glory of its Author—the amazing sufferings he endured—the various and extraordinary gifts and operations of the Holy Ghost, that in former ages sealed and signalized this divine dispensation—the pardon and grace offered to us, and urged upon us—the advices, exhortations, entreaties, and warnings of ministers and others, who had our salvation at heart;—in short, the various means made use of, in various ways, to bring us to the knowledge and enjoyment of this salvation:—all these must aggravate our guilt, and increase our condemnation and future punishment, if we neglect it.

Verse 5. *For, &c.*—This verse contains a proof of the third: the greater the salvation is, and the more glorious the Lord whom we despise, the greater will be our punishment. *Unto the angels hath he (God) not put in subjection the world to come*—That is, as most commentators have understood the clause, the dispensation of the Messiah; which, being to succeed the Mosaic, was usually styled by the Jews, *The world to come*; although it is still, in a great measure, *to come: whereof we speak*—Of which I am now speaking. In this last great dispensation, the Son alone presides. Macknight, however, objects to this interpretation of the words, observing, “The gospel dispensation is called *αιωνος μελλοντος, the age to come*, (Heb. vi. 5,) but never *οικουμενην μελλουσαν, the habitable world to come*. That phrase, if I mistake not, signifies the heavenly country promised to Abraham, and to his spiritual seed. Wherefore, as *οικουμενην, the world*, (Luke ii. 1, and elsewhere,) by a usual figure of speech, signifies *the inhabitants of the world*, the phrase *οικουμενην μελλουσαν*, may very well signify *the inhabitants of the world to come*, called, (Heb. i. 14,) *them who shall inherit salvation*. If so, the apostle’s meaning will be, that God hath not put the heirs of salvation, who are to inhabit the world to come, the heavenly Canaan, in subjection to angels, to be by them conducted into that world, as the Israelites were conducted into the earthly Canaan, by an angel, Exod. xxiii. 20. They are only ministering spirits, sent forth by the Son to minister for the heirs of salvation, but not to conduct them. The heirs who are to inhabit the world to come, God hath put in subjection to the Son alone. Hence he is called *the Captain of their salvation*, Heb. ii. 10. And having introduced them into the heavenly country, he will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, as we are told 1 Cor. xv. 24.”

Verse 6. *But one in a certain place*—Namely,

the son of man, that thou visitest him? A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64. 7 Thou madest him ^a a little lower

than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands;

viii. 4, &c.; cxliv. 3.—^a Or, a little while inferior to.

David, Psa. viii. 4; *testified, saying, What is man*—The Hebrew word *אנוש*, used in the Psalm, means *weak, miserable, and mortal man*; man in his fallen state; obnoxious to grief, sorrow, anxiety, pain, trouble, and death: *that thou art mindful of him*—What is he to the vast expanse of the heavens, *to the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained?* This Psalm seems to have been composed by David in a clear, moon-shiny, and star-light night, while he was contemplating the wonderful fabric of the heaven; because, in his magnificent description of its luminaries, he takes no notice of the sun, the most glorious of them all. The words here cited concerning dominion, were doubtless in some sense applicable to Adam; although, in their complete and highest sense, they belong to none but the second Adam. It has indeed been a great question among interpreters, whether the Psalm speaks of man in general, and of the honour which God put upon him in his creation, or only of the man Christ Jesus. But upon comparing the contents of it with this chapter, it seems evident that both are included. For the design of the Psalm appears plainly to have been to display and celebrate the great love and kindness of God to mankind: not only in their creation, but also in their redemption by Christ Jesus; whom, as he was man, God advanced to the honour here spoken of, that he might carry on that great and glorious work. Some parts of the Psalm, however, relate more eminently to Christ than to man in general, and accordingly are so interpreted, both by our Lord and by his apostles, particularly verses 2, 6. *Or the Son of man*—Hebrew, *בן אדם, the son of Adam*, of one made out of the earth; *that thou visitest him*—The sense rises: we are *mindful* of him that is absent; but to *visit* denotes the care of one present. And it is worthy of observation, that the Hebrew word occurring in the Psalm, and rendered *visitest*, though variously used, yet constantly denotes the action of a superior toward an inferior, and commonly expresses some act of God toward his people for good. And especially in the term *visiting* used to express the stupendous act of God in sending his Son to take our nature upon him, as Luke i. 68, 78. “He hath *visited* and redeemed his people;” and “The day-spring from on high hath *visited* us.” This was the ground of the psalmist’s admiration, and will be a cause of admiration to all believers through eternal ages.

Verse 7. *Thou madest him*—That is, 1st, *Man*, when first created; *a little lower than the angels*—So the LXX., and all the old Greek translations, as also the Targum, read the clause; but the Hebrew, *ממעט מאלהים, is a little lower than God*; the word *God* being probably put by an ellipsis for *the angels*

A. M. 4068. 8^m Thou hast put all things in
A. D. 64. subjection under his feet. For in that
he put all in subjection under him, he left no-
thing *that is* not put under him. But now^a we
see not yet all things put under him :

^a Matt. xxviii. 18 ; 1 Cor. xv. 27 ; Eph. i. 22 ; Chap. i. 13.
^b 1 Cor. xv. 25. — ^c Phil. ii. 7-9. — ^d Or, *by*. — ^e Acts ii. 33.

of God. Man, when first formed, was, it seems, in the scale of creatures next to angels, his soul being spiritual, intelligent, free, and immortal ; but, as by his body he was allied to the earth, and to the beasts that perish, he was *lower* than they. But, 2d, The expression here used, *βραχυ τι*, may be rendered, *for a little while*, as it is Acts v. 44 ; *And commanded to put the apostles forth, βραχυ τι, a little space*, or while ; and Luke xxii. 58, *μετα βραχυ, after a little while*. Thus translated, the clause is, *Thou hast made him, for a little while, lower, or less, than the angels* : in which sense the passage may be properly applied to Christ, as it here is by the apostle, whose meaning appears to be, *Thou, O God, hast made thy Son, by his incarnation, humiliation, and obedience unto death, for a little while, lower than the angels*. For although from Christ's birth the angels adored his person as their Lord, yet in the outward condition of his human nature he was made exceedingly beneath their state of glory and excellence, for a little while, *a short season*. "That which renders this sense unquestionable," says Dr. Owen, "is the apostle's restraining the words precisely thereto, verse 9. It was but for a little while that the person of Christ, in the nature of man, was brought into a condition more indigent than that to which the nature of angels is exposed : neither was he for that season made a little, but very much lower than the angels. And had this been the whole of his state, it could not have been an effect of that inexpressible love which the psalmist so admires. But, seeing it was but for a short season, and that for the blessed ends which the apostle speaks of, nothing could more commend it to us." *Thou crownedst him with glory and honour*—That is, not only man at his first creation, to whom God gave dominion over the creatures, but also, and more especially, Jesus, after his resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven. Jesus was covered with the greatest ignominy when he was crucified by the Jews as a deceiver, for calling himself Christ the Son of God. But at his resurrection and subsequent exaltation that ignominy was entirely removed ; and his fame, and name, and honour, as the Son of God, were, in the most illustrious manner, restored to him. See Phil. ii. 9-11. *And didst set him over the work of thy hands*—As Ruler and Lord of all ; namely, in a lower sense Adam when created, and more eminently Christ when raised from the dead, and set at God's own right hand. For as he had actual dominion given him upon his ascension into heaven, so the extent of this dominion is *the works of God's hands*.

Verses 8, 9. *Thou hast put all things*—All things without exception ; *in subjection*—Υποκατω των ποδων

b

9 But we see Jesus, ° who was made A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64. a little lower than the angels⁴ for the
suffering of death,^p crowned with glory and
honour ; that he by the grace of God should
taste death^q for every man.

^q John iii. 16 ; xii. 32 ; Romans v. 18 ; viii. 32 ; 2 Cor. v. 15 ;
1 Tim. ii. 6 ; 1 John ii. 2 ; Rev. v. 9.

avru, under his very feet—Such are the psalmist's words, expressive of a dominion every way unlimited and absolute. *For in that it is said, he put all things under him, he left nothing*—That is, nothing is excepted ; *that is not put under him*—But the whole universe and every creature in it is included. *But now we see not yet all things put under him*—That is, under man, concerning whom the words were spoken, being connected with verse 4 of the Psalm, *What is man?* As if the apostle had said, *A long space of time hath elapsed since the giving out this testimony, and much longer since the creation of man ; and yet, during all these years, or rather, all these ages, we see that all things are very far from being put under man's feet, from being subjected to the human race in general, or to any individual mere man. Hence, (as if the apostle had added,) we ourselves, by our own observation, may easily discern that these words of the psalmist respect not only, or principally, either the first man or his posterity, under whom certainly all things are not, and never were, put in subjection. But we see Jesus*—That is, it is only in Jesus that the psalmist's testimony is verified ; *he was made lower than the angels*—And he hath had all things put in subjection to him. These things, says the apostle, we see. Yet it was not on his own account that he was made lower than the angels, in being clothed with our frail and mortal nature, but in order that he might suffer death, which is further explained by the addition of the next clause. For the words *δια το παθηναι τε θανατου, for the suffering of death*, are evidently intended to express the final cause of the humiliation of Christ, (he was made lower than the angels, who cannot die, *that he might suffer death*,) and not the meritorious cause of his exaltation. This, therefore, is the import and natural order of the words : *we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, who was for a little while made lower than the angels, for the suffering of death ; that he by the grace of God*—By his gracious, free, sovereign purpose, suited to, and arising from, his natural goodness and benignity, mercy and compassion ; *might taste death*—*Tasting death*, (like *seeing death*,) is a Hebrew form of expression, signifying *really dying*, not dying in appearance or pretence, as some of old foolishly taught respecting the death of Christ, which *shadow* of dying could only have produced a *shadow* of redemption. The expression may also imply, finding by experience what is in death ; Christ knew by experience what bitterness was in that cup of death which is threatened to sinners. He understood and felt it fully. The expression might also be intended to intimate, (as Chrysostom and the

A. M. 4068. 10 ^r For it became him, ^s for whom
A. D. 64. *are* all things, and by whom *are* all
things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to
make ^t the Captain of their salvation ^u perfect
through sufferings.

11 For ^v both he that sanctifieth, and they who
are sanctified, ^w are all of one: for which cause ^x he

^r Luke xxiv. 46.—^s Romans xi. 36.—^t Acts iii. 15; v. 31; Chap. xii. 2.—^u Luke xiii. 32; Chap. v. 9.—^v Chap. x. 10, 14.

ancients thought,) our Lord's continuing only a short time in the state of the dead, and, of consequence, his conquest over death; for though the phrase be used concerning other persons also, yet as applied to him, the event shows that it was only a thorough taste of it that he had. He neither was nor could be detained under the power of it. *For every man*—That ever was or will be born into the world, without the exception of any. To die for another, according to the constant use of the expression, imports to die in his room and stead; and this the Jews understood in the use of their sacrifices, where the life of the beast was accepted instead of the life of the sinner. Thus Christ tasted death; he was, by the grace and wisdom of God, substituted as a mediator and surety in the stead of others, of all others; for *he gave himself a ransom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6; *when all were dead, he died for all*, 2 Cor. v. 15.

Verse 10. In this verse the apostle expresses, in his own words, what he before expressed in those of the psalmist. *For it became him*—It was suitable to all his attributes, especially to his justice and mercy, his holiness and goodness, his wisdom and truth; *for whom*—As their ultimate end; *and by whom*—As their first cause; *are all things; in bringing many sons unto glory*—Namely, believers, called God's sons, John i. 12; Rom. viii. 14; and frequently elsewhere. The clause seems to be an allusion to the introduction of Israel (whom God dignified with the title of his son) into Canaan, which was a type of heaven; called *glory*, both because God there manifests his presence in a most glorious manner, and because there all his saints are rendered unspeakably glorious; *to make the Captain*—*Ἀρχηγόν*, the prince, leader, and author; *of their salvation perfect*—That is, a complete Saviour; *through sufferings*—Endured for them. By which sufferings he was consecrated to his office, and qualified to discharge it; expiated men's sins, obtained for them the Holy Spirit, John xvi. 7; Acts ii. 33; showed them by his example that their way lay through sufferings to glory, and in what spirit they must suffer; learned, as man, to sympathize with, and to succour and support them in their sufferings, verses 17, 18; chap. iv. 15, 16.

Verses 11–13. *For*—As if he had said, And it appears that it was meet that Christ should suffer, because, having the same nature with us, it was necessary he should thus be made like us, who must suffer before we can reign; *both he that sanctifieth*—That washes men from their sins in his blood, renews them in the spirit of their minds, and consecrates

is not ashamed to call them brethren, A. M. 4068.

12 Saying, ^y I will declare thy name ^z
A. D. 64. unto my brethren, in the midst of the church
will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, ^a I will put my trust in him.
And again, ^b Behold, I and the children ^c which
God hath given me.

^y Acts xvii. 26.—^z Matt. xxviii. 10.—^a Psa. xxii. 22, 25.
^b Psalm xviii. 2.—^c Isaiah viii. 18.—^d John xx. 29; xvii. 6, 9, 11, 12.

them unto God; *and they who are sanctified*—Who are renewed and dedicated to God; *are all of one*—Of one nature, from one parent, Adam; for which cause *he is not ashamed to call them*—Whom he thus sanctifies and saves; *brethren*—He reckons it no disparagement to him, though in respect of his divine nature he is infinitely above them, to acknowledge and deal with them as his brethren; *saying*, (Psa. xxii. 22,) to his Father, When I appear in the human nature on the earth, *I will declare thy name*—Thy perfections, and especially thy grace and mercy in sending me into the world; *unto my brethren*—Of mankind; *in the midst of the church*—Publicly among the people of God; *will I sing praise unto thee*—As the precentor of the choir. This he did literally in the midst of his apostles, on the night before his passion. And in a more general sense, as the expression means setting forth the praise of God, he has done it in the church by his word and Spirit in all ages; and he still does, and will do it throughout all generations. It is well known that the 22d Psalm, from which this passage is cited, is a prophetic description of the sufferings of Christ, the apostles and evangelists having applied many passages of it to him. Also by repeating the first words of it from the cross, our Lord appropriated the whole of it to himself. The ancient Jewish doctors likewise interpreted this Psalm of the Messiah. *And again*—(Psa. xviii. 2,) as one that has communion with his brethren in sufferings, as well as in nature, he says; *I will put my trust in him*—To support me under, and carry me through them all. Hereby the apostle proves that Christ had the same affections, and consequently the same nature with believers. For had he been God only, or the Son merely in his original state, he could not have been brought into such a condition as required dependance upon another; neither is the nature of angels exposed to such dangers or troubles, as render it necessary for them to have recourse to God for support, protection, and consolation. *And again*—Isa. viii. 18, (where see the note,) when he says; *Behold I and the children which God hath given me*—He makes a like acknowledgment of his near relation to them, and of his being of the same nature with them, parents being of the same nature with their children. The opposers of Christianity affirm, that the prophecy from which this is taken doth not relate to the Messiah, and that in applying it to Jesus, the writer of this epistle hath erred; and from this they infer that he was not inspired. But, in

A. M. 4068. 14 Forasmuch then as the children
A. D. 64. are partakers of flesh and blood, he
* also himself likewise took part of the same;
' that through death he might destroy him that
had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them, who, * through fear of
death, were all their life-time subject to bondage.

* John i. 14; Rom. viii. 3; Phil. ii. 7.—† 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55;
Col. ii. 15; 2 Timothy i. 10.—‡ Luke i. 74; Romans viii. 15;
2 Tim. i. 7.

answer, be it observed, that the application of this prophecy to Christ doth not rest on this writer's testimony alone. The 14th verse of the prophecy is applied to him both by Paul, (Rom. ix. 33,) and by Peter, (1 Pet. ii. 6, 8,) and by Simeon, (Luke ii. 34;) nay, our Lord has applied the 15th verse to himself, Matt. xxi. 44. So that if the writer of this epistle hath erred in the application of that prophecy, all the others have erred in the same manner. But that they have not, is sufficiently shown in the notes on the passages referred to.

Verses 14, 15. *Forasmuch then as the children—Believers, who are Christ's spiritual seed; are partakers of flesh and blood—Of human nature with all its infirmities; he also took part of the same—See on Phil. ii. 8; that through his own death he might destroy the tyranny of him that had—By God's permission; the power of death—The power of bringing death on all mankind by tempting our first parents to sin. Hence he is called a murderer from the beginning, and a liar, and the father of it, John viii. 44. It is observable that the power of death, ascribed to the devil, is called *κρᾶτος*, and not *ἐξουσία*, because he had no right to it. It was a power usurped by guile. And all the baneful effects of this power Christ at the resurrection will remove, as far as they relate to the righteous. The word *καταργησον*, rendered *that he might destroy*, properly signifies, that he might render ineffectual. "Since the Son of God is said to have partaken of the *flesh and blood* of the children in the same manner that they themselves partake of these, namely, by being born of a woman; and since he was born into the world in that manner, to render him capable of dying, that through his death in the flesh he might frustrate the malicious contrivance of the devil, who first introduced death into the world; we are thereby taught that he is *the seed of the woman*, which at the fall was promised to bruise the head of the serpent; and that the serpent who deceived Eve was not a natural serpent, but the devil, who, because he assumed the form of a serpent on that occasion, is called (Rev. xx. 2) *the great dragon, or serpent; and that old serpent, the devil*. See on 2 Cor. xi. 3. The intention of the devil, in seducing our first parents, was to destroy them, and thereby put an end to the human species. This malicious design the Son of God rendered ineffectual, by assuming our nature, and in that nature dying as a sacrifice for sin."—Macknight. *And—By his death making atonement for their sins, and procuring for them pardon and holiness; that is,**

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16 For verily ^a he took not on *him* A. M. 4068.
the nature of angels; but he took A. D. 64.
on him the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behooved him
^b to be made like unto *his* brethren; that he
might be ^c a merciful and faithful High-Priest
in things *pertaining* to God, to make re-

^a Gr. *he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.*—^b Philippians ii. 7.—^c Chapter iv. 15; v. 1, 2.

both justification and sanctification, both a title to heaven and a meetness for it, and also an earnest of it by the Holy Spirit in their hearts, he *delivers them*—Even all who are made God's children by faith in him; *who*—Before they received this deliverance; *were all their life-time, through tormenting fear of death, subject to bondage*—In a slavish uncomfortable state of mind. And every man fears death, more or less, who is not savingly acquainted with, and united to Christ; who is not justified through faith in his blood, and regenerated by the influence of his Spirit, and therefore is not *begotten again to a lively hope* of a heavenly inheritance. Death is unwelcome to him if he knows what death is. But he delivers all true believers from this *bondage*.

Verse 16. *For verily he took not on him*—Greek, *καὶ γὰρ ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται*, *he took, or taketh, not hold of angels, to save them from the abyss of misery into which they are fallen, as not taking their nature upon him; but he took, or taketh, hold of the seed of Abraham*—And hath made a gracious provision for the salvation of all who shall by true faith approve themselves the genuine children of that holy patriarch. The apostle says, *the seed of Abraham*, rather than *the seed of Adam*, because to Abraham was the promise made. "If the sin of the angels, who, as Jude tells us, (verse 6,) *kept not their own office*, consisted in their aspiring after higher stations and offices than those originally allotted to them by God, as Jude's expression intimates, we can see a reason why the Son of God did not take hold of them to save them, but took hold of *the seed of Abraham*; that is, of believers of the human species. The first parents of mankind sinned through weakness of nature and inexperience, and by their lapse brought death on themselves and on their posterity, notwithstanding their posterity were not accessory to their offence. Whereas the angels, through discontentment with their own condition, and envy of their superiors, perhaps also animated by pride, rebelled presumptuously against God. Wherefore, since they could not plead weakness of nature and inexperience in excuse of their sin, nor complain that the sin for which they were doomed to punishment was the act of another, they were justly left by the Son of God to perish in their sin."—Macknight.

Verses 17, 18. *Wherefore in all things—That essentially pertain to our nature, and in all sufferings and temptations; it behooved him*—In respect of the

A. M. 4068. conciliation for the sins of the people.
A. D. 64. 18 ^a For in that he himself hath

suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

^a Chap. iv. 15, 16 ;

v. 2 ; vii. 25.

office, duty, and employment he had taken upon him; or it was highly fit and proper, yea, necessary, in order to his design of redeeming them; to be made like his brethren—That is, a mortal man; that—By experience of suffering in himself; he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest—Merciful toward sinners, affected with the sorrows and sufferings of others, and the more inclined to pity and relieve them; and faithful toward God, in discharging every other part of his office, as well as in relieving his suffering members. A priest or high-priest, is one who has a right of approaching God, and of bringing others to him. His being faithful is treated of, chap. iii. 2, &c., with its use: merciful, chap. iv. 14, &c., with the use also: high-priest, chap. v. 4, &c., vii. 1. The use is added, from chap. x. 19. “The Son of God, who made men, no doubt had such a knowledge of their infirmity, as might have rendered him a merciful intercessor, though he had not been made flesh. Yet, considering the greatness of his nature, it might have been difficult for men to have understood this. And therefore, to impress us the more strongly with the belief that he is most affectionately disposed, from sympathy, to succour us when tempted; and, in judging us at the last day, to make every reasonable allowance for the infir-

mity of our nature, he was pleased to be made like us in all things, and even to suffer by temptations.” In things pertaining to God—That were to be done either for men with God, or for God with men; to make reconciliation for—Or to expiate, as *ἰλασκεσθαι* signifies, the sins of the people—Not the people of the Jews merely, but the people of all nations, whether Jews or Gentiles, who, in repentance and faith, should turn to God. Hence St. John tells us, he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, offering sacrifice and interceding for them, and deriving God’s grace, peace, and blessings upon them. For in that he himself suffered, being tempted—See chap. iv. 15; he is able—Has a greater fitness and readiness; to succour them that are tempted—And he has given a manifest, demonstrative proof that he is able so to do. Our Lord was not only tempted immediately after his baptism in the wilderness, but his whole life was a continued scene of temptation, as we learn from Luke xxii. 28: *Ye are they who have continued with me in my temptation.* Christ’s temptations, like those of his brethren, arose from the persecutions and sufferings to which he was exposed, as well as from direct attacks of the devil by evil suggestions, such as those mentioned Matt. iv. 1–11; Luke iv. 1–13.

CHAPTER III.

To show still more fully the excellence of the gospel from the excellence of its Author, the apostle in this chapter, (1.) *1* *shows the great superiority of Christ in his person and office to Moses, the noted prophet, deliverer, and law-giver of the Jews, 1–6. (2.) From the fate of their unbelieving ancestors in the wilderness, he shows the sin and danger of unbelief and apostacy, and the necessity of immediate attention to Christ’s voice, and of a true faith in, and steadfast adherence to him, in order to their entering into the heavenly rest, 7–19.*

A. M. 4068. WHEREFORE, holy brethren,
A. D. 64. partakers of ^a the heavenly call-

ing, consider ^b the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; A. M. 4068.
A. D. 65.

^a Rom. i. 7.

^b Rom. xv. 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. The apostle, in the first chapter of this epistle, having affirmed that Jesus of Nazareth, by whom the gospel revelation was given to mankind, is God’s Son, in a peculiar sense; a sense in which no man or angel is his son; and having proved, from the Jewish Scriptures, that God had constituted this his Son the Heir or Lord of all things, because by him he made the worlds; and in the second chapter, having answered the objections which were, or might be, brought for invalidating the claim of Jesus to be God’s Son, and having thereby given full effect to the direct proofs which established his claim; he, in this third chapter, proceeds to show what is implied in Christ’s being the Heir or Lord of all things; which

is the third fact on which the authority of the gospel revelation depends. A proper account of this matter was necessary; 1st, Because the title of Jesus to remove the Mosaic economy, and to substitute the gospel dispensation in its place, was founded on the power which he possessed as the Son of God and Heir of all things; 2d, Because many of the Jews, in the persuasion that the law of Moses was of perpetual obligation, and that its sacrifices were real atonements for sin, rejected Jesus as an impostor, for pretending to abolish these institutions.

Wherefore—Seeing the author of the gospel is so excellent a person, (chap. i.) and so highly advanced above all others, men and angels, (chap. ii. 7, 8,) holy brethren—By giving this appellation to

A. M. 4068. 2 Who was faithful to him that
A. D. 64. ¹ appointed him, as also ^o Moses was
faithful in all his house.

3 For this *man* was counted worthy of more
glory than Moses, inasmuch as ^d he who hath

¹ Gr. *made*; 1 Sam. xii. 6.—^c Num. xii. 7; Verse 5.

those to whom he wrote, it is evident he addressed his epistle, not, as Macknight supposes, chiefly, if at all, to the unbelieving Hebrews, but principally, if not only, to such as had embraced the gospel, and were really made new creatures in Christ; *partakers of the heavenly calling*—The calling of the gospel, which came from heaven, and is intended to bring men to heaven, including the preaching of the word, and the various means of grace, whereby men are brought to believe in Christ. *Consider the Apostle*—The messenger of God, sent immediately from him to preach that gospel to you which you profess to believe; the highest office this in the New Testament; and *High-Priest*—This was the highest function in the Old Testament church. As an *Apostle*, or God's messenger, he pleads the cause of God with us; and as *High-Priest*, he pleads our cause with God. Both are contained in the one word *Mediator*. He compares Christ as an apostle, with Moses; as a priest, with Aaron. Both these offices, which Moses and Aaron severally bore, he bears together, and far more eminently; *of our profession*—Of the religion we profess, of which Jesus is called the *Apostle*, because he was sent by God to reveal it; and the *High-Priest*, because we receive its blessings through his mediation. By thus calling upon them to consider Christ Jesus in these characters, the apostle seems to intimate that the believing Hebrews had not sufficiently adverted to the nature and quality of the person and offices of Christ, and for that reason were kept in the entanglements of Judaism; therefore he exhorts them to fix their minds attentively on the sublime subject.

Verse 2. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him*—The sacred penman, entering upon a comparison between Moses and Christ, as he was the apostle of God, or one sent by him to reveal his will, he recommends him to the faith of the Hebrews, under the principal qualification of a person in that office; he *was faithful*, which faithfulness he further describes by its respect to that act whereby he was appointed by God to the office. God's apostle is the chief steward or dispenser of his mysteries; and it is principally required in stewards that a man be found faithful. Now the fidelity of a legate, ambassador, or apostle consists principally in the full declaration of the mind and will of him who sent him, as to those ends for which he is sent. Faithfulness respects *trust*. Our Lord, therefore, must have had a trust committed to him wherein he was faithful. Accordingly he sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; declaring that he came not in his own, but in his Father's name, John v. 43. He moreover sealed that truth with his blood, which he came into the world to bear

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built the house, hath more ho- A. M. 4068.
nour than the house. A. D. 64.

4 For every house is builded by some
man; but ^e he that built all things is
God.

^d Zech. vi. 12; Matt. xvi. 18.—^e Eph. ii. 10; iii. 9; Chap. i. 2.

witness to, John xviii. 37; and greater faithfulness could not be expressed. *As also Moses was faithful in all his house*—The church of Israel, then the peculiar family of God. The words are an allusion to the testimony which God bare to Moses, Num. xii. 7, *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house*. It is true, Moses failed personally in his faith, and was charged of God that *he believed him not*, Num. xx. 12; but this was no impeachment of his faithfulness in the special office intended. As he was to reveal Jehovah's mind, and institute his worship, he was universally faithful; for *according to all that God appointed him so did he*, Exod. xl. 16. He did not conceal any of the divine laws, on account of their disagreeableness to the Israelites; nor did he alter them in the least, to make them acceptable, but delivered the whole law as it was spoken to himself, and formed the tabernacle and the ritual of the worship exactly according to the pattern showed him. In like manner, Christ's faithfulness consisted in his teaching the doctrines, appointing the laws, and establishing the worship which his Father had ordained for the church.

Verses 3, 4. *For, &c.*—The apostle proceeds in this verse, and the three following, with his design of evidencing the excellence of Christ above Moses, as he had done before in reference to angels, and all other revealers of the will of God to the church; the word *for* denoting the connection of this paragraph with verse 1: "Consider him," says he; *for he is worthy of more glory than Moses*.—The church being called the house of God, and that by God himself, the apostle takes advantage of the metaphor to express the dignity of Christ. *He that buildeth the house, &c.*—The verb *κατασκευάζω*, here used, and rendered to *build*, signifies to set things in order, Heb. ix. 6. It likewise signifies to form a thing as an artificer doth; in which sense it is applied to Noah's forming the ark, Heb. xi. 7. In this passage it signifies the forming a church, or religious society, by bestowing on it privileges, and by giving it laws for the direction of its members. And, as the apostle is speaking of the forming of the Christian Church, his meaning is, that Jesus, who formed the Christian Church, is a more honourable or greater person than all the members of that church collectively; consequently greater than any particular member of it. By making this observation, the apostle intimated that Moses, being a member of the Jewish Church, which he formed as God's servant, and needing its services and privileges equally with the Israelites, he was not to be compared with Jesus, who by his own authority had erected and supported the church in all ages and places, and had need of none of the

A. M. 4068. 5 ^f And Moses verily *was* faithful
A. D. 64. in all his house, as ^g a servant, ^h for
a testimony of those things which were to be
spoken after :

^f Verse 2.—^g Exod. xiv. 31 ; Num. xii. 7 ; Deut. iii. 24 ;
Josh. i. 2 ; viii. 31.—^h Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19.—ⁱ Chap. i. 2.

privileges or services of the church which he had formed. *For every house is builded by some man*—As the discourse is not concerning a material edifice, but concerning the Jewish and Christian Churches, *every house* must mean *every church or religious society* ; perhaps also every community, state, or government righteously established, is included in this general expression. *But he that built all things*—Or *all these things*, as Beza renders the expression, namely, the whole church, and all the persons that belong to it, or the parts of it, in all ages ; the expression *all things* being properly restrained to the subject treated of, and the word used by the apostle to express the building of the house, plainly declaring that it is the same kind of building he is treating of, and not the absolute creation of all things, which is nowhere expressed by that word ; *is God*—“The words may be so understood as to signify either that *God made or built all these things*, or that *he who made and built all these things is God* ; the first sense making God the *subject*, the latter the *predicate* of the proposition. But as to our purpose, they amount to the same thing ; for if he who made them is God, his making of them declares him to be so. And that it is the Lord Christ who is intended in this expression, will appear immediately ; for, 1st, If God absolutely, or God the Father be intended, then by the building of all things, the creation of the world is designed ; so they all grant who are of that opinion ; but that this is not so, we have already demonstrated from the words themselves. 2d, The introduction of God absolutely, and his building of all things in this place, is no way subservient to the apostle’s purpose ; for what light or evidence doth this contribute to his principal assertion, namely, that Christ was more honourable than Moses, and that on account of his building the house of God, the confirmation whereof he doth in these words expressly design ? 3d, It is contrary to his purpose. For he doth not prove the Lord Christ to be deservedly preferred before Moses, unless he manifest that by his *own power* he built the house of God in such a manner as Moses was not employed in ; whereas, according to this interpretation, he assigns the principal building of the house to *another*, even the Father, and so overthrows what he had before asserted. This then is that which by these words the apostle intends to declare ; namely, the ground and reason whence it is that the house was or could be in that glorious manner built by Christ, even *because he is God*, and so able to effect it ; and by this effect of his power he is manifested so to be.”—Owen.

Verses 5, 6. *And Moses verily*—Another proof of the pre-eminence of Christ above Moses ; *was faith-*

6 But Christ as ⁱ a Son over his own A. M. 4068.
house, ^k whose house are we, ^l if we A. D. 64.
hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of
the hope firm unto the end.

^k 1 Cor. iii. 16 ; Eph. ii. 21, 22 ; 1 Pet. ii. 5.—^l Verse 14 ; Matt. x. 22 ; xxiv. 13 ; Rom. v. 2 ; Col. i. 23 ; Chap. vi. 11 ; x. 35.

ful in all his house as a servant—*Θεραπον, minister, or officer*. In describing the faithfulness of Moses when, under God, he built the Jewish Church, God called him, (Num. xii. 7,) *My servant Moses*. From this the apostle justly inferred that Moses was not a legislator, but only a messenger from the legislator, or his minister. This was his place, this his dignity and honour ; and it was amplified by the considerations, that he was *faithful* in his service—was a servant in the *house of God*—and was not thus employed, and thus faithful, in this or that part, this or that service of God’s house, but in *his whole house*, and all the concernments of it. Herein was he different from all others in the same service in the Old Testament ; one was employed in one part of it, another in another ; one to instruct, another to reform it, one to renew a neglected ordinance, another to give new instructions ; no one but he was used in the service of the whole house. *For a testimony of the things, &c.*—That is, because the Jewish Church was designed for a testimony of the things which were afterward to be spoken by Christ and his apostles. This shows that Moses’s faithfulness consisted not only in forming the tabernacle and its services, according to the pattern showed him by God, but in recording all the preceding revelations, exactly as they were discovered to him by the Spirit. For these revelations, equally with the types and figures of the Levitical ritual, were intended to exhibit the things afterward to be spoken by Christ. Hence our Lord said to the Jews, (John v. 46.) *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me* ; namely, in the figures, but especially in the prophecies of his law, where the gospel dispensation, the coming of its author, and his character as Messiah, are all described with a precision which adds the greatest lustre of evidence to Jesus and his gospel. See Luke xxiv. 44. *But Christ as a Son*—That is, was faithful as a Son ; *over his own house*—“Every word proves the asserted pre-eminence of Christ ; *he is a Son, Moses a servant* ; he *over* the house, Moses *in* the house ; he *over his own house*, Moses *in* the house of *another*. The argument of the apostle therefore is obvious.”—Owen. But Pierce objects to this version, *over his own house*, and thinks the reading ought to be *his*, that is, God’s house ; “1st, Because if the church be Christ’s own house, to speak of him as a Son was improper, by reason that he would have presided over it as its *master*. 2d, Because the apostle’s argument requires that Christ be faithful to the same person as a Son, to whom Moses was faithful as a servant.” Wherefore *his house*, he thinks, in this verse, is God’s house or church. Inasmuch, however, as Christ is the *heir of all things*, it may with the utmost propriety be

A. M. 4068. Wherefore, as ^athe Holy Ghost
A. D. 64. saith, ^aTo-day if ye will hear his
voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provoca-

^a2 Sam. xxiii. 2; Acts i. 16.

said that the church is *his own house*, that is, the house in which he hath not only a trust and office, but also a property; which is appointed for him to inhabit and preside over, and which is still more especially his own, as it was purchased with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. *Whose house we*—All true believers; *are*—Or shall make it appear that we are, namely, lively stones in the spiritual temple built upon him, 1 Pet. ii. 5; and inhabited by him, Eph. ii. 20–22; 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19; and true members of his family, his servants, yea, even his brethren and sisters; *if we hold fast the confidence*—*τὴν παρησίαν*, properly, *the liberty of speech*; that is, that bold profession of the Christian faith which in the first age was so dangerous, exposing those who made it frequently to imprisonment and martyrdom, but which was absolutely necessary to the continuance of the gospel in the world; and therefore it was expressly required by Christ, Matt. x. 32, 33. See Heb. x. 22, 23. The apostle uses another word, namely, *εὐφροσίνης*, to express confidence, as verse 14. *And the rejoicing*—Or, *glorying*, as *καυχῆμα* signifies; *of hope*—Hope of eternal life founded on God's promises, namely, the hope which we professed at our baptism; *firm*—Without declining from or being shaken in it; keeping it up against all that fluctuating uncertainty of mind, which is apt to invade and possess unstable persons; *unto the end*—That is, as long as we live; not for the present season only, but in all future occurrences until we come to the end of our faith, the final salvation of our souls. Now, in order to this, great care and watchfulness, zeal, diligence, and resolution must be exercised, because of the opposition and violence that will be used to wrest them from us. Hence the exhortation contained in the following paragraph.

Verses 7–9. Having demonstrated the pre-eminence of Christ above Moses in their respective ministries, the apostle, according to his design and usual method, now proceeds to the application of the truth he had evinced, in an exhortation to stability and constancy in faith and obedience. And this he does in a way that adds double force to his exhortation, in that he both reminds them of, and urges upon them the words, testimonies, and examples recorded in the Old Testament, to which they professed a special deference and subjection; and also in that the nature of the example, which he insists upon, is such as supplies him with a new argument for his purpose. Now this is taken from God's conduct toward them, who were disobedient under the ministry of Moses, which he further explains, verses 15–19. For if God dealt in severity with them who were unbelieving and disobedient, with respect to him who was but a *servant* in the house, they might easily learn from this what his displeasure would be

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tion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

^aVerse 15; Psa. xc. 7.

toward those who should behave so with respect to the Son, who is Lord over the whole house, and whose property all the members of it are. *Wherefore*—This word shows that what follows is an inference from what precedes; *as the Holy Ghost saith*—The expression is emphatical, *τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἁγίου*, *that Spirit, that Holy Spirit*, so called by way of eminence; who in an especial manner spake in and by the penmen of the sacred Scriptures, 2 Pet. i. 21. The words here quoted are taken from Psa. xc. 7, which the apostle tells us (chap. iv. 7) was written by David. Hence we learn that David wrote his Psalms by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as our Lord likewise testifies, Matt. xxii. 43. "The judgments of God executed on sinners in ages past, being designed for the reproof and instruction of those who come after, the Holy Ghost, by David, very properly founded his exhortation to the people of that age upon the sin and punishment of their fathers in the wilderness. And the apostle, for the same reason, fitly applied the words, which the Holy Ghost spake to the people by David, to the Hebrews in his day, to prevent them from hardening their hearts when they heard God's voice speaking to them in the gospel of his Son." *To-day*—Now, at the present time, while the season of grace lasts, and you are favoured with the means thereof; *if ye will hear his voice*—If ye ever intend, or will consent to do it; *harden not your hearts*—By inattention, by thoughtlessness, by unbelief, and disobedience. Observe, reader, God speaks by his works, particularly those of creation, providence, and grace, and in and by his word; and *to hear him*, implies that we hearken to, understand, believe, and obey him; and instead of rejecting his counsel, that we suffer it to enter into our hearts, so as to influence our spirits and conduct; *as in the provocation*—*Παρακράσῳ*, *bitter provocation*; that is, as the Israelites hardened their hearts when they provoked me by their strife and murmurings. See Exod. xvi. 4; xvii. 2–9; xxxii. 10; Num. x. 33; xi. 3, 33, 35; xii. 16; xiii. 25–32; xiv. 4–22; Deut. i. 6, 7, 19–22, 34, 35; ii. 14; ix. 7; xxxii. 51; 1 Cor. x. 4. In short, their whole story manifests a continued scene of provocation. *When*—Or *where*, rather, as the Syriac and Vulgate read the words; for the word *when* would imply that, at the time of the bitter provocation chiefly referred to, the Israelites had seen God's works forty years, contrary to the history, which shows that that provocation happened in the beginning of the third year from the going out of Egypt: whereas to read *where* instead of *when*, agreeably to the matter of fact, represents God as saying by David, that the Israelites tempted him in the wilderness during forty years, notwithstanding all that time they had seen his miracles. The *tempting* God, here spoken of, consisted in their

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A. M. 4068. 10 Wherefore I was grieved with
A. D. 64. that generation, and said, They do
always err in their heart; and they have not
known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, ² They shall not
enter into my rest.

² Gr. if they

calling in question his presence with them, their dis-
trusting his power to help and save them, or his
faithfulness to his promises; or their despising ordi-
nary means of help and deliverance, and desiring
extraordinary. See note on Psa. xcv. 8, 9; Matt.
iv. 7; and proved me—Put my patience to the
proof, even while they saw my glorious works both
of judgment and mercy; or had proof by experience
of my power, providence, goodness, and faithfulness,
and that for forty years.

Verses 10, 11. *Wherefore*—To speak after the
manner of men; *I was grieved*—Highly displeased;
with that generation—With the generality of this
people; *and said, They do always*—Notwithstand-
ing all that I have done for them before their eyes;
err in their heart—Are led astray by their stubborn
will and vile affections; *and they have not known
my ways*—Have not paid any regard to the clear
discoveries of my will and design. They saw in-
deed God's works, or the ways of his providence,
the ways in which he walked toward them; and the
ways of his laws were made known to them, the
ways wherein he would have had them to walk toward
him; and yet it is said of them that they knew not his
ways, because they knew them not to any good pur-
pose; they did not know them spiritually and prac-
tically. They were not, properly speaking, igno-
rant of them, but they disliked them, and would
not walk in them. *So I swear in my wrath*—The
matter here referred to is recorded Num. xiv. 21,
&c., where see the notes. It must be observed,
when in Scripture human parts and passions are as-
cribed to God, it is not because these parts and pas-
sions do really exist in God, but that way of speak-
ing is used to give us some idea of his attributes and
operations, accommodated to our manner of conceiv-
ing things. We are not to suppose that, when God
said he *swore in his wrath*, he felt the passion of
wrath as men, when provoked, are wont to do; but
that he acted on that occasion as men do who are
moved by anger. He declared by an oath his fixed
resolution to punish the unbelieving Israelites, by
excluding them for ever from his rest in Canaan,
because they refused to go into that country when
he commanded them; and to show that this punish-
ment was not too severe, God, by the mouth of Da-
vid, spoke of their tempting him all the forty years
they were in the wilderness.

Verses 12, 13. *Take heed*—*Βλεπετε*, see to it, con-
sider, use care and circumspection; *brethren, lest*—
Μηπαρε, lest at any time; *there be in any of you*—As
there was in your forefathers of old; he speaks to
them collectively, to take care that none might be
found among them with such a heart as he guards

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there
be in any of you an evil heart of
unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is
called to-day; lest any of you be hardened
through the deceitfulness of sin.

shall enter.

them against, and consequently his caution concern-
ed every individual of them; *an evil heart of unbel-
ief*—Unbelief is the parent of all evil, and the very
essence of it lies in *departing from God, as the liv-
ing God*—The fountain of all our life, holiness, and
happiness. For as faith draws near to him in the
consideration and knowledge of him, in beholding
his glory, in desire after him, gratitude to him, and
delight in him; continually aspiring after a conform-
ity to him, and longing to enjoy union and commu-
nion with him; so unbelief produces directly contrary
effects, rendering the mind averse to approach God in
these respects and for these purposes, disliking and
shunning all intercourse with him. It is distinguished
by some into negative and positive. Negative unbel-
ief is wherever any believe not, or have not faith,
because they have not yet had the means of believ-
ing, namely, the Scriptures, or the truths declared
in them, as the heathen nations. Such, supposing
they believe and lay to heart the truths of what is
called natural religion, cannot be said to have in
them an *evil heart of unbelief*. 2d, Positive unbel-
ief is where men believe not, though they enjoy the
means of faith. This latter is here meant, and in it
consist some of the highest workings of the depraved
nature of man; it being, on many accounts, the
greatest provocation of God that a creature can be
guilty of. For it is an opposition to God in all the
perfections of his nature, and in the whole revelation
of his will. And therefore the gospel, which is a
declaration of grace, mercy, and pardon, and which
indeed condemns all sin, yet denounces final con-
demnation only against this sin, *he that believeth
not shall be damned*, Mark xvi. 16.

Observe reader, the apostle's caution against a
heart of unbelief implies two things: 1st, That we
take heed lest, through refusing to consider the evi-
dence of the truth, or the goodness and excellence
of the things proposed to be embraced by our faith,
we should continue in our natural unbelief, and
never attain faith. 2d, Lest we should reject or de-
cline from the faith after it has been received,
through neglect of the means which minister to its
continuance and increase, namely, the word of
God, prayer, Christian fellowship, the Lord's supper,
&c.; through yielding to the temptations of the devil,
the world and the flesh, and to the love of sin; through
unwatchfulness and the neglect of self-denial and
mortification; through relapsing into our former
habits, and imitating the spirit and conduct of the
carnal and worldly part of mankind around us;—
through fear of reproach, of ill-usage and persecution
from those that are enemies to the truth and grace
of God. As a powerful means to prevent this from

A. M. 4068. 14 For we are made partakers of
A. D. 64. Christ, ° if we hold the beginning of
our confidence steadfast unto the end ;
15 While it is said, ° To-day if ye will hear

° Verse 6.—° Verse 7.

being the case, the apostle adds, *exhort one another, &c.*—It is justly observed by Dr. Owen, that “many practical duties are neglected because they are not understood, and they are not understood because they are supposed to have no difficulty in them.” The duty of constant exhortation, that is, of persuading men to constancy and growth in faith, love, and obedience, to watchfulness and diligence in the ways of God, and attention to every duty which we owe to God, our neighbour, and ourselves, is the most important part of the ministerial office. It is, however, not confined to ministers: it must also be mutual among believers; and, in order to the right performance of it, the following things are necessary: 1st, A deep concern for one another’s salvation and growth in grace. 2d, Wisdom and understanding in divine things. 3d, Care that only words of truth and soberness be spoken, for only such words will be attended with authority, and have the desired effect. 4th, Avoiding those morose and severe expressions which savour of unkindness, and using words of mildness, compassion, tenderness, and love, at least toward such as are well-disposed, and desirous to know and do the will of God. 5th, Avoiding levity, and always speaking with seriousness. 6th, Attention to time, place, persons, occasions, circumstances. 7th, A suitable example in the persons exhorting, giving weight and influence to every advice that is given, in imitation of the apostle, who could say, *Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ.* 8th, We must be unwearied in this duty, and exhort one another *daily*; and that not only in appointed meetings, but in every proper season, and on all fit occasions, whenever we happen to be in company one with another: and, lastly, *while it is called to-day*—While the season for doing it continues; and therefore *now*, without delay, the time for performing this duty being both very short and very uncertain.

As a motive impelling to the practice recommended, the apostle adds, *lest any of you be hardened*—That is, 1st, Rendered blind and insensible as to the nature, excellence, necessity, and importance of spiritual things: 2d, impenetrable to mercy or justice, promises or threatenings; to the word, providence, or grace of God; stubborn and irreclaimable: 3d, Abandoned, and finally given up of God to sin and its consequences. It should be well observed, that this awful effect is not usually produced suddenly, and all at once, but by slow degrees, and perhaps insensibly, just as the hand of a labouring man is wont gradually to contract a callousness. It is effected, the apostle says, *by the deceitfulness of sin*, probably first by yielding to, instead of resisting and mortifying, sinful dispositions and corrupt passions, which by degrees produce those sinful

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his voice, harden not your hearts, as A. M. 4068.
in the provocation. A. D. 64.

16 °Forsome, when they had heard, did provoke:
howbeit, not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

¶ Num. xiv. 2, 4, 11, 24, 30; Deut. i. 34, 36, 38.

practices, which, 1st, Not only grieve, but quench and do despite to the Spirit of grace, and cause him to withdraw his influences from us. 2d, The mind becomes hereby indisposed, and averse to attend to, or to obey, the voice of God in his word or providence, to consider or to yield to his counsel and authority. Hereby, 3d, The conscience is stupified, the will, affections, and all the powers of the soul are preoccupied and engaged in the service of sin and Satan, of the world and the flesh. The apostle terms sin *deceitful*, because it promises the satisfaction it never yields: persuades us we may venture to yield a little to its solicitations, but need not go far;—that we may yield at this time, this once, but need not afterward;—that we may and can repent and reform when we will;—that God will not be extreme to mark little things;—and that he is merciful, and will not be so strict as ministers are wont to urge, in fulfilling his threatenings.

Verse 14. *For we are made partakers of Christ*—Of all the blessings procured by his death, and offered in his gospel, even of pardon, holiness, and eternal life; *if we hold*—If we retain with constancy and perseverance; *the beginning of our confidence*—That is, the confidence or trust we have begun to place in him; *steadfast*—*Βεβαιων, firm*; *unto the end*—Of our lives, whatever difficulties or oppositions may arise. Dr. Owen (who, by *being partakers of Christ*, understands our having an interest in his nature, by the communication of his Spirit, as Christ had in ours by the assumption of our flesh) interprets the word *πιστας*, here rendered *confidence*, of that union which we are bound to preserve and maintain with Christ, or of our *subsistence* in him, our abiding in him as the branches in the vine, observing, “So the word very properly signifies, and so it is here emphatically used.” He adds, “*the beginning of our subsistence in Christ, and of our engagements to him, is, for the most part, accompanied with much love and other choice affections, resolution, and courage; which, without great care and watchfulness, we are very ready to decay in and fall from.*”

Verse 16. *For some, &c.*—As if he had said, You have need to attend; be watchful and circumspect. *For some*—Yea, many; *when they had heard*—The voice of God in giving the law, and the various instructions which God granted them in the wilderness; *did provoke*—Literally, *bitterly provoke*, that is, God, whose voice they heard. By this consideration the apostle enforces his exhortation; when the people, says he, of old heard the voice of God in that dispensation of his law and grace which was suited to their condition, some of them provoked God; and whereas those also may do so who hear his voice in the dispensation of the gospel, it con-

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A. M. 4068. 17 But with whom was he grieved for—
A. D. 64. ty years? *was it* not with them that had
sinned, ^r whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?
18 And ^s to whom sware he that they should

^r Num. xiv. 22, 29, &c.; xxvi. 65; Psa. cvi. 26; 1 Cor. x. 5;

cerns all that hear it to take care that they be not disobedient; for, under every dispensation, dreadful is the consequence of abused mercy. *Howbeit, not all that came out of Egypt*—In the preceding discourse the apostle had expressed the sin and punishment of the people indefinitely, so as to appear at first view to include the whole generation in the wilderness; but here he makes an exception, which may refer to three sorts of persons. First, Those who were under twenty years of age in the second year after their coming out of Egypt, and who were not numbered in the wilderness of Sinai. See Num. i. 1, 3. For of those that were then numbered, there was not a man left save Caleb and Joshua, but they all died, because of their provocation. Secondly, the tribe of Levi; for the threatening and oath of God was only against them that were numbered, and Moses was expressly commanded not to number the Levites; although it is much to be feared that the generality of this tribe also provoked and fell. Thirdly, Caleb and Joshua are excepted; and indeed seem here to be principally intended. Now the apostle thus expresses the limitation of his former general assertion, that he might enforce his exhortation by the example of them who believed and obeyed the voice of God, and therefore entered into his rest; as well as of those who provoked, and therefore were prohibited from entering it. So that he draws his argument not only from the severity of God, which at the first view seems to be only set forth, but also from his implied faithfulness and mercy.

Verses 17, 18. *But with whom was he grieved*—Or, *displeased*, as Macknight renders *προσῶθιαι*; *forty years*?—The apostle's answer to this inquiry consists of a double description of them. First, By their sin; *was it not with them that had sinned*? Secondly, By their punishment; *whose carcasses fell in the wilderness*?—As some only, and not all provoked, so it was with some only, and not all, that God was displeased. The sins here principally intended are the general sins of the whole congregation, which consisted in their frequent murmurings and rebellions, which came to a head, as it were, in that great provocation upon the return of the spies,

not enter into his rest, but to them that A. M. 4068.
believed not? A. D. 64.

19 'So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

John 5.—Num. xiv. 30; Deut. i. 34, 35.—^r Chap. iv. 6.

(Num. xiv.) when they not only provoked God by their own unbelief, but encouraged one another to destroy Joshua and Caleb, who would not concur in their disobedience; for *all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And to whom sware he, &c.*—The apostle refers to Num. xiv. 21–23, 30; *but to them that believed not?*—Or *were disobedient*, as the word *πειθροασι* may be properly rendered; or who would not be persuaded, namely, to trust God, and believe that he would give them the possession of Canaan, and would not obey him when he commanded them to go up against their enemies, and take possession of it.

Verse 19. *So we see, &c.*—The conclusion we draw from the whole is, *that they could not enter in because of unbelief*—Though afterward they desired it. In looking over the whole story of the sins of the Israelites, and of God's dealings with them, one would be apt to fix upon some other causes of their exclusion from Canaan, as the Jews, their posterity, do at this day. But our apostle here lays it absolutely and wholly on their unbelief, which he proves to have been the chief spring and cause of all their provocations. From this, in particular, proceeded that cowardice which made them refuse to march against the Canaanites, when the spies brought them information concerning the giants whom they had observed in the country, the sons of Anak, and the large and well-fortified cities. But how inexcusable was this their unbelief, considering the many astonishing miracles which God had wrought for them, before he gave them the command to enter Canaan! "The conclusion," says Macknight, "of the apostle's reasoning concerning the sin and punishment of the ancient Israelites, contained in this verse, ought to make a deep impression on every reader, since it shows, in the strongest colours, the malignity of unbelief, and teaches us that it is the source of all the sin and misery prevalent among mankind. Our first parents sinned through their not believing God, when he said, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; and their posterity sin through their not believing what God hath suggested to them by their own reason, and by revelation, concerning the rewards and punishments of a future state."

CHAPTER IV.

Here, (1.) The apostle inculcates on professing Christians an holy fear and care to prevent their coming short of the heavenly rest through unbelief, 1, 2. (2.) Shows that the rest into which those enter on earth that believe the gospel, and the rest of heaven, are more excellent than that of Canaan, 3–10. (3.) By the most awakening and encouraging arguments he excites men to faith and hope in their approaches to God, 11–16.

A. M. 4068. **L**ET ^a us therefore fear, lest a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but ¹ the word preached did

^a Chap. xii. 15.—¹ Gr. the word of hearing.—² Or, because they were not united by faith to.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1, 2. In this chapter, which is of the same nature with the foregoing, the apostle proceeds with his exhortation to the Hebrews, and all professing Christians, to faith, obedience, and perseverance; and enforces it by a most apposite and striking instance in the punishment which befel the Israelites, those ancient professors of the true religion, who were guilty of sins contrary to those duties. And the example, as has been often observed, was peculiarly suitable, taken from their own ancestors, the evil being the same, namely, unbelief; the time in both cases being just after the establishment of a new constitution, and the consequence being the same, the exclusion from rest. The superior dignity of Christ above Moses, and the superior excellence of heaven above Canaan, greatly confirm the force of the apostle's argument. *Let us*—Christian Hebrews; *therefore fear, lest a promise being left*—A conditional promise, to be fulfilled to all obedient, persevering believers; (the pronoun *us* is not in the original;) *of entering into his rest*—The rest of glory in heaven; and, preparatory thereto, the rest of grace on earth; the peace and joy, the solid and satisfying happiness consequent on pardon and holiness, on the justification of our persons, the renovation of our nature, and that lively, well-grounded hope of eternal life, which is as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, and entering in within the veil, chap. vi. 19; *any of you should seem to come short of it*—Should fail of it; as your forefathers failed of entering the rest of Canaan. The *fear* here inculcated is not a fear of diffidence or distrust, of doubting or uncertainty, as to the event of our faith and obedience. This is enjoined to none, but is evidently a fruit of unbelief, and therefore cannot be our duty. Neither can it be a timidity or dismayedness of mind upon a prospect of difficulties and dangers in the way, for this is the sluggard's fear who cries, There is a lion in the way, I shall be slain. Nor is it that general fear of reverence with which we ought to be possessed in all our concerns with God; for that is not particularly influenced by threatenings, and the severity of God, seeing we are bound always in that sense to fear the Lord and his goodness. But it is, 1st, A jealous fear of ourselves, lest, having run well for a time, we should be hindered; should grow lukewarm and indolent, formal and dead, and so should fall from that state of grace in which we had once stood. 2d, A suspicious fear of our spiritual enemies, inducing us to watch and stand on our guard against them. *For unto us was the gospel preached*—That is, good news of entering into

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not profit them, ² not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 ^b For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, ^c As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

^b Chap. iii. 14.—^c Psa. xcvi. 11; Chap. iii. 11.

his rest have been brought to us; as well as unto them—The Israelites in the wilderness. The Hebrews, to whom he wrote, might be ready to say, "What have we to do with the people in the wilderness, with the promise of entering into Canaan? or with what the psalmist from thence exhorted our fathers to?" Nay, these things, saith the apostle, belong to you in an especial manner. For in the example proposed, you may evidently see what you are to expect, if you fall into the same sins. For he declares, that in the example of God's dealing with their progenitors, there was included a threatening of similar dealing with all others, who should fall into the same sin of unbelief; that none might flatter themselves with vain hopes of any exemption in this matter; which he further confirms in these two verses, though his present exhortation be an immediate inference from what went before. *But the word preached*—The promise declared unto them; *did not profit them*—So far from it, that it increased their condemnation; *not being mixed with faith in them that heard it*—So firmly believed as to become a principle of obedience in them. And it is then only, when these truths are thus mixed with faith, that they exert their saving power.

Verse 3. *For we who have believed*—Or, who believe, namely, in Christ, and the promises of rest made in the gospel, and are diligent in the use of the means appointed in order to the attainment of it; *do enter into rest*—Are at present made partakers of the rest promised by Jesus to the weary and heavy-laden that come to, and learn of him, Matt. xi. 28, 29: the rest implied in peace with God, peace of conscience, tranquillity of mind, the love of God and of all mankind shed abroad in the heart, and lively hopes of future felicity. Or rather, as Macknight observes, the present tense is put for the future, to show the certainty of believers entering into the rest of God. For the discourse is not directly concerning any rest belonging to believers in the present life, but of a rest remaining to them after death, verse 9. *As he said*—Clearly showing that there is a further rest than that which followed the finishing of the creation; *As I have sworn, &c., if they shall enter*—That is, they shall never enter; into my rest—Namely, by reason of their unbelief. The apostle's argument is to this purpose: Seeing men are by the oath of God excluded from God's rest on account of unbelief, this implies that all who believe shall enter into his rest. *Although the works were finished before, even from the foundation of the world*—So that God did not speak of resting from them. The proposition is, There remains a rest for the

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A. M. 4068. 4 For he spake in a certain place of A. D. 64. the seventh day on this wise, ^d And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, ^e and they to whom ³ it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

^d Gen. ii. 2; Exod. xx. 11; xxxi. 17.—^e Chap. iii. 19.—³ Or, the gospel was first preached.

people of God. This is proved, (verses 3-11,) thus: that psalm (the 95th) mentions a rest, yet it does not mean, 1st, God's rest from creating, for this was long before the time of Moses, nor the rest of the seventh day, which was instituted from the beginning. Therefore God's swearing that the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness should not enter into his rest, shows that there was then another rest to be entered into, of which they who then heard fell short. Nor is it, 2d, The rest which Israel obtained through Joshua, for the psalmist wrote after him. Therefore it is, 3d, The eternal rest in heaven.

Verses 4-8. *For he spake in a certain place—Namely, Gen. ii. 2; Exod. xxxi. 17; on this wise, God did rest, &c.*—These words the apostle quotes, because they show that the seventh-day rest is fitly called *God's rest*, and that the seventh-day rest was observed from the creation of the world. "God's ceasing from his works of creation is called his resting from all his works, because, according to our way of conceiving things, he had exerted an infinite force in creating the mundane system."—Macknight. *And in this place again, If they shall enter—That is, they shall not enter; into my rest—Namely, the rest of Canaan, to be entered above three thousand years after the former. This is called God's rest, 1st, Because, after the Israelites got possession of that country, God rested from his work of introducing them; 2d, Because they were there to observe God's sabbaths, and to perform his worship free from the fear of their enemies, Luke i. 68, 74. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein—As if he had said, From what has been spoken, it is evident that, besides the rest of God from the foundation of the world, and a seventh-day sabbath as a pledge thereof, there was another rest, which some persons were to enter into, namely, the rest in the land of Canaan; and they to whom it was first preached—That is, published and offered by Moses in the wilderness; entered not in because of unbelief—As was said above. Again, &c.*—And further, besides the two times of rest before mentioned, namely, those of the creation and of Canaan, he afterward, in this psalm, speaks of another; he limiteth a certain day—That is, the Holy Ghost specifies and appoints another determinate time or season of rest besides those before mentioned, whose season was now past; saying in David—In the psalm penned by him; after so long a time—After

7 (Again, he limiteth a certain day, A. M. 4068. saying in David, To-day, after so A. D. 64. long a time; as it is said, 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if 'Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a ⁵ rest to the people of God.

^f Psa. xc. 7; Chap. iii. 7.—⁴ That is, Joshua.—⁵ Or, keeping of a sabbath.

they had entered into the rest of Canaan, and had possessed it for about five hundred years, he yet again calls upon them to seek after another rest: therefore there is another besides that of Canaan. *For if Jesus—That is, Joshua; had given them rest*—If that rest which they obtained under the conduct of Joshua, who brought them into Canaan, had been all which was intended by God for them, this latter exhortation by David had been needless. Upon the whole, the apostle proves that after the original rest at the creation, there was a second promised and proposed to the people of God, namely, in Canaan; but yet neither was that the rest intended in the place of the psalm here so often referred to; but a third, which yet remained for them, and was now offered to them, and that under the same promises and threatenings with the former, namely, to be conferred on obedient believers, and withheld from the unbelieving and disobedient.

Verse 9. *There remaineth therefore a rest, &c.*—Since neither of the two former rests is intended by David, and there was no new rest for the people to enter into in the days of David, and the psalm wherein these words are recorded is acknowledged to be prophetic of the days of the Messiah, it unavoidably follows that there is such a rest remaining; and not only a spiritual rest, in the peace and love of God, and in the enjoyment of communion with him entered into by believing in Christ, (Matt. xi. 28, 29; Isa. xxxii. 17, 18,) but an eternal rest in the heavenly world. "The apostle having established this conclusion by just reasoning on the sayings of the Holy Ghost, uttered by the mouth of David, they misrepresent the state of the Israelites under the Mosaic dispensation who affirm that they had no knowledge of the immortality of the soul, nor of future retributions. They had both discovered to them in the covenant with Abraham, as recorded by Moses, and explained by the prophets. The apostle here, in this conclusion, substitutes the word *sabbatismos*, sabbatism, for the word *καταπαυσις*, rest, in his premises. But both are proper, especially the word *sabbatism*, in this place, because, by directing us to what is said verse 4, it showeth the nature of that rest which remaineth to the people of God. It will resemble the rest of the sabbath, both in its employments and enjoyments. For therein the saints shall rest from their work of trial, and from all the evils they are subject to in the present life; and shall

A. M. 4068. 10 For he that is entered into his
A. D. 64. rest, he also hath ceased from his own
works, as God *did* from his.)

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that
rest, lest any man fall ^a after the same exam-
ple of ^b unbelief.

^a Chap. iii. 12, 18, 19.—^b Or, *disobedience*.—Isa. xlix. 2;
Jer. xxiii. 29; 2 Cor. x. 4, 5; 1 Pet. i. 23.

recollect the labours they have undergone, the dangers they have escaped, and the temptations they have overcome. And by reflecting on these things, and on the method of their salvation, they shall be unspeakably happy, Rev. xxi. 3. To this add, that being admitted into the immediate presence of God to worship, they shall, as Doddridge observes, pass a perpetual sabbath in those elevations of pure devotion, which the sublimest moments of our most sacred and happy days can teach us but imperfectly to conceive. Here it is to be remarked, that the Hebrews themselves considered the sabbath as an emblem of the heavenly rest: for St. Paul reckons *sabbaths* among those Jewish institutions which were shadows of good things to come, Col. ii. 17.—Macknight.

Verse 10. *For that rest of which we were speaking, may properly be called a sabbatical rest, or the celebration of a sabbath; for he that hath entered into this his final and complete rest, hath ceased from his own works*—From all his labours and toils; *as God did from his*—In that first seventh-day, which, in commemoration of it, was appointed to be kept holy in all future ages. Probably God appointed men to rest on the seventh day, not only in commemoration of his having rested on that day, but to teach them that their happiness in a future state will consist in resting from their work of trial, and in reviewing it after it is finished, as God, when he rested from the work of creation, surveyed the whole, and pronounced it good. From this account of the rest which remaineth for the people of God, namely, that they do not enter into it till their works of trial and suffering are finished, it is evident that the rest which is here said to remain to them is the rest of heaven, of which the seventh-day rest is only an imperfect emblem.

Verse 11. *Let us labour therefore, &c.*—That is, since the Israelites were so severely punished for their unbelief, *let us labour*—Greek, *σπουδασωμεν*, *let us be in earnest, use diligence, and make haste*, (all which particulars are included in the word,) *to enter into that rest*—By sincerely believing and steadfastly obeying the gospel, aspiring after and striving to attain every branch of holiness, internal and external; *lest any man fall*—Into sin and eternal perdition; *after the same example of unbelief*—By reason of such unbelief as the Israelites gave an example of. The unbelief against which we are here cautioned, as being the cause of men's falling under the wrath of God, is chiefly that kind of it which respects the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the reality and greatness of the

12 For the word of God is ^b quick, A. M. 4068
and powerful, and ^c sharper than any A. D. 64.

^d two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and
marrow, and is ^e a discerner of the thoughts
and intents of the heart.

ⁱ Proverbs v. 4.—^k Ephesians vi. 17; Revelation i. 16; ii. 16.
^l 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

joys of heaven, and the miseries of hell; the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, men's sinfulness and guilt, depravity and weakness, and their need of the salvation of the gospel in all its branches, the ability and willingness of Christ to save them from their sins here, and conduct them to the heavenly country hereafter, together with his authority to judge the world, and power to dispense rewards to the righteous, and inflict punishments on the wicked. The unbelief of these great truths, revealed to us in the gospel, being the source of that wickedness which prevails among those called Christians, as well as among Mohammedans and heathen, we ought carefully to cherish a firm and steady belief of these things, lest by the want of a lively sense of them, we be led to live after the manner of the ungodly, and God be provoked to destroy us by the severity of his judgments.

Verse 12. *For the word of God*—As if he had said, Take heed of unbelief, *for the word of God will try and condemn you if you be guilty of it.* It is greatly debated among commentators whether this is to be understood of Christ, the eternal Word, or of the gospel. “None of the properties,” says Calmet, “mentioned here can be denied to the Son of God, the eternal Word. He sees all things, knows all things, penetrates all things, and can do all things. He is the Ruler of the heart, and can turn it where he pleases. He enlightens the soul, and calls it gently and efficaciously, when and how he wills. Finally, he punishes in the most exemplary manner the insults offered to his Father and to himself by infidels, unbelievers, and the wicked in general. But it does not appear that the divine Logos is here intended: 1st, Because St. Paul does not use that term to express the Son of God. 2d, Because the conjunction, *γαρ*, *for*, shows that this verse is an inference drawn from the preceding, where the subject in question is concerning the eternal rest, and the means by which it is obtained. It is therefore more natural to explain the term of the word, order, and will of God; for the Hebrews represent the revelation of God as an active being, *living, all-powerful, illumined, executing vengeance, discerning and penetrating all things.*” Of this he produces divers examples. Macknight considers the passage in the same light, observing, “The apostle having said, (verse 2,) that *λογος της ακοης*, *the word which they heard did not profit them; the word of God in this verse, I think, signifies the preached gospel; understanding thereby its doctrines, precepts, promises, and threatenings, together with those examples of the divine judgments which are recorded in the*

A. M. 4068. 13 Neither is there any creature
A. D. 64. that is not manifest in his sight: but
all things are naked and opened unto the
eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Psalm xxxiii. 13, 14; xc. 8; cxxxix. 11, 12.—Job xxvi. 6; xxxiv. 21; Prov. xv. 11.

Scriptures; by all which the gospel operates powerfully on the minds of believers. In our common version of 1 Pet. i. 23, the word of God is said to be living. So also Christ, John vi. 63, *The words that I speak to you they are spirit and they are life*; and in the last clause of this verse, actions are ascribed to the word of God which imply life, namely, *it is a discerner of the devices and purposes of the heart.* And as the word is here said to be, *ενεργης*, efficacious, "this efficacy is described by Paul, 2 Cor. x. 4, *The weapons of our warfare are powerful, for the overturning of strong holds, &c.* Also 1 Thess. ii. 13, the word of God is said to *work effectually in them who believe*: Eph. vi. 17, *the sword of the Spirit denotes the doctrine of the gospel, called a sword, because it is of great use to repel the attacks of our spiritual enemies; and a sword of the Spirit, because it was dictated by the Spirit of God*: Rev. i. 16, the word of God is represented as a *sharp, two-edged sword, which went out of the mouth of Christ*: Isa. xi. 4, it is said of Christ, *He shall smite the earth with the rod, or (as the LXX. render it) τῷ λόγῳ, the word of his mouth.*" Bengelius and Wesley understand the passage in the same sense, the note of the latter being as follows: "*The word of God preached, (verse 2,) and armed with threatenings, (verse 3,) is living and powerful, attended with the power of the living God, and conveying either life or death to the hearers; sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating the heart more than this does the body; piercing quite through, and laying open the soul and spirit, joints and marrow, the inmost recesses of the mind, which the apostle beautifully and strongly expresses by this heap of figurative words: and is a discerner not only of the thoughts, but also of the intentions.*"

In the clause, *piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit*, the writer proceeds on the supposition that man consists of three parts, a *body, a sensitive soul*, which he hath in common with the brutes, and a *rational spirit*, of which see the note on 1 Thess. v. 23. In representing the word, or gospel, as a person who shall judge the world at the last day the apostle hath imitated Christ, who said to the Jews, (John xii. 48,) *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: ο λογος, the word that I have spoken shall judge him in the last day.* But to raise the figure, the apostle ascribes to the word *life, strength, discernment, and action*; qualities highly necessary in a judge.

Verse 13. *Neither is there any creature*—Especially no human creature; *that is not manifest*—Αφανης, unapparent; *in his sight*—Namely, in the sight of God, whose word is thus powerful; for it is God in whose sight, or before whom, Greek ενωπιου,

14 Seeing then that we have a A. M. 4068.
great High-Priest, that is passed A. D. 64.
into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let
us hold fast our profession.

Chapter iii. 1.—Chapter vii. 26; ix. 12, 24.—Chapter x. 23.

αυτου, every creature is manifest, and of this his word, working on the conscience, gives the fullest conviction; *but all things are naked and opened*—Γεμνα και τετραχλησμενα, expressions used with a plain allusion to the state in which the sacrifices called burnt-offerings were laid on the altar. They were stripped of their skins, their breasts were ripped open, their bowels were taken out, and their back-bone was cleft from the neck downward, as the latter word signifies. So that every thing, both within and without them, was exposed to open view, particularly to the eye of the priest, in order to a thorough examination, Lev. i. 5, 6. And being found without blemish, they were laid in their natural order on the altar, and burned, verse 8. The apostle's meaning is, that neither infidelity, nor hypocrisy, nor worldly-mindedness; neither covetousness, nor pride, nor ambition, nor any sinful disposition, however secretly it may lurk in the mind, can be concealed from our judge; *with whom we have to do*—Προς ον ημιν ο λογος, *to whom we must give an account.* So the word λογος frequently signifies. See Matt. xii. 36; xviii. 23; Luke xvi. 2; and particularly Rom. xiv. 12, where the final judgment is spoken of. *So every one of us, λογον δωσει, shall give an account of himself to God*; and Heb. xiii. 17, *they watch for your souls, ως λογον αποδωσωτες, as those who must give account.*

Verse 14. The writer of this epistle having spoken of the Author of the gospel, as the Creator of the world, as the Lawgiver in God's church, as the Conductor of the spiritual seed of Abraham into the heavenly country, the rest of God, and as the Judge of the whole human race, now proceeds to speak of him as the High-Priest of our religion, and to show that, as such, he hath made atonement for our sins by the sacrifice of himself. This is the fourth fact whereby the authority of the gospel, as a revelation from God, is supported. See note on chap. i. 1. They who are acquainted with the history of mankind, know that from the earliest times propitiatory sacrifices were offered by almost all nations, in the belief that they were the only effectual means of procuring the pardon of sin and the favour of the Deity. In this persuasion the Jews more especially were confirmed by the law of Moses, in which a variety of sacrifices of that sort, as well as free-will-offerings, were appointed by God himself. And as the heathen offered these sacrifices with many pompous rites, and feasted on them in the temples of their gods, they became extremely attached to a form of worship which at once eased their consciences and pleased their senses. Wherefore, when it was observed that no propitiatory sacrifices were enjoined in the gospel, and that nothing of the kind was of

A. M. 4063. 15 For^r we have not a high-priest which
A. D. 64. cannot be touched with the feeling of our

^r Isaiah liii. 3; Chap. ii. 18.— Luke xxii. 28.

ferred in the Christian places of worship, Jews and Gentiles equally were very difficultly persuaded to renounce their ancient worship for the gospel form, in which no atonements appeared; and which, employing rational motives alone for exciting their affections, was too naked to be, to such persons, in any degree interesting. Wherefore, to give both Jews and Gentiles just views of the gospel, the apostle, in this passage of his epistle, affirms, that although no sacrifices are offered in the Christian temples, we have a *great High-Priest*, even *Jesus the Son of God*, who, at his ascension, passed through the visible heavens into the true habitation of God, with the sacrifice of himself; and from these considerations he exhorts the believing Hebrews in particular to hold fast their profession. Then to show that Jesus is well qualified to be a High-Priest, he observes, that though he be the Son of God, he is likewise a man, and so cannot but be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. On which account we may come boldly to the throne of grace, well assured that through his intercession we shall obtain the pardon of our sins, and such supplies of grace as are needful for us. These being the doctrines which the apostle is to prove in the remaining part of this epistle, this paragraph may be considered as the *proposition of the subjects* he is going to handle in the following chapters. And as his reasonings on these, as well as on the subjects discussed in the foregoing part of the epistle, are all founded on the writings of Moses and the prophets, it is reasonable to suppose that his interpretations of the passages which he quotes from these writings, are no other than those which were given of them by the Jewish doctors and scribes, and which were received by the people at the time he wrote. See Macknight. *Seeing then that we have*—Greek, *εχουτες αυ*, *having therefore*. The apostle refers to what he had affirmed, (chap. i. 3,) that the Son of God had *made purification of our sins by the sacrifice of himself*, and to what he had advanced chap. ii. 17, that he was *made like his brethren in all things, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest*; and to his having called him *the High-Priest of our profession*, chap. iii. 1. He had not, however, hitherto attempted to prove that Jesus really was a high-priest, or that he had offered any sacrifice to God for the sins of men. The proof of these things he deferred till he had discussed the other topics of which he proposed to treat. But having finished what he had to say concerning them, he now enters on the proof of Christ's priesthood, and treats thereof, and of various other matters connected with it, at great length, to the end of chap. x. Theodoret, who had divided this epistle into sections, begins his second section with this verse, because it introduces a new subject. Indeed, the 5th chapter, according to our division of the epistle, should have begun with this verse. *A great High-Priest*—Great indeed, being the eternal Son of God; *that is passed*

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infirmities: but^r was in all points tempt- A. M. 4063.
ed like as *we are*, 'yet without sin.' A. D. 64.

^r 2 Cor v. 21; Chap. vii. 26; 1 Pet. ii. 22; 1 John iii. 5.

into the heavens—Or, *through the heavens*, as the expression *διεληλυθота τας υρανας*, literally signifies. The word *heavens* is taken in two senses: 1st, For the palace of the great King, where is his throne, and where thousands of the holy ones stand ministering before him. This heaven the Lord Jesus did not pass *through* but *into*, when he was taken up into glory, 1 Tim. iii. 16. There he is at *the right hand of the majesty on high*; and these heavens have received him until the time of restitution of *all things*, Acts iii. 27. But by *the heavens* we are sometimes to understand, 2d, the air, as when mention is made of *the fowls of heaven*; and concerning *them* our apostle says, (chap. vii. 26,) that Jesus *is made higher than the heavens*; he passed through them, and ascended above them, into that which is called the *third heaven*, or *the heaven of heavens*. The allusion is evidently made to the Jewish high-priest, and to what he typically represented to the church of old. As he passed through the veil into the holy of holies, carrying with him the blood of the sacrifices on the yearly day of atonement; so our great High-Priest went, once for all, through the visible heavens with the virtue of his own blood, into the immediate presence of God. It is to be observed, the apostle calls *Jesus, the Son of God, a great High-Priest*, because in chap. i. he had proved him to be greater than the angels; and in chap. iii. 1-4, to be worthy of more honour than Moses. *Let us hold fast our profession*—Our professed subjection to him and his gospel, notwithstanding our past sins, the present defects of our obedience, and our manifold infirmities. The word *ομολογια*, however, may be properly rendered, and probably was chiefly intended to signify, *confession*; for it is required that we should make a solemn declaration of our subjection to the gospel, with prudence, humble confidence, and constancy; for *with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*, Rom. x. 10. The open acknowledgment of the Lord Christ, of his word and ways under persecution, is the touch-stone of all profession. This is what we are to hold fast, *totis viribus*, with our whole strength, as *κρατωμεν* signifies, or with resolution, zeal, and firmness. See Rev. ii. 25; iii. 12. This verse, therefore, contains the enjoinder of a duty, with a motive and encouragement to the due performance of it. *We have a great High-Priest, therefore let us hold fast, &c.*

Verse 15. *For we have not a high-priest, &c.*—As if he had said, Though he be so great, yet he is not without concern for us in our mean and low condition. Here the apostle lets the Hebrews know that in the gospel there is no loss of privilege in any thing. Had they a high-priest who, with his office, was the life and glory of their profession and worship? We also, says he, have a High-Priest, who is, in like manner, the life and glory of our profession and service; and not one *who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*—Or, *who cannot,*

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A. M. 4068. 16 ^a Let us therefore come boldly
A. D. 64. unto the throne of grace, that we

may obtain mercy, and find grace to ^{A. M. 4068.}
^{A. D. 64.} help in time of need.

^a Eph. ii. 28; iii. 12;

Chap. x. 19, 21, 22.

συμπαθεσαι ταις ασθενειαις ημων, sympathize with our weaknesses, our temptations, trials, and troubles, of whatever kind they may be, ghostly or bodily. The Son of God, having been made flesh, experienced all the temptations and miseries incident to mankind, sin excepted; consequently he must always have a lively feeling of our infirmities; of our wants, weaknesses, miseries, dangers; *but was in all points tempted*—That is, tried; *like as we are*—καθ' ομοιοτητα, according to a similitude of our trials, or with such as belong to human nature. What is here said of the similarity of our Lord's trials to ours, does not imply an exact likeness; for he was free from that corruption of nature which, as the consequence of Adam's sin, has infected all mankind; which is intimated likewise in the expression, (Rom. viii. 3,) *sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh; yet without sin*—For he never committed any; and is able to preserve us in all our temptations from the commission of it.

Verse 16. *Let us therefore come boldly*—Without any doubt or fear, trusting in his sacrifice and intercession for acceptance; *unto the throne of grace*—The throne of our reconciled Father, which grace erected, and where it reigns and dispenses all blessings in a way of unmerited favour; *that we may obtain mercy*—To pardon all our past sins, and compassionate our condition, amidst our various infirmities and sufferings; *and find grace to help in time of need*—Or, *for a seasonable help*; according to our respective necessities, as εις ευκαιρον βοηθειαν implies.

The latter word properly signifies *help obtained* in consequence of *crying aloud*, or strong crying for it. Observe, reader, though every time may be properly termed *a time of need*, in which we want supplies of grace, yet some times are peculiarly such: as seasons of affliction, of persecution, and temptation; or times when God, to chastise us for our lukewarmness and sloth, our hypocrisy and formality, or pride, self-will, discontent, or impatience; our neglect of prayer and watchfulness, our levity and folly, or any other fault or failing, withdraws his presence from us: or when we are called to the performance of any great and signal duty, as it was with Abraham when he was called first to leave his country, and afterward to sacrifice his son: or to something that is new, and in which we are yet inexperienced; a duty against which there is great opposition, or for which we may seem to be very unfit, or in which the glory of God is in an especial manner concerned. And, above all, the time of death will be such a season. To part with all present things and present hopes, to give up one's departing soul, entering the invisible world, an unchangeable eternity, into the hands of our sovereign Lord, are duties which require strength beyond our own, for their right and comfortable performance. And at such seasons, as we have peculiar need to make application to the throne of grace, here spoken of, for the purpose of obtaining seasonable help; so, if we apply in faith, and with sincere and earnest desire and persevering diligence, we shall not apply in vain.

CHAPTER V.

^a in this chapter, (1.) The apostle sets forth the duty and qualifications of a high-priest, 1-4. (2.) Shows how abundantly these are answered in Christ's supereminent call to, fitness for, and discharge of that office, 5-10. (3.) Reproves the believing Hebrews for their sloth and negligence, and the little progress they had made in the knowledge of the truths of the gospel, which were prefigured by the ceremonial dispensation, 12-14.

A. M. 4068. **FOR** every high-priest taken from
A. D. 64. among men, ^a is ordained for men

^b in things pertaining to God, ^c that he ^{A. M. 4068.}
^{A. D. 64.} may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

^a Chap. viii. 2.—^b Chap. ii. 17.

^c Chap. viii. 3, 4; ix. 9; x. 11; xi. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. The priesthood and sacrifice of the Son of God, and the pardon procured for sinners thereby, together with the many happy effects of the pardon thus procured, being matters of the greatest importance to mankind, the apostle in this chapter, and in what follows to chap. x. 19, hath stated at great length the proofs by which they are established. And it was very proper that he should be copious, not only in his proofs of these important subjects, but also in his comparison of the priesthood of

Christ with the Levitical priesthood, that while he established the merit of the sacrifice of Christ, he might show the inefficacy of the Levitical atonements, and of all other sacrifices whatever. For as the unbelieving Jews, and probably many of those who believed, did not acknowledge his apostleship, St. Paul knew that his affirmation of these matters would not be held by them as sufficient evidence. His proof of the priesthood of Christ he begins in this chapter, in the course of which he shows, that whatever was excellent in the Levitical priesthood

A. M. 4068. 2^d Who¹ can have compassion on
A. D. 64. the ignorant, and on them that are
out of the way; for that^e he himself also is
compassed with infirmity.

3 And^f by reason hereof he ought, as for the
people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

4^g And no man taketh this honour unto him-
self, but he that is called of God, as^h was
Aaron:

^d Chapter ii. 18; iv. 15.—¹ Or, *can reasonably bear with*.
^e Chap. vii. 28.—^f Lev. iv. 3; ix. 7; xvi. 6, 15, 16, 17; Chap.
vii. 27; ix. 7.—^g 2 Chron. xxvi. 18; John iii. 27.—^h Exod.
xxviii. 1; Num. xvi. 5, 40; 1 Chron. xxiii. 13.

is in Christ, and in a more eminent manner. And
whatever excellence was wanting in those priests, is
in him. For—Or now; every high-priest—As if he
had said, To show that Christ is a real High-Priest,
I will describe the designation, the duties, and the
qualifications of a high-priest, by which it will ap-
pear that all the essential parts of that office are
found in him; taken from among men—Being, till
he is taken, of the same rank with them; is ordained
—Appointed, set apart for that office; for men—For
their benefit; in things pertaining to God—To
bring God near to men, and men to God; that he
may offer both gifts—Out of things inanimate; and
sacrifices—Of animals; to atone for sins—“Gifts,
or free-will-offerings, as distinguished from sacrifices
for sins, were expressions of gratitude to God for his
goodness in the common dispensations of his providence.
And because the priests offered both kinds, Paul speaks of himself, (Rom. xv. 16.) as *exercising
the priesthood according to the gospel*, by offering the
Gentiles in an acceptable manner, through the
sanctification of the Holy Ghost.”

Verses 2, 3. Who can have compassion—The
word *μετριοπαθεῖν*, here used, signifies to feel com-
passion in proportion to the misery of others. The
apostle's words imply that a high-priest, who is not
touched with a feeling of the weaknesses and mis-
eries of others, is unfit to officiate for them, because
he will be apt to neglect them in his ministrations,
or be thought by the people in danger of so doing.
On the ignorant—Who, not being properly in-
structed in divine things, are involved in error with
respect to them; and on them that are out of the
way—Of truth and duty, of wisdom, holiness, and
happiness; or who, through their ignorance or any
other cause, fall into sin: so that all sins and sinners
are here comprehended. For that he himself is
compassed with infirmity—So that under a consci-
ousness thereof, he will officiate for them with
the greater kindness and assiduity, knowing that he
needs the compassion which he shows to others.
And by reason hereof—Because he himself is a sin-
ner; he ought, as for the people, so also for himself,
(see the margin,) to offer for sins—That, being par-
doned himself, and in a state of reconciliation and
peace with God, he may offer for others with more
acceptance. We are not to infer from this that

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5ⁱ So also Christ glorified not him- A. M. 4068.
self to be made a high-priest; but he A. D. 64.
that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day
have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou
art a priest for ever after the order of Melchi-
sedec.

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had
offered up prayers and supplications with

ⁱ John viii. 54.—² Psalm ii. 7; Chapter i. 5.—¹ Psalm
cx. 4; Chapter vii. 17, 21.—^m Matthew xxvi. 39, 42,
44; Mark xiv. 36, 39.—ⁿ Psalm xxii. 1; Matthew xxvii.
46, 50; Mark xv. 34, 37; John xvii. 1.

Christ had any sins of his own to offer for, or that
he offered any sacrifice for himself, it being repeat-
edly affirmed by the apostles that he was absolutely
free from all sin.

Verses 4-6. And no man—Who has any regard
to duty or safety; taketh this honour—This awful
office, attended with a high degree of responsibility;
unto himself, but he only that is called of God to it;
as was Aaron—And his posterity, who were all of
them called at one and the same time. But it is ob-
servable Aaron did not preach at all, preaching being
no part of the priestly office. So also Christ glo-
rified not himself—See John viii. 54; to be made a
High-Priest—That is, did not take this honour to
himself, but received it from his Father, who said
unto him, Thou art my Son—This solemn acknow-
ledging of him for his Son, shows that he undertook
nothing but what his Father authorized him to un-
dertake; to-day have I begotten thee—As if he had
said, There is an eternal relation between us, which
is the foundation of thy call to this work. See note
on Psa. ii. 7; Acts xiii. 33. As he—God the Father;
saith in another place—Because the former testi-
mony was somewhat obscure, the apostle adds an-
other more clear: Thou art a priest for ever, after
—Or according to; the order of Melchisedec—That
is, thou art a priest, not like Aaron, but Melchisedec.
Inasmuch as Melchisedec had neither predecessor
nor successor in his office, his priesthood could not,
properly speaking, be called an order, if by that
phrase be understood a succession of persons exe-
cuting that priesthood. Therefore the expression,
κατα τάς, here rendered after the order, must mean
after the similitude of Melchisedec, as it is expressed
chap. vii. 15; and as the Syriac version renders the
phrase in this verse. The words of God's oath, re-
corded Psa. cx. 4, are very properly advanced by the
apostle as a proof of the Messiah's priesthood, be-
cause the Jews in general acknowledged that David
wrote that psalm by inspiration concerning Christ.

Verse 7. Who, &c.—The sum of the things treated
of in the 7th and following chapters, is contained in
this paragraph, from verse 7-10, and in this sum is
admirably comprised the process of his passion with
its inmost causes, in the very terms used by the
evangelists. Who in the days of his flesh—Those
two days in particular wherein his sufferings were

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A. M. 4068. strong crying and tears unto him
 A. D. 64. ° that was able to save him from
 death, and was heard ² in ³ that he feared ;

° Matthew xxvi. 53 ; Mark xiv. 36.
 ² Or, for his piety.

at the height ; when he had offered up prayers and supplications thrice ; with strong crying and tears —In the garden ; to him (his heavenly Father) that was able to save him from death—Which yet he endured in obedience to his Father's will. The reader will easily understand what is here said concerning the fear and sorrow, the strong crying and tears of the Son of God, if he remember that He, who was perfect God, and possessed of all possible perfections as the eternal Word of the Father, was also perfect man, "of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting : " in other words, that in his mysterious person, the perfect human nature, consisting of soul and body, was indeed united indissolubly to the divine, but was not while he was on earth, (and is not even now,) absorbed by it. The union was such as gave an infinite dignity to the person of the Redeemer, and infinite merit to his sufferings, but not such as made him incapable of suffering, or rendered his sufferings of no efficacy, which would have been the case if they had not been felt. Only let this be kept in remembrance, and Christ's humiliation and sorrow will not be a stone of stumbling to us, or rock of offence, any more than his exaltation and glory. And was heard in that he feared—To be heard, signifies, in Scripture, to be accepted in our requests, or to be answered in them. There is no doubt but the Father heard the Son always in the former sense, John xi. 42 : but how far was he heard in the latter, so as to be delivered from what he prayed against ? In answer to this it must be observed, the prayers of Christ on this occasion were, 1st, Conditional ; namely, that the cup might pass from him if it were agreeable to his Father's will ; *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me*, Luke xxii. 42. He could not have been man, and not have had an extreme aversion to the sufferings that were coming upon him in that hour and power of darkness, when it is certain that Satan and his angels, who had departed from him for a season, (Luke iv. 13,) were again permitted to oppress his soul with inexpressible horror. Nothing, in fact, is suffering, or can be penal to us, but what is grievous to our nature. But the mind of Christ, amidst these assaults of hell, and the view given him of the sufferings which awaited him, was so supported and fortified, as to come to a perfect acquiescence in his Father's will, saying, *Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done*. But, 2d, His prayers were also absolute, and were absolutely heard. He had conceived a deep and dreadful apprehension of death, upon its being presented to him as attended with the wrath and curse of God, due to those sins of mankind, for which he was to make atonement. And he well knew how unable the human nature was to undergo it, (so as to remove that wrath and curse, and make

8 ¹ Though he were a Son, yet A. M. 4068.
 learned he ² obedience by the things A. D. 64.
 which he suffered ;

³ Matthew xxvi. 37 ; Mark xiv. 33 ; Luke xxii. 43 ; John xii. 27.
 ¹ Chap. iii. 6.—Phil. ii. 8.

way for the justification of such as should believe in him,) if not mightily supported and carried through the trial by the power of God. And while his faith and trust in God were terribly assaulted by the temptations of Satan suggesting fear, dread, and terrible apprehensions of the divine displeasure due to our sins, it was his duty, and a part of the obedience he owed to his heavenly Father, to pray that he might be supported and delivered, *απο της ενλαβειας*, in that he particularly feared—Or rather ; from his fear, namely, the fear of that weight of infinite justice and wrath, which our sins had provoked ; or, *the being bruised and put to grief* by the hand of God himself. Compared with this, every thing else was as nothing. And yet so greatly did he thirst to be obedient even unto this dreadful death, and to lay down his life for his sheep, under this dreadful load of anguish and sorrow, that he vehemently longed to be baptized with this baptism, Luke xii. 50. The consideration of its being the will of God that he should thus suffer, first tempered his fear, and afterward swallowed it up. And he was heard—Not so that the cup should pass away, but so that he was enabled to drink it without any fear. Thus the prophet represents him as saying, *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back : I gave my back to the smiters, &c., for the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded ; therefore have I set my face like a flint, I know that I shall not be ashamed, &c.,* Isa. l. 5-8. Add to this, that he was actually delivered from the power of death itself by a glorious resurrection, of which the prophet intimates his having an assured expectation, representing him as adding, *He is near that justifieth me ;* namely, that acquits me from the charge of being an impostor and blasphemer, by raising me from the dead, exalting me to his own right hand, and investing me with all power in heaven and on earth, and especially by authorizing me to confer the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary gifts upon my disciples, and thereby to give demonstration of my being the true Messiah. In this sense the apostle seems to have understood the passage when he said, that he, who was *put to death in the flesh ;* namely, as a blasphemer ; *was justified in*, or by, *the Spirit*, conferred by him after his ascension.

Verse 8. *Though he were a son*—And so, one would have supposed, might have been exempted from suffering ; this is interposed, lest any should be offended at all these instances of human weakness ; *yet learned he obedience, &c.*—Yea, although he was such a son as has been before described, even that Son of God, who had glory with his Father before all worlds. It was no singular thing for a son, or child of God by adoption, to be chastised, to suffer,

A. M. 4068. 9 And being made perfect,
A. D. 64. he became the author of eternal

salvation unto all them that obey him;
A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

Chapter ii.

10; xi. 40.

and thereby to be instructed to obedience. He therefore speaks not of him as a son in such a way, or in any way in which a mere creature might be God's son, but as he was his Son in a peculiar sense, his only-begotten Son, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, John i. 1, 14: that *He* should do and suffer the things here spoken of, was indeed marvellous. Therefore it is said, he did and suffered them *although he was a Son*. Which words imply both the necessity of his doing and suffering what is here ascribed to him, and his love, that when, on his own account no such thing was required, or in any respect needful, yet that he would submit to this condition for our sakes. But what is the *obedience* here intended? To this it may be answered, the word *υπακοη*, so rendered, means an obediencial attendance to, or compliance with, the commands of another, when they are *heard*, and thereby *known*. This obedience in Christ was two-fold: 1st, General, in the whole course of his life. Every thing he did was not only right and holy as to the matter of it, but as to the form and manner of it; it was obediencial: he did all things, because it was the will of God that he should do them; and this his obedience to God was the life and beauty of the holiness, even of Christ himself. This, however, is not chiefly meant here, but rather, 2d, That peculiar compliance with the Father's will, whereby he became *obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*. For this commandment had he received of the Father, that he should lay down his life for his people, and which he did in the way of obedience, saying, *A body hast thou prepared me; lo! I come to do thy will*, by offering up that body, chap. x. 5, 9. But how did he *learn* this obedience? It must be observed, 1st, The word *μαθηται*, here used, signifies to *learn* as a disciple, with an humble, willing subjection to, and a ready reception of, the instruction given. 2d, It is said he learned *obedience*, not he learned to obey, which will give us light in the meaning of the passage. He did not learn that to be his duty which he knew not before, or did not consider; nor was he impelled to, or instructed, or directed in the various acts of the obedience required, as we are often taught by chastisements. But, 3d, He learned obedience by experiencing it, as a man learns the taste of meat by eating it. Thus he was said to *taste of death*, or to experience what was in it by undergoing it. The obedience he learned was a submission to undergo great, hard, and terrible things, accompanied with patience under them, and faith for deliverance from them. This he could have no experience of but by suffering the things he was to undergo, and by the exercise of appropriate graces while suffering. Thus he learned or experienced in himself, what difficulty obedience is attended with. And, 4th, This way of his learning it is what is so useful to us, and so full of consolation. For if he had only known obedience, though never so per-

fectly, in theory merely, what relief could have accrued to us from it? How could it have been a spring in him of suitable compassion toward us? But now, having fully experienced the nature of that special obedience which is yielded to God in a suffering condition, what difficulty it is attended with, what opposition is made to it, how great an exercise of grace is required, &c., he is disposed to support and succour us in this our obedience and sufferings. See Dr. Owen.

Verse 9. *And being made perfect, &c.*—Many of the difficulties which we meet with in Scripture, are entirely owing to our ignorance: some to our ignorance of the subjects under consideration, and others of the meaning of the terms made use of to express these subjects. This is peculiarly the case here: there would be no difficulty in conceiving how Christ could be said to be *made perfect*, if we observed, 1st, That he was *very man*, and that his human nature, before his resurrection, was in a state of infirmity, and not of perfection, his body being subject to various weaknesses, and the faculties of his soul, of course, being influenced thereby. While in his childhood he is said to have increased in *wisdom* as well as in stature, namely, as the powers of his mind were gradually unfolded, and subjects, through the medium of his senses, were presented to his contemplation. And if he increased in wisdom, he must, of course, have increased in love to God and man, and all other graces and virtues, though always perfectly free from every defilement of sin, internal or external: but when he was raised from the dead, and exalted to his Father's right hand, his human nature was fully and for ever freed from this state of infirmity, and was rendered completely perfect. This, however, does not appear to be the meaning of the word *perfect* here, but the expression rather refers, 2d, To his having fully accomplished the work he had to do, and the sufferings he had to endure in order to his being a perfect Mediator and Saviour. Accordingly the expression here used by the apostle, *τελειωθεις*, is literally *being perfected*, answering directly to the word used chap. ii. 10, *τελειωσαι*, to *perfect by sufferings*; only there it is used *actively*, it became *him* (God the Father) to *make perfect the Captain of our salvation*; here it is used *passively*, with respect to the effect of that act, and signifies his being *consummated*, or having finished his whole process, from his leaving the celestial glory to his returning to it; which process it was absolutely necessary he should accomplish, that his character, as a High-Priest, might be completed, and he might be consecrated as such. This, 3d, Is another meaning of the term, and a meaning given it by our translators at the close of the seventh chapter, where they have rendered *τετελειωμενων*, (another participle of the same verb,) *consecrated* or *dedicated* to his high office. The priests under the law were consecrated by the death and oblation of the beasts offered in

A. M. 4068. 10 Called of God a high-priest
A. D. 64. † after the order of Melchisedec.

11 Of whom ^a we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are ^x dull of hearing.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* ^v the first principles of the oracles of God; ^u and are become such as have

[†] Verse 6; Chapter vi. 20.—^a John xvi. 12; 2 Pet. iii. 16.
^x Matthew xiii. 15.—^v Chapter vi. 1.—^u 1 Cor. iii. 1-3.
^u Gr. *hath no experience.*

sacrifice at their consecration, (Exod. xxix.,) but it belonged to the perfection of Christ as a high-priest, that he should be consecrated by his own sufferings. This was necessary both from the nature of the office, to which he was to be solemnly set apart, and to answer the types of the Aaronical priesthood. This, however, was only the external means of his consecration, and an evidence thereof. He was really consecrated by the act of God the Father, who said, *Thou art my Son, &c.*, and by his own act when he said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He became the author*—*Αιτιος, the cause*, both the meritorious and efficient cause; of eternal salvation—As procuring it for us by his obedience unto death, and conferring it upon us in all its branches, in consequence of his ascension and exaltation; *to all those that obey him*—The expression is emphatical: the salvation belongs *only* to those that obey him, and it belongs to all such. And as the Greek term here used imports to obey *upon hearing*, the obedience intended is, 1st, Faith, which cometh by hearing. 2d, The subjection of the heart, of the will and affections to him, in consequence of faith; and, 3d, A uniform complying with the will of God as far as it is known to us, (Matt. vii. 21,) or a conscientious, steady, and persevering obedience to all the precepts of the gospel. For only *blessed are they that do his commandments*, because they, and only they, shall have a *right to the tree of life*, Rev. xxii. 14. Thus, as Macknight observes, “in this verse three things are clearly stated: 1st, That obedience to Christ is equally necessary to salvation with believing on him. 2d, That he was made perfect as a high-priest, by offering himself a sacrifice for sin; and, 3d, That by the merit of that sacrifice he hath obtained pardon and eternal life for them who obey him.”

Verse 10. *Called*—*Προσκαγορευθεις*, denominated by God himself, or, as some understand the expression, *openly declared*, namely, in the 110th Psalm, before referred to; *a high-priest after the order of Melchisedec*—Or, according to the constitution of Melchisedec's priesthood, which was a figure and example of Christ's priesthood, in the peculiar properties and circumstances of it, namely, not by a material unction, legal ceremonies, or any human ordination, but by a heavenly institution, and the immediate unction of the divine Spirit. The Holy Ghost seems

need of ^x milk, and not of strong A. M. 4068.
meat. A. D. 64.

13 For every one that useth milk, ³ is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is ^a a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are ⁴ of full age, *even* those who by reason ⁶ of use have their senses exercised ^b to discern both good and evil.

^a 1 Corinthians xiii. 11; xiv. 20; Ephesians iv. 14.—⁴ Or, *perfect*, 1 Corinthians ii. 6; Eph. iv. 13.—⁶ Or, *of a habit, or, perfection.*—^b Isaiah vii. 15; 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

to have concealed who Melchisedec was, on purpose that he might be the more eminent type of Christ. This only we know, that he was a *priest*, and the *king of Salem*, or Jerusalem.

Verses 11-14. *Of whom, &c.*—The apostle here begins an important digression, wherein he reproves, admonishes, and exhorts the believing Hebrews; *we*—Apostles and other ministers of the word; *have many things to say*—And things of great importance, in order to your full illumination, and perfect acquaintance, with that Christianity which you profess; *and hard to be uttered*—Interpreted or explained, as *δυσερμηνευτος* signifies; though not so much from the subject matter, as because *ye are dull of hearing*—Careless as to giving attention, slothful in considering, and dull in apprehending the things of God. *For when, for the time*—Since ye first professed Christianity; *ye ought to be teachers*—Able to teach others less informed than yourselves; *ye have need that one teach you again which be* the nature of the *first principles of the oracles of God*—Accordingly these are enumerated in the first verse of the ensuing chapter. *And are become such as have need of milk*—The first and plainest doctrines. See on 1 Cor. iii. 2. *For every one that useth milk*—That is, that neither desires nor can digest any thing else; (otherwise strong men use milk, but not that chiefly, much less that only;) *is unskilful in the word of righteousness*—Makes it appear that he is unacquainted (through want of exercise and experience) with the sublimer truths of the gospel. Such are all they who desire and can digest nothing but the doctrine of justification and imputed righteousness. *For he is a babe*—See on 1 Cor. xiv. 20. The apostle compares these Hebrews to babes, not on account of their innocent simplicity and teachableness, qualities which Christ recommended to all his disciples; but on account of their weakness and ignorance; for which, considering the advantages they had so long enjoyed, they were deserving of censure. *But strong meat*—The sublimer truths relating to a perfect acquaintance with, experience in, and the practice of, the whole gospel, chap. vi. 1; *belongeth to them that are of full age*—*Τελειων, the perfect*, or perfectly instructed: see on 1 Cor. ii. 6, where the same expression seems to be used in the same sense; *even those who, by reason of use*—Or *habit*, as *εξιν* signifies, implying strength of spiritual understanding,

arising from maturity of spiritual age; *have their senses exercised*—Though the word *ασθητηρια*, here used, properly signifies the outward senses, as the eyes, ears, &c.; yet it is evidently here put for the inward senses, the senses of the mind; *to discern both good and evil*—Grown Christians, by exercis-

ing their spiritual faculties, become able to distinguish truth from error, in the various branches of Christian doctrines, having attained the *full assurance of understanding in the mystery of God and of Christ*, (Col. ii. 2,) as also to distinguish duty from sin, or moral and spiritual good from evil.

CHAPTER VI.

Here, (1.) The apostle declares his resolution of advancing to sublimer truths without dwelling further upon the first principles, and exhorts the believing Hebrews to aspire after greater proficiency in the knowledge of the gospel, as a mean to prevent their backsliding and apostacy, which he shows would end in ruin, 1-8. (2.) He expresses his hopes that they would persevere in the good way on which they had entered, and would attain eternal salvation; pressing them, however, to still greater diligence, in imitation of those who already inherited the promises, 9-12. (3.) Addressing himself to sincere believers, he comforts them with a view of the goodness of God, and his fidelity to those sacred engagements into which he had condescended to enter; the performance of which, he shows, is further sealed by the entrance of Christ into heaven as our forerunner, 13-20.

A. M. 4068. THEREFORE ^a leaving ¹ the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance ^b from dead

works, and of faith toward God, A. M. 4069. 2 ^c Of the doctrine of baptisms, ^d and of laying on of hands, ^e and of resurrection of the dead, ^f and of eternal judgment.

^a Phil. iii. 12, 14; Chapter v. 12.—¹ Or, the word of the beginning of Christ.—^b Chapter ix. 14.—^c Acts xix. 4, 5.

^d Acts viii. 14-17; xix. 6.—^e Acts xvii. 31, 32.—^f Acts xxiv. 25; Rom. ii. 16

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1, 2. *Therefore*—Seeing that most of you have continued so ignorant, although you have been so long favoured with the light of the gospel, and various means of edification, it is high time for you to labour for more knowledge and grace, and for me to instruct you further; *leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ*—That is, saying no more for the present, of those things in which those who embrace Christianity are wont to be first instructed. The original expression, *τον της αρχης τε Χριστου λογον*, is, literally, *the word of the beginning of Christ*, as in the margin; and signifies those parts of the Christian doctrine which men were usually and properly first instructed in; and which the apostle immediately enumerates. They are the same with the *first principles of the oracles of God*, mentioned chap. v. 12. But it must be observed that the signification of the words must be limited to the present occasion; for if we consider the things here spoken of *absolutely*, they are never to be left, either by teachers or hearers. There is a necessity that teachers should often insist on the rudiments, or first principles, of religion; not only with respect to them who are continually to be trained up in knowledge from their infancy, but also those who have made a further progress in knowledge. And this course we find our apostle to have followed in all his epistles. Nor are any hearers so to leave these principles, as to forget them, or not duly to make use of them. Cast aside a constant regard to them, in their proper place, and no progress can be made in knowledge, no more than a building can be carried on when the foundation is taken away. *Let us go on unto per-*

fection—Unto a perfect acquaintance with the more sublime and difficult truths, and the high privileges and duties of Christianity; *not laying again*—What has been laid already; *the foundation of repentance from dead works*—That is, from the works done by those who are dead in sin, or who, through sin, are under condemnation to the second death, are alienated from the life of God, and *carnally minded, which is death*, Rom. viii. 6. See note on Eph. ii. 1, 2. Not only are known and wilful sins, which proceed from spiritual death, and if not pardoned and taken away, end in death eternal, here intended; but even all works, though apparently moral, charitable, and pious, are but dead works, before the living God, if they do not proceed from spiritual life in the soul, or from living faith, even the *faith which worketh by love*, (Gal. v. 6; 1 Cor. xiii. 3,) as their principle, and be not directed to the glory of God as their end. *And faith toward God*—Looking to, and confiding in him for pardon, holiness, and eternal life, through Christ. *Of the doctrine of baptisms*—The apostle does not speak of the legal washings in use among the Jews, whether by immersion, ablution, or sprinkling; (for why should those who believed in Christ be instructed concerning these?) but John's baptism and that of Christ, which were distinct from each other, and were subjects of disputation with many among the Jews, Mark vii. 3, 4; John iii. 22-26. John admitted the penitent to the baptism of water; and, in obedience to the command of Christ, (Matt. xxviii. 19,) the apostles baptized all that professed to believe in him, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Or, as Whitby thinks, the apostle is

A. M. 4068. 3 And this will we do, ^a if God permit. A. D. 64.

4 For ^bit is impossible for those ^cwho were once enlightened, and have tasted of ^dthe heavenly gift, and ^ewere made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

^a Acts xviii. 21; 1 Cor. iv. 19.—^b Matt. xii. 31, 32; Chap. x. 26; 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21; 1 John v. 16.

here to be understood of the double baptism "of which John spake, when he said, *I baptize you with water, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire*, Matt. iii. 19; and of which Christ spake to Nicodemus, (John iii. 5,) saying, *Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*. For this, in order, followed the doctrine of repentance, and of faith in God and our Lord Jesus Christ." *And the laying on of hands*—The imposition of hands was used by the apostles and first Christian ministers in the healing of diseases, and in setting persons apart for the work of the ministry; but neither of these were common to all Christians, nor joined with baptism; nor were they reckoned among the *principles of the doctrine of Christ*, or the initiatory doctrines of the Christian faith. We must therefore understand this of that imposition of the apostles' hands which was wont to be used, after baptism, to confer upon the persons baptized the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost. See Acts viii. 14–17; xix. 6. And this was a matter wherein the glory of the gospel and its propagation were highly concerned; indeed, next to the preaching of the word, it was the great means used by God for bringing both Jews and Gentiles over to the faith of the gospel, or for establishing them therein. *And the resurrection of the dead*—Namely, of the bodies of the dead; and of *eternal judgment*—The future and general judgment, called *eternal*, because the sentence then pronounced will be irreversible, and the effects of it remain for ever. In which two last-mentioned articles, the penitent and believing, that had been admitted to baptism, were more fully instructed, as being most powerful motives to engage them herein to exercise themselves to have always *consciences void of offence toward God and toward all men*. "Interpreters observe," says Whitby, "that the doctrine of Origen, touching the period of the torments of the damned, is here condemned; and indeed the primitive father's not Origen himself excepted, taught the contrary. 'If we do not the will of Christ,' says Clemens Romanus, 'nothing will deliver us from eternal punishment.' 'The punishment of the damned,' says Justin Martyr, 'is endless punishment and torment in eternal fire.' In Theophilus it is, 'eternal punishment.' Irenæus, in his symbol of faith, makes this one article, 'that God would send the ungodly and unjust into everlasting fire.' Tertullian declares, 'that all men are appointed to torment or refreshment, both eternal.' And 'if any man,' says he, 'thinks the wicked are to be consumed and not punished, let him remember that hell-fire is styled eternal, because designed for eternal punishment; and their substance will remain

5 And have tasted the good word of ^a God, and the powers of ^bthe world ^cto come, A. M. 4068. A. D. 64.

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; ^dseeing they crucify to them-

^a Chap. x. 32.—^b John iv. 10; vi. 32; Eph. ii. 8.—^c Gal. iii. 2, 5; Chap. ii. 4.—^d Chap. ii. 5.—^e Chap. x. 29.

for ever whose punishment doth so.' St. Cyprian says, 'The souls of the wicked are kept with their bodies to be grieved with endless torments.' 'There is no measure nor end of their torments,' says Minutius. Lastly, Origen reckons this among the doctrines defined by the church; 'That every soul, when it goes out of this world, shall either enjoy the inheritance of eternal life and bliss, if its deeds have rendered it fit for bliss; or be delivered up to eternal fire and punishment, if its sins have deserved that state.'

Verses 3–5. *And this we will do*—We will go on to perfection; *if God permit*—That is, afford assistance and opportunity. And we will do this the rather, and the more diligently, because it is *impossible for those who were once enlightened*—With the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, (Eph. iv. 21,) and have been made free thereby from the bondage of sin and Satan, John viii. 31–36; *and have tasted the heavenly gift*—The gift of righteousness imputed to them, Rom. v. 17; faith counted for righteousness; or the remission of sins through faith in Christ, sweeter than honey to the taste; *and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost*—Of the witness and fruits of the Spirit of God; *and have tasted the good word of God*—Have had a relish for and delight in the doctrine of the gospel, have fed upon it, and been nourished by it; *and the powers of the world to come*—*Μελλοντος αιωρος, of the future age*, as the Christian dispensation was termed by the Jews, the Messiah being called by the LXX. in their interpretation of Isa. ix. 6, (instead of the *everlasting Father*, which is our translation of the clause,) *πατηρ τε μελλοντος αιωρος, the Father of the age to come*. If the expression be thus taken, by *the powers*, here spoken of, we are to understand the privileges and blessings of the gospel dispensation in general, including, at least with regard to some, the miraculous gifts conferred on many of the first Christians. But as the *future state*, or *future world*, may be meant, the expression may be understood of those earnest and anticipations of future felicity which every one tastes who has a hope full of immortality. "Every child that is *naturally* born, first *sees* the light, then receives and *tastes* proper nourishment, and *partakes* of the things of this world. In like manner the apostle, comparing spiritual with natural things, speaks of one born of the Spirit as *seeing* the light, *tasting* the sweetness, and *partaking* of the things of *the world to come*."—Wesley.

Verse 6. *If they fall away*—Literally, *and have fallen away*. The preceding participles, *φωτισθεντας, γευσσαμεντες, and γενηθεντας*, being aorists, says Macknight, "are rightly rendered by our translators in

A. M. 4068. selses the Son of God afresh, and
A. D. 64. put him to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them ² by whom it is dressed, ^o receiveth blessing from God :

^a Or, for.—^o Psa. lxx. 10.

the past time; *who were enlightened, have tasted, were made partakers*; wherefore *παρὰπισσοντας*, being also an aorist, ought to have been translated in the past time, *have fallen away*. Nevertheless our translators, (following Beza, who, without any authority from ancient MSS., has inserted in his version the word *si, if,*) have rendered this clause, *if they fall away*; that this text might not appear to contradict the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. But as no translator should take upon him to add to, or alter the Scriptures, for the sake of any favourite doctrine, I have translated the word in the past time, *have fallen away*, according to its true import, as standing in connection with the other aorists in the preceding verses." "Two things," says Pierce, "are here to be observed: 1st, That he speaks of such only as fell away from the very profession of Christianity. This appears from what he presently adds, to set forth the aggravations of their guilt, that *they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame*"—That is, show themselves to be of the same mind with those that did crucify him, and would do it again were it in their power; and do all they can to make him contemptible and despised. "It is therefore very unreasonable for persons to give way to despair themselves, or to drive others to it, by applying to other sins this text, which only relates to total apostacy. 2d, As the same thing is spoken of again, chap. x. 26, &c., it cannot be improper to compare the two places together, in order to our fully understanding his design. And therefore, from the other place, I would explain this, *If they shall, εκκλιως, wilfully, fall away*. But it may be inquired why our author speaks so severely of the condition of such apostates. Now the reason of this may be taken partly from the nature of the evidence which they rejected. The fullest and clearest evidence which God ever designed to give of the truth of Christianity, was these miraculous operations of the Spirit; and when men were not only eye-witnesses of these miracles, but were likewise themselves (probably) empowered by the Spirit to work them, and yet after all rejected this evidence, they could have no further or higher evidence whereby they should be convinced; so that their case must, in that respect, appear desperate. This may be partly owing to their putting themselves out of the way of conviction. If they could not see enough to settle them in the Christian religion, while they made a profession of it, much less were they like to meet with any thing new to convince and reclaim them, when they had taken up an opposite profession, and joined themselves with the inveterate enemies of Christianity. And finally,

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8 ^p But that which beareth thorns and briars *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned.

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

^p Isa. v. 6.

this may be resolved into the righteous judgment of God against such men for the heinous and aggravated wickedness of which they are guilty."

Verses 7, 8. *For the earth which drinketh in the rain, &c.*—Thus they to whom the gospel is preached, and who believe and embrace it, bring forth the fruits of repentance, faith, and new obedience, and are accepted and blessed by God with further measures of grace, according to Matt. xiii. 12; xxv. 29, where see the notes. *But that which beareth thorns and briars*—Only or chiefly; *is rejected*—No more labour is bestowed upon it; *and is nigh unto cursing*—As in the blessing mentioned in the former verse, there is an allusion to the primitive blessing, whereby the earth was rendered fruitful, Gen. i. 11; so in the curse, here mentioned, there is an allusion to the curse pronounced on the earth after the fall, Gen. iii. 17. *Whose end is to be burned*—A principal part of the eastern agriculture consists in leading rills of water from ponds, fountains, and brooks to render the fields fruitful. When this is neglected, the land is scorched by the heat and drought of the climate, and so, being burned up, is altogether sterile. Or, he may refer to the custom of husbandmen's burning up the thorns and briars produced by barren ground. The apostle's meaning is, that as land, which is unfruitful under every method of culture, will at length be deserted by the husbandmen, and burned up with drought; so those that enjoy the means of grace, and yet bring forth nothing but evil tempers, words, and works, must expect to be deprived of the means they enjoy, and exposed to utter ruin. And the apostle particularly referred in these words to the Jewish nation, the generality of whom rejected the gospel, while many others, who had received it, apostatized from it; and who therefore, in a peculiar sense, were exposed to the divine malediction, as was signified by Christ's cursing the barren fig-tree, mentioned Mark xi. 13, 20. The consequence of which was the burning of their city and temple, and the slaughter of many hundreds of thousands of them shortly after this epistle was written, together with the awful state of spiritual barrenness in which the remnant of them have long lain.

Verses 9-11. *But, beloved*—In this one place he calls them so. He never uses this appellation but in exhorting; *we are persuaded better things of you*—Than those intimated verses 4-6. This is exactly in St. Paul's manner of softening the harsh things he found himself obliged to write. See Eph. iv. 20; 2 Thess. ii. 13. *And things that accompany salvation*—Which argue you to be in a state of salvation, and will in the end, if you persevere, bring you to

A. M. 4068. 10 ^q For ^r God is not unrighteous
A. D. 64. to forget ^s your work and labour of
love, which ye have showed toward his name, in
that ye have ^t ministered to the saints, and do
minister.

11 And we desire that ^u every one of you
do show the same diligence ^x to the full assu-
rance of hope unto the end :

^q Proverbs xiv. 31 ; Matthew x. 42 ; xxv. 40 ; John xiii. 20.
^r Romans iii. 4 ; 2 Thessalonians i. 6, 7. — ^s 1 Thessalonians
i. 3. — ^t Romans xv. 25 ; 2 Corinthians viii. 4 ; ix. 1, 12 ;

eternal salvation ; namely, sincere faith in Christ and his gospel, love to God and one another, and obedience to his will ; *though we thus speak*—Declare the danger of apostacy to warn you, lest you should fall from your present steadfastness. *For God is not unrighteous to forget, &c.*—You give plain proof of your faith and love, which the righteous God will surely reward ; *and, or rather, but, we desire that every one of you do continue to show the same diligence*—Which you have used hitherto ; and therefore we thus speak ; *to the full assurance of hope*—That you may be fully confirmed in your hope of eternal felicity ; *unto the end*—As long as you live ; which you cannot expect if you abate of your diligence. “The full assurance of faith relates to present pardon, the full assurance of hope to future glory. The former is the highest degree of divine evidence that God is reconciled to us in the Son of his love : the latter is the same degree of divine evidence (wrought in the soul by the same immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost) of persevering grace, and of eternal glory. So much, and no more, as faith every moment beholds with open face, so much does hope see, to all eternity. But this assurance of faith and hope is not an opinion, not a bare construction of Scripture, but is given immediately by the power of the Holy Ghost ; and what none can have for another, but for himself only.”—Wesley.

Verse 12. *That ye be not slothful*—*Νωθροί*, careless and negligent, or dull, sluggish, and indolent, namely, in the use of the means of grace, or in those works of piety and virtue which are the proper fruits of faith and love ; *but followers*—*μιμηταί*, imitators ; of them who through faith—In God, and in the truths and promises of his holy word ; *and patience*—Or, *long-suffering*, as *Μακροθυμίας* rather signifies, enduring long in the constant exercise of faith, hope, and love, notwithstanding any or all opposition, and the bearing all trials and troubles, of whatever kind, with composure of mind and resignation to the divine will ; *inherit the promises*—Dr. Whitby would render it, *inherited the promises*, supposing that the expression refers to the promises made to Abraham and the other patriarchs respecting the multiplication of their seed, their being put in possession of Canaan, and the various other promises made to them, the accomplishment of which they afterward received. But the participle, *κληρονομητων*, being in the present tense, will hardly

12 That ye be not slothful, but fol- A. M. 4068.
lowers of them who through faith and A. D. 64.
patience ^y inherit the promises.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, ^z he sware by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

2 Timothy i. 18. — ^a Chapter iii. 6, 14. — ^x Colossians ii. 2.
^y Chapter xiii. 36. — ^z Genesis xxii. 16, 17 ; Psalm cv. 9 ; Luke i. 73.

bear to be so rendered, signifying literally, *are inheriting*, namely, the promises. Pierce and MacKnight, therefore, understand it of the believing Gentiles, who at the time when the apostle wrote were inheriting those promises made to Abraham concerning all nations of the earth being blessed in him and his seed. But, as Dr. Doddridge observes, if this were intended as a hint to stir up the Jews to emulation, as is supposed, “it was indeed a very obscure one ; for, comparatively, it is a low sense in which Christians, in this imperfect state, can be said to inherit the promises. It seems rather to refer to all good men, who were departed out of our world, whether in former or latter days, and under whatever dispensation they died. Taking it in this view, it is a conclusive argument against the soul’s continuing in a state of sleep during the intermediate period between death and the resurrection.” This certainly seems the most natural interpretation of the verse, namely, that “the apostle meant to lead his readers to meditate on the happiness of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Job, and all those who had on earth lived by faith in the promises of God, especially the great promise of a Saviour, and eternal salvation by him ; and had patiently waited, laboured, and suffered in the obedience of faith ; and in consequence were at the time, when the apostle wrote this, inheriting the promises of God, of eternal blessings, through Christ, to all believers.”—Scott.

Verses 13–15. *For when God made promise, &c.*—As if he had said, And it appears that this is the way to partake of mercies promised, because Abraham was obliged to exercise faith and long-suffering before he obtained the accomplishment of the promise made to him. The promise here referred to, is that which God made to Abraham after he had laid Isaac on the altar, Gen. xxii. 16, 17. For on no other occasion did God confirm any promise to Abraham with an oath. *To Abraham*—Whose spiritual as well as natural seed you believing Hebrews are, and therefore shall partake of the same promises and blessings which were ensured to him. *Because he could swear by no greater person, he sware by himself*—By his own sacred and divine name ; *saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee*—And all believers in thee ; *and multiplying I will multiply thee*—Both thy natural and thy spiritual seed. The apostle quotes only the first words of the oath ; but his reasoning is founded on the whole ; and particularly on the promise, (Gen. xxii. 18,) *And*

A. M. 4068. 15 And so, after he had patiently
A. D. 64. endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and
an oath for confirmation is to them an end of
all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to
show unto the heirs of promise the immuta-
bility of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

^a Exod. xxii. 11.—^b Chapter xi. 9.
^c Rom. xi. 29.

in thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. They shall be blessed by having their faith counted to them for righteousness, through thy seed, Christ. And so after he had patiently endured—*Μακροθυμῶν*, after he had waited, or suffered long: he waited about thirty years before Isaac was born, after he was promised; he obtained the promise—Here, by a usual figure of speech, the promise is put for the thing promised. "In the birth of Isaac, Abraham obtained the beginning of the accomplishment of God's promise concerning his numerous natural progeny. Moreover, as the birth of Isaac was brought about supernaturally by the divine power, it was both a proof and a pledge of the accomplishment of the promise concerning the birth of his numerous spiritual seed. Wherefore, in the birth of Isaac, Abraham may truly be said to have obtained the accomplishment of the promise concerning his numerous spiritual seed likewise. In any other sense, Abraham did not obtain the accomplishment of that promise."

Verses 16, 17. For men verily swear by the greater—By persons greater than themselves, whose vengeance they imprecate if they swear falsely; and particularly by Him who is infinitely greater than themselves; and an oath for confirmation—To confirm what is promised or asserted; is to them an end of all strife—*Πασης αντιλογίας περας*, usually puts an end to all contradiction. This shows that an oath taken in a religious manner, is lawful, even under the gospel: otherwise the apostle would never have mentioned it with so much honour, as a proper means to confirm the truth. Wherein—In which business of confirming his promise; God, willing more abundantly—Beyond what was absolutely necessary, and out of his superabundant love to and care for us; to show unto the heirs of promise—To Abraham's spiritual seed, whose faith is counted for righteousness, and who partake of the blessings promised; the immutability of his counsel—Of his purpose, which is accompanied with infinite wisdom; confirmed it—Greek, *επιεικτοεν*, interposed, or came between the making of the promise and its accomplishment. The expression, says Macknight, "literally signifies, he mediated it with an oath: he made an oath, the mediator, surety, or ratifier of his counsel." This sense of the word merits attention, because it suggests a fine interpretation of chap. ix. 15, where see the note. What amazing condescension was this of God! He, who is greatest of all, acts

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18 That by two immutable things, A. M. 4068.
in which it was impossible for God A. D. 64.
to lie, we might have a strong consolation,
who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the
hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the
soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth
into that within the veil;

^a Gr. interposed himself by an oath.—^d Chap. xii. 1.—^e Lev.
xvi. 15; Chap. ix. 7.

as if he were a middle person; as if, while he swears, he were less than himself, by whom he swears.

Verses 18, 19. That by two immutable things in either, much more in both, of which it was impossible for God to lie—To alter his purpose and disappoint our expectation; we might have a strong consolation—A powerful argument to believe the promise with a confidence excluding all doubt and fear, and might receive a great comfort thereby; who have fled for refuge—Who, under a consciousness of our sinfulness and guilt, depravity, weakness, and wretchedness, have betaken ourselves for safety from deserved wrath; to lay hold on the hope—The promise (so confirmed by an oath) which is the ground of our hope; set before us in Christ—Through whom alone we can have salvation, present and eternal; which hope—In and through Christ, our righteousness and sanctification; we have as an anchor of the soul—The apostle here alludes to an anchor, which when cast, both preserves the vessel from losing the ground she has gained, and keeps her steady amid the winds and waves, when the art and skill of the mariners are overcome, and they cannot steer the ship in its right course, nor could otherwise preserve it from rocks, shelves, or sand-banks; both sure—*Ασφαλη*, safe, that will not fail, or may with confidence be trusted to, the matter of which it is formed being solid, and the proportion of it suited to the burden of the ship; and steadfast—*Βεβαια*, firm against all opposition, which no violence of winds or storms can either break or move from its hold; and which entereth into that within the veil—He alludes to the veil which divided the holy place of the Jewish tabernacle or temple from the most holy: and thus he slides back to the priesthood of Christ. But he does not speak of that which was within the veil, namely, the ark and mercy-seat, the tables of stone, and cherubim, the work of men's hands, but of the things signified by them; God himself on a throne of grace, and the Lord Christ, as the high-priest of the church, at his right hand: or the Father as the author, the Lord Jesus as the purchaser, and the covenant as the conveyer of all grace; which were all typically represented by the things within the veil. And the apostle makes use of this allusion to instruct the Hebrews in the nature and use of the old tabernacle institutions; and from thence in the true nature of the priesthood of Christ, to which he is now returning. The meaning is, that the believer's hope lays hold on God himself, on a throne of grace and

A. M. 4068. 20 ' Whither the forerunner is for
A. D. 64. us entered, *even Jesus*, * made a High-

Priest for ever after the order of Mel- A. M. 4068.
chisedec. A. D. 64.

' Chap. iv. 14; viii. 1; ix. 24.

* Chap. iii. 1; v. 6, 10; vii. 17.

on Christ as the High-Priest of the church, who is in heaven itself, the place of God's presence, typified by the holy of holies.

Verse 20. *Whither the forerunner*—Προδρομος, a forerunner, is one who goes before to do some service for another who is to follow: in which sense also the Latin word *ante-cursor* is used. A forerunner uses to be less in dignity than those that are to follow him: but it is not so here; for Christ, who is gone before us, is infinitely superior to us; *is for us entered*—Namely, for our good. 1st, To prepare a place for us, John xiv. 2. 2d, To make continual intercession for us. 3d, To make us partakers of his own glory, John xvii. 24; Rev. iii. 21. 4th, To take possession of heaven for us, John xiv. 3. What an

honour is it to believers to have so glorious a *fore-runner* now appearing in the presence of God for them! *Made a High-Priest for ever*—Christ ascended to heaven, 1st, To open it to us by the sacrifice of himself, and to plant our hope of eternal life there as an anchor of the soul. 2d, Because having opened heaven, he remains there as the High-Priest of that holy place, to introduce all believers into the presence of God. This shows in what sense Jesus is a *High-Priest for ever*. He is so, not by offering sacrifice for ever in behalf of his people, but by interceding for them always, Rom. viii. 34; and by introducing them into the presence of God by the merit of the one sacrifice of himself, which he offered to God without spot.

CHAPTER VII.

The apostle, (1,) Enters into a parallel between Melchisedec and Christ as agreeing in title and descent; and from various respects in which the priesthood of Melchisedec was superior to that of Aaron and his successors, he infers the superior glory of the priesthood of Christ, 1-17. (2,) From what had been said above, he argues that the Aaronical priesthood was not only excelled, but vindicated and consummated by that of Christ; and, by consequence, that the obligation of the law was dissolved, 18-28.

A. M. 4068. FOR this * Melchisedec, king of Sa-
A. D. 64. lem, priest of the most high God,

who met Abraham returning from the A. M. 4068.
slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; A. D. 64.

* Gen. xiv.

18, &c.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. *For, &c.*—The apostle having promised to lead the believing Hebrews forward to the perfection of Christian knowledge, (chap. vi. 1-4,) particularly with regard to the high-priesthood of Christ as typified by that of Melchisedec, which he had repeatedly mentioned, (namely, chap. v. 6, 10; vi. 20,) as a figure of it he proceeds now to fulfil his promise; and, in order thereto, points out the deep meaning of the oath recorded *Psa. cx. 4*. And by accurately examining the particulars concerning Melchisedec, related in the Mosaic history, he shows that Melchisedec was a far more excellent priest than Aaron and all his sons, and consequently that Jesus, whom God had made a *High-Priest for ever after the similitude of Melchisedec*, exercised a priest-hood both more acceptable to God, and more effectual for procuring the pardon of sin, than the priest-hood which the sons of Aaron exercised under the law. For the design of the apostle in this chapter is not to declare the *nature* or the *exercise* of the priest-hood of Christ, though occasionally mentioned; having spoken of the former, chap. v., and intending to treat of the latter at large afterward, which he does chap. ix. But it is of its *excellence* and *dignity* that he discourses here, and yet not absolutely, but in

comparison with the Levitical priesthood, which method was both necessary, and directly conducive to his end. For if the priesthood of Christ were not so excellent as that of Aaron, it was to no purpose to persuade them to embrace the former, and reject the latter. This, therefore, he designs to prove upon principles avowed among themselves, by arguments taken from what had been received and acknowledged in the Jewish Church from the first foundation of it. To this end he shows, that antecedently to the giving of the law, and the institution of the Levitical priesthood, God had, without any respect thereto, given a typical prefiguration of this priesthood of Christ, in one who was on all accounts superior to the future Levitical priests. This sacred truth, which had been hid for so many ages in the church, and which undeniably manifests the certain future introduction of another and better priesthood, is here brought to light by the apostle and improved. *For this Melchisedec*—Of whom Moses speaks, *Gen. xiv. 18, &c.*, (the passage to which David refers,) was *king of Salem*—"According to Josephus, (*Antiq. lib. i. cap. 11.*) *Salem*, the city of Melchisedec, was Jerusalem. But according to Jerome, who says he received his information from some learned Jews, it was the town which is mentioned *Gen. xxxiii. 18,*

A. M. 4068. 2 To whom also Abraham gave a
A. D. 64. tenth part of all; first being by inter-
pretation king of righteousness, and after that
also king of Salem, which is, king of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, ¹ without
descent, having neither beginning of days, nor

¹ Gr. without pedigree.—^b Gen. xiv. 20.

as a city of Shechem, and which is spoken of (John iii. 23) as near to Enon, where John baptized. This city being in Abraham's way, as he returned from Damascus to Sodom, after the slaughter of the kings, many are of Jerome's opinion, that the northern Salem was Melchisedec's city rather than Jerusalem, which was situated farther to the south." *Priest of the most high God*—This title given him by Moses, and here taken notice of by the apostle, implies that he had been appointed to that office in a solemn and public manner; and, of consequence, "that there was a priest divinely appointed to officiate for the worshippers of the true God in Canaan, long before the days of Aaron, and before God formed to himself a visible church from any particular family or nation of mankind. The Hebrew word, indeed, translated a *priest*, sometimes signifies a *prince*, but the historian hath removed the ambiguity by adding the words, *of the most high God*." *Who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings*—Who had taken Lot prisoner, with the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities of the plain; and *blessed him*—Pronounced on him a blessing in the name of God, to whom he ministered; and in his manner of blessing him showed himself to be a priest of the only true God, his words being, *Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth*.

Verses 2, 3. *To whom also Abraham gave a tenth of all*—Namely, of all the spoils of the vanquished kings, (verse 4,) but not a *tenth* also of the goods that had been taken from the king of Sodom and from Lot; for of these Abraham took nothing to himself. By paying tithes to Melchisedec, Abraham acknowledged him to be a priest of the true God. It seems, indeed, his being supernaturally appointed a priest by God, was known through all that country. *Being first*—According to the meaning of his own name; *king of righteousness*; and *after that also*—According to the name of his city; *king of peace*—So that in him, as in Christ, *righteousness* and *peace* were joined. And so they are in all that believe in him. "In ancient times, it was usual to give names to persons and places expressive of their qualities, or in commemoration of some remarkable events. Thus *Abram's* name was changed into *Abraham*, to signify that he was made the father of many nations; and *Sarai* was named *Sarah*, because she was made the mother of nations; and *Jacob* obtained the name of *Israel*, because he had power with God. Viewed in the light of this ancient practice, the apostle's argument, from these names, is conclusive, to show what an excellent person Mel-

end of life; but made like unto the Son A. M. 4068.
of God; abideth a priest continually. A. D. 64.

4 Now consider how great this man *was*,
^b unto whom even the patriarch Abraham
gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily. ^o they that are of the sons of

^o Num. xviii. 21, 26.

chisedec was, and how fit to be made a type of the Son of God. *Without father, without mother*—Without any mention of his parents; *without descent*—Or rather, *without genealogy*, or pedigree, recorded; for so the word here used, *γενεαλογητος*, signifies; not a person who hath no *descent* or genealogy, but one whose *descent* and pedigree is nowhere entered on record. This was the case with Melchisedec. He was assuredly born, and did no less certainly die than other men; but neither his birth nor his death are recorded. Or the apostle's principal meaning may be, that there is no account of his being descended from any ancestors of the priestly order, and that therefore he did not derive his priesthood from his parents, but was a priest of the most high God by a particular appointment. *Having neither beginning of days nor end of life*—Mentioned by Moses. But whence was it that Moses should introduce so great and excellent a person as Melchisedec, without making any mention of his race or stock, of his parents or progenitors, of his rise or fall, contrary to his own custom in other cases, and contrary to all rules of useful history? The true cause of the omission of all these things was the same with that of the institution of his priesthood, and the introduction of his person in the story. And this was that he might be a more express and signal representative of the Lord Christ in his priesthood. *But in all these respects, made like the Son of God*—Who was really *without father* as to his human nature, *without mother* as to his divine; and in this also, *without pedigree*; and not descending, even in human nature, from any ancestors of the priestly order; *abideth a priest continually*—That is, no mention is made of the end of the priesthood of his order, nor of the termination of his own personal administration of his office by death; and so he stands in the story as a kind of immortal priest, without any successor being mentioned. And this is that which the apostle chiefly designed to confirm from hence, namely, that there was in the Scripture, before the institution of the Aaronical priesthood, a representation of an eternal, unchangeable one, namely, that of Christ, who, as he was without *beginning of days*, alone does really remain without death and without successor.

Verses 4-7. *Consider how great this man was*—The greatness of Melchisedec is described in all the preceding and following particulars. But the most manifest proof of it was, that Abraham gave him tithes as a priest of God, and a superior; though he was himself a patriarch, greater than a king, and a progenitor of many kings. *The sons of Levi take*

A. M. 4068. Levi, who receive the office of the
A. D. 64. priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham :

6 But he whose ² descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, ^d and blessed ^e him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes ; but there he *receiveth them*, ^f of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

² Or, pedigree.—^d Gen. xiv. 19.—^e Rom. iv. 13 ; Gal. iii. 16.

tithes of their brethren—Sprung from Abraham as well as themselves. The Levites, therefore, are greater than they ; but the priests are greater than the Levites ; the patriarch Abraham than the priests, and Melchisedec than him. *But he whose descent is not counted from them*—From that people who come out of the loins of Abraham, not only received tithes of Abraham, but blessed him—Another proof of Melchisedec's superiority ; even *him that had the promises*—With whom God made the covenant of grace, as with the Father of all the blessed seed. Thus Gal. iii. 16: *To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. And without all contradiction—Without all question ; the less is blessed authoritatively of the better—Or greater ; that is, when a man does, in God's name and stead, and by his authority, declare and pronounce another to be blessed, he that gives the blessing is, in that respect, greater than he who receives it.*

Verses 8–10. *And here*—In the Levitical priesthood ; *men that die, receive tithes, but there*—In the case of Melchisedec ; *he of whom it is witnessed that he liveth*—Who is not spoken of as one that died for another to succeed him, but is represented only as living, being mentioned in such a way as if he lived for ever. *And even Levi, who received tithes*—Not in person, but in his successors, as it were, paid tithes in the person of Abraham. *For he was yet in the loins of his father*—“This might justly be said of Levi, who descended from Abraham in the ordinary course of generation. But it cannot be said of Christ, who was born in a miraculous manner, without any human father. While, therefore, the apostle's argument, taken from Abraham's paying tithes to Melchisedec, and his receiving the blessing from him, proves that both Abraham and the Levitical priests, his natural descendants, were inferior to Melchisedec, it does not apply to Christ at all.”—Macknight.

Verse 11. The apostle, having cleared his way from objections, now enters on his principal argument concerning the priesthood of Christ, and all the consequences of it with respect to righteousness, salvation, and the worship of God which depend thereon. *If, therefore, or, now if, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood*—If it perfectly answered

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, A. M. 4068. who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in A. D. 64. Abraham.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

11 ^a If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron ?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

^a Chap. v. 6 ; vi. 20.—^c Gal. ii. 21 ; Ver. 18, 19 ; Chap. viii. 7.

all God's designs and man's wants ; *what further need was there that another priest*—A priest of a new order ; *should rise*—Or be set up ; *and not one after the order of Aaron?*—As if he had said, Since by what has been advanced it appears from Scripture that another priesthood was to arise after Aaron's, of another order, it follows hence that *perfection* could not be attained by that of Aaron ; for if it could, that certainly would not have been removed, and another substituted in its place. In other words, the prediction of the rising up of a priest of a different order from that of Aaron, is a declaration of the inefficacy of the Levitical priesthood, and of God's intention to change it. Instead of the clause, *for under it*, (namely, the Levitical priesthood,) Macknight reads, *on account of it, the people received the law*—Observing that the law “was prior to the priesthood, being given for the purpose of forming and establishing the priesthood ; and that the Jewish people themselves were separated from the rest of mankind, and made a people by the law, merely that they might, as a nation, worship the only true God according to the Levitical ritual, in settling which most of the precepts of the law were employed. This being the case, is it any wonder that such of the Jews as looked no farther than the outside of the priesthood and law, imagined that perfection, in respect of pardon and acceptance with God, was to be obtained by the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices, and in that persuasion believed they never would be abolished ? Nevertheless, if they had understood the true meaning of the law, they would have known that it was a typical oracle, in which, by its services, the priesthood and sacrifice of the Son of God were prefigured, and that by calling his Son a priest, not after the order of Aaron, but after that of Melchisedec, God declared that his services as a High-Priest, and the sacrifice of himself which he was to offer, were entirely different, both in their nature and effects, from the Levitical services and sacrifices, and that they were to be substituted in the room of these services, for which there was no occasion after the priest and sacrifices which they prefigured, were come.”

Verses 12–14. *For, or, wherefore, the priesthood*—On account of which the law was given ; *being*

A. M. 4068. 13 For he of whom these things are
A. D. 64. spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of
which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For *it* is evident that ^b our Lord sprang
out of Judah; of which tribe Moses ^a spake
nothing concerning priesthood.

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that
after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth
another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a

^a Isa. xi. 1; Matt. i. 3; Luke iii. 33; Rom. i. 3; Rev. v. 5.
^b Psa. cx. 4; Chap. v. 6, 10; vi. 20.—^c Rom. viii. 3; Gal.
iv. 9.—^d Acts xiii. 39; Rom. iii. 20, 21, 28; viii. 3; Gal. ii.

changed, of necessity there must be a change also of the law—As if he had said, Since there is such a near relation between the priesthood and the law, and since the whole administration of the law, as the rule of worship, depended absolutely on the Aaronical priesthood, therefore the one being changed, the other must be changed also. “Under the law the offices of the priesthood consisted in offering the sacrifices of beasts, and in performing various rites for purifying the bodies of the worshippers from ceremonial defilement, that they might be fit to join the congregation in the public worship of God. But when the *priesthood* was changed by raising up from another tribe a priest after the order of Melchisedec, whose services had for their object to purify the conscience of the worshippers, not by the sacrifice of beasts, but by the sacrifice of himself,” and to sanctify their souls by the influences of the Holy Spirit; “the whole law concerning the sacrifices of beasts, and the sanctifying of the flesh of the Israelites by washing, was of necessity entirely abolished.” *For he of whom*—Or, to whom; *these things are spoken*—That is, he to whom it was said, *Thou art a priest for ever, &c.*, was of a different tribe, namely, that of Judah; of which no man gave attendance at the altar—Or, was suffered by the law to minister there, so that the priesthood is manifestly changed from one order to another, and from one tribe to another. *For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah*—“That the Messiah was to spring up from Judah is plain from the prophecies concerning his descent: and it is likewise plain that this part of his character was verified in our Lord, whose genealogy Matthew and Luke have traced up to King David from the public tables. For that such tables of their descent were kept by the Jews Josephus testifies, (section i. of his Life, at the end,) saying, ‘I give you these successions of our family as I find them written in the public tables.’ By these tables Paul knew himself to be of the tribe of Benjamin.”

Verses 15–17. *And it is yet far more evident*—That both the priesthood and the law are changed, because the priest now raised up is not only of another tribe, and of a quite different order, but *is made a priest; not after the law of a carnal commandment*—With such carnal rites and outward

carnal commandment, but after the A. M. 4068
power of an endless life. A. D. 64.

17 For he testifieth, ⁱ Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for ^k the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 For ^l the law made nothing perfect, ^m but the bringing in of ⁿ a better hope *did*; by the which we ^o draw nigh unto God.

16; Chap. ix. 9.—² Or, but it was the bringing in, Gal. iii. 24.
^m Chap. vi. 18; viii. 6.—ⁿ Rom. v. 2; Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12;
Chap. iv. 16; x. 19.

solemnities as the law prescribed for those priests, which reached no further than to the purifying of the flesh; *but after the power of an endless life*—Which he has in himself as the eternal Son of God. Being a *sacrifice*, as well as a priest, it was indeed necessary that he, as a man, should die; but as he continued only a short while in the state of the dead, and arose to die no more, he may justly be said to have *an endless life*, even as to his human nature. Besides, it should be considered that his life, as a priest, did not begin till after his ascension, when he passed through the heavens into the holiest of all, with the sacrifice of his crucified body. And having offered that body there, he sat down at the right hand of the throne of his Father’s majesty, where he remains the minister of that true tabernacle, making continual intercession for his people.

Verses 18, 19. *For there is verily*—Implied in this new and everlasting priesthood, and in the new dispensation connected therewith; *a disannulling of the preceding commandment*—An abrogation of the Mosaic law; *for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof*—In comparison of the new priesthood and dispensation. See on Rom. viii. 3. *For the law*—The dispensation of Moses, taken by itself, separate from the light and grace of the gospel: *made nothing perfect*—Either as to the state of God’s church, (which was then in its minority, Gal. iv. 1–3,) or the religion of its members. The institutions of divine worship were imperfect, being mere shadowy representations of good things to come; the promises made to Abraham were but imperfectly fulfilled, and divine revelation was very incomplete, and in many respects obscure. Therefore that dispensation did not perfect the illumination of the people of God in things spiritual or divine, but they were still in comparative darkness as to divers particulars of great importance. See on Luke i. 76, 79. It did not perfect their justification and reconciliation with God, or remove their guilt before God, or a sense of it in their own consciences; it only did this typically and figuratively, chap. ix. 9; x. 1–4. It did not perfect their sanctification and conformity to God, Rom. vii. 5, &c. For the truths, precepts, and promises which it revealed, were chiefly of a worldly and carnal nature, and not calculated to sanctify the minds and hearts of those that received them, or to render

A. M. 4068. 20 And inasmuch as not without
A. D. 64. an oath *he was made priest* :

21 (For those priests were made ⁴without an oath ; but this with an oath, by him that said unto him, ^oThe Lord swear, and will

⁴ Or, *without swearing of an oath.*—Psa. cx. 4.

them heavenly and holy. And the sanctifying Spirit, and the salvation consequent thereon, were not so largely given as under the gospel, John vii. 37, 38 ; 1 Pet. i. 10–12. *But the bringing in of a better hope*—The Christian dispensation, or the priesthood of Christ and the promises of the gospel, which afford more solid grounds for hope, *did, or does* ; making full provision both for our justification and sanctification, and for our living in the practice of universal holiness and righteousness, and therefore furnishing us with a title to, and a meetness for, eternal life. “*Promissa terrestria non operantur mortis contemptum, sed eum operantur spes melior vitæ eternæ, atque celestis. Inde tam crebra martyria.*” *Earthly promises do not produce a contempt of death, but the better hope of a heavenly and eternal life produces it. Hence so many martyrdoms, namely, in the first church.*—Grotius. The word *επιπαύωσιν*, rendered *the bringing in*, literally means, *the introduction of a thing after, or upon, another.* The priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, and the dispensation thereupon, were brought in *after* the law, upon it, *in the room of it*, to effect what the law could not do. This, therefore, says Dr. Owen, is the sense of the words: “The introduction of the better hope after and upon the law, when a sufficient discovery had been made of its weakness and insufficiency as to this end, made all things perfect, or hath brought the church to that state of consummation which was designed for it. It is called *better* with respect to the law, and all it contained, or could effect.” *By which we draw nigh unto God*—Have free liberty to draw nigh in faith and prayer, through the sacrifice and intercession of our ever-living and glorious High-Priest and Mediator. It is an expression, says Grotius, “properly sacerdotal, denoting the approach of the priests to God and his worship.” Under the Levitical priesthood the priests, in their sacrifices and solemn services, drew nigh to God: the same liberty is now granted to all true believers, under the sacerdotal ministration of the Lord Jesus ; through him *they have access by one Spirit unto the Father*, at all times, and particularly in their prayers and praises, and all acts of worship ; and may draw so nigh as to *become one spirit with him*, which is true Christian perfection.

Verses 20–22. *And inasmuch as, &c.*—Here is another argument from the words of the psalmist, to prove the appointment of a new priesthood, the removal of the old, and the superior excellence of the new to the old ; *not without an oath*—Which argues the weightiness of the matter, and the eternal continuance of Christ’s priesthood. “The apostle’s reasoning here is founded on this, that God never interposed his oath except to show the certainty and

not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ^{A. M. 4068.} ever after the order of Melchise- ^{A. D. 64.} dec :)

22 By so much ^pwas Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

^p Chap. viii. 6 ; ix. 15 ; xii. 24.

immutability of the thing sworn. Thus he swore to Abraham, that in *his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*, Gen. xxii. 16–18 ; and to the rebellious Israelites, that *they should not enter into his rest*, Deut. i. 34, 35 ; and to Moses, that *he should not go into Canaan*, Deut. iv. 21 ; and to David, that *his seed should endure for ever, and his throne unto all generations*, Psa. lxxxix. 4. Wherefore, since Christ was made a priest *not without an oath*, that he should be a priest for ever, &c., that circumstance showed God’s immutable resolution never to change or abolish his priesthood, or the covenant established thereon. Whereas the Levitical priesthood and the law of Moses being established *without an oath* were thereby declared to be changeable at God’s pleasure.”—Macknight. *The Lord swear and will not repent*—Hence also it appears that his priesthood is unchangeable. God not only swore that he would make him *a priest for ever*, but swore also that he would never repent of doing it. *By so much, &c.*—By how much the priesthood of Christ was better than the former, by so much the testament, or rather *covenant*, of which he was to be surety, was better also. The word *covenant* frequently occurs in the remaining part of this epistle. The original word means either a covenant, or a last will and testament. St. Paul takes it sometimes in the former, sometimes in the latter sense ; sometimes he includes both. The word *surety* or *sponsor*, may here mean one who has undertaken, on our behalf, to satisfy divine justice for our sins, making atonement for them ; and to give to all that sincerely, earnestly, and perseveringly ask it, grace sufficient to enable them to perform the conditions of the covenant, and thereupon to receive its blessings. But it is proper to observe, that the Greek commentators explain the word *εγγυος*, here rendered *a surety*, by *μεσιτης*, *a mediator*, which is its etymological meaning. “For it comes from *εγγυος*, *near*, and signifies *one who draws near*, or who causes another to draw near. Now, as in this passage a comparison is stated between Jesus, as a High-Priest, and the Levitical high-priests ; and as these were justly considered by the apostle as the mediators of the Sinai covenant, because through their mediation the Israelites worshipped God with sacrifices, and received from him, as their king, a political pardon, in consequence of the sacrifices offered by the high-priest on the day of atonement, it is evident that the apostle, in this passage, calls Jesus *the High-Priest*, or *Mediator, of the better covenant*, because through his mediation believers receive all the blessings of the better covenant. And, as the apostle had said, (verse 19,) that, *by the introduction of a better hope, εγγιζομεν we draw near to God*, he, in this verse,

A. M. 4068. 23 And they truly were many
A. D. 64. priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such a high-priest became us; who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from

³ Or, which passeth not from one to another.—⁴ Or, evermore.
¹ Rom. viii. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Chap. ix. 24; 1 John ii. 1.
² Chap. iv. 15.—⁵ Eph. i. 20; iv. 10; Chap. viii. 1.

sinner, and made higher than the heavens; A. M. 4068. A. D. 64.

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high-priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

¹ Lev. ix. 7; xvi. 6, 11; Chap. v. 3; ix. 7.—² Lev. xvi. 15.
³ Rom. vi. 10; Chap. ix. 12, 28; x. 12.—⁴ Chap. v. 1, 2.
⁵ Chap. ii. 10; v. 9.—⁶ Gr. perfected.

very properly called Jesus εγγυος, rather than μεσιτης, to denote the effect of his mediation. See verse 25. Our translators, indeed, following the Vulgate and Beza, have rendered the word surety, a sense which it hath Ecclus. xxix. 16, and which naturally enough follows from its etymological meaning. For the person who becomes surety for the good behaviour of another, or for his performing something stipulated, brings that other near to the party to whom he gives the security; he reconciles the two. But in this sense, the word εγγυος is not applicable to the Jewish high-priests. For to be a proper surety, one must either have power to compel the party to perform that for which he hath become his surety, or, in case of his not performing it, he must be able to perform it himself. As little is the appellation, surety of the new covenant, applicable to Jesus. For since the new covenant doth not require perfect obedience, but only the obedience of faith; if the obedience of faith is not given by men themselves, it cannot be given by another in their room, unless we suppose that men can be saved without personal faith; I therefore infer, that they who speak of Jesus as the surety of the new covenant, must hold that it requires perfect obedience, which not being in the power of believers to give, Jesus hath performed it for them. But is not this to make the covenant of grace a covenant of works, contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture? For these reasons, I think the Greek commentators have given the true meaning of the word εγγυος in this passage, when they explain it by μεσιτης, Mediator.—Macknight.

Verses 23-25. And there were many priests—One after another, because they were hindered by death from continuing in the perpetual execution of their office. But this man, because he continueth ever—In life and in his office; hath an unchangeable priesthood—One that passes not from one to another. Wherefore—From whence it appears; that he is able to save to the uttermost—From sin and its consequences, into the favour and image of God, and to preserve to eternal life, all that by faith and prayer come to God through him—As their priest; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession—That is, he lives and intercedes, in every circumstance of their respective lives, through all successive ages and generations. He died once, he intercedes perpetually.

ally. "The nature of the apostle's argument requires that by Christ's always living we understand his always living in the body: for it is thus that he is a sympathizing High-Priest, who in his intercession pleads the merit of his death to procure the salvation of all who come unto God through him. Agreeably to this account of Christ's intercession, the apostle (verse 27) mentions the sacrifice of himself, which Christ offered as the foundation of his intercession. Now, as he offered that sacrifice in heaven, (chap. viii. 2, 3,) by presenting his crucified body there, and as he continually resides there in the body, some of the ancients were of opinion that his continual intercession consists in the continual presentation of his humanity before his Father, because it is a continual declaration of his earnest desire of the salvation of men, and of his having, in obedience to his Father's will, made himself flesh, and suffered death to accomplish it. This opinion is confirmed by the manner in which the Jewish high-priest made intercession for the people on the day of atonement, and which was a type of Christ's intercession in heaven. He made it not [merely or chiefly] by offering prayers for them in the most holy place, but by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices on the mercy-seat, in token of their death. And as by that action he opened the earthly holy places to the prayers and worship of the Israelites during the ensuing year; so Jesus, by presenting his humanity continually before the presence of his Father, opens heaven to the prayers of his people in the present life, and to their persons after the resurrection." See Macknight.

Verses 26-28. Such a High-Priest became us—Or rather, was suited to us, who are unholy, mischievous, defiled sinners; who is holy—With respect to God; harmless—With respect to men; undefiled—In himself by any sin; separate from sinners—That is, from all defiling society of sinners, though mercifully conversant among them; and, to complete all, made higher—Even in his human nature, than the heavens, and than all their inhabitants; being far more superior to the noblest of them than Aaron was to the meanest Levite who ministered in the temple. Who needeth not daily—That is, on every yearly day of expiation; as those high-priests, to offer sacrifice, first for his own sins—For he had no

sins of his own; and then for the people's—Which last he did once for all, when he offered up himself—A spotless and acceptable sacrifice to God. "In this passage," says Macknight, "the apostle notices three particulars, which distinguish the sacrifice offered by Christ from those offered by the Jewish high-priests: 1st, He offered no sacrifice for himself, but only for the people. 2d, He did not offer that sacrifice annually, but once for all. 3d, The sacrifice which he offered was not of calves and goats, but of himself." For the law maketh men high-priests

which have infirmity—Who are weak, sinful, and mortal; but the oath which was since the law—Namely, in the time of David; maketh the Son—A priest; who is consecrated—Or perfected, as τετελειωμενον properly signifies; see note on chap. v. 9; for evermore—Who, having finished his whole process, undertaken and accomplished to effect the work of our redemption, and being without blemish, and perfectly free from every natural and moral infirmity, and invested with all authority and power in heaven and on earth, remaineth a priest for ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

In this chapter the apostle, (1,) Demonstrates the excellence of Christ's priesthood above that of Aaron, in respect of the place where he now officiates, the sacrifice which he offered, and the covenant of which he is the mediator, 1, 2. (2,) Shows the excellence of the covenant of grace and the gospel dispensation above the legal covenant and ceremonial dispensation, 7-13.

A. M. 4068. NOW of the things which we
A. D. 64. have spoken, this is the sum: We have such a High-Priest, * who

is set on the right hand of the A. M. 4068.
throne of the Majesty in the hea- A. D. 64.
vens;

* Eph. i. 20; Col. iii. 1;

Chap. i. 3; x. 12; xii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. The apostle having shown that Jesus, as a High-Priest, is superior to all the Levitical high-priests, inasmuch as, like Melchisedec, he is a King, as well as a Priest; nay, a more righteous King than even Melchisedec, being absolutely free from sin, he in this and the following chapter, for the further illustration of the glory of Christ, as a High-Priest, compares his ministrations with those of the Levitical high-priests, both in respect of the place where he officiates, and of the efficacy of his ministrations. Of this chapter there are two general parts. 1st, A further explication of the excellence of the priesthood of Christ, or of Christ himself as vested with that office. 2d, A further confirmation thereof, wherein is introduced the consideration of the two covenants, the old and the new. For to the former was the administration of the Levitical priests confined; of the latter, Christ is our Priest, Mediator, and Surety.

Now of the things which we have spoken—Namely, in the preceding part of this discourse; this is the sum—Or rather, the chief article, as κεφαλαιον is interpreted by Chrysostom and Theophylact, in which sense the Syriac and Vulgate translations understand the expression. He calls Christ's sitting down at the right hand of God the chief of all the things he had hitherto mentioned, because it implied, 1st, That the sacrifice of himself which he had offered was accepted of God as a sufficient atonement for the sins of the world. 2d, That he possesses all power in heaven and on earth next to the Father; so that he is able to defend the people for whom he officiates from their enemies, and is authorized by God to acquit and reward them at the final judgment. 3d, That he did not, like the Levitical high-priests, de-

part out of the most holy place after finishing the atonement, but abideth there always as the minister thereof, to open that holy place to the prayers and other acts of worship performed by his people on earth, and to their persons after death and judgment. We have such a High-Priest—One so great and illustrious as hath been described, made after the order, or similitude, of Melchisedec, and by the oath of God himself invested with immortal honours. The expression answers to such a High-Priest became us, (chap. vii. 26,) and brings to the reader's recollection the description there given of the High-Priest who could effectually officiate for us. Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. That is, at the right hand of the visible glory, whereby the divine presence is manifested to the angels in heaven. Of this Stephen had a clear view before he expired; for being full of the Holy Ghost, and looking up steadfastly into heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus at the right hand of God. This sight, it is probable, the apostle himself enjoyed when he was caught up into the third heaven. "That the Deity manifests his presence to his intelligent creatures in a sensible manner, somewhere in the universe, is a notion," says Macknight, "which has been entertained by all mankind." Higher expressions cannot be imagined than those here used to lead us into a holy adoration of the tremendous glory intended to be described. And now, what was the glory of the Jewish high-priest, if considered in comparison with that of the Lord Christ, the High-Priest of our profession? The legal priest indeed entered into the holy place made with hands, and presented there the blood of the sacrifices of beasts before the august pledges of the divine presence; but all the while he was there

A. M. 4068. 2 A minister ¹ of ^b the sanctuary, and of ^c the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 For ^d every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore ^e it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

4 For if he were on earth, he should not be

¹ Or, of holy things.—^b Chap. ix. 8, 12, 24.—^c Chap. ix. 11. ^d Chap. v. 1.—^e Eph. v. 2; Chap. ix. 14.

he stood before the typical throne with holy awe and reverence, and immediately on the discharge of his duty was to withdraw, and depart out of the sacred place; but our High-Priest, after he had offered his great sacrifice on the cross, entered with the virtue of his own blood, not into the *holy places made with hands*, but into heaven itself, not to stand with humble reverence before the throne, but to sit on the throne of God at his right hand, and that for evermore!

Verse 2. *A minister*—*Δεσποτος*, a public minister, who, having entered within the veil, now ministers, or executes, the remaining part of his office in his human nature, representing the merit of his own sacrifice, as the high-priest represented the blood of those sacrifices once a year; *of the sanctuary*—The place of God's glorious presence, typified by the *holy of holies* of the Jewish tabernacle and temple, where were the mercy-seat and ark, the symbols of God's presence with his church; *and of the true tabernacle*—The third heaven, called the true tabernacle or habitation of God, to distinguish it from the Mosaic tabernacle, which was only its representation or shadow, by means of the inhabitation of the glory of the Lord, *which heavenly tabernacle the Lord pitched*—Or fixed; *and not man*—That is, a tabernacle infinitely superior to any which human hands could be concerned in rearing, and proportionable to the boundless wisdom, power, and magnificence of God. In this most holy place our great High-Priest ever lives, happy in his own blessedness and glory, and having the whole administration of things sacred between God and the church committed to him.

Verses 3, 4. *For every high-priest, &c.*—As if the apostle had said, And it appears that Christ is a minister, or priest, of the true tabernacle, because he offers sacrifice, which none but the priests might do. *Wherefore*—Greek, *οθεν*, whence; the whole force of this inference depends on this supposition—that all the old typical institutions did represent what was really to be accomplished in Christ; *it is of necessity that this man have somewhat to offer*—For whatever otherwise this glorious person might be, yet a high-priest he could not be, unless he had in his possession somewhat to offer in sacrifice to God, and that was his whole human nature, soul and body. *For, or, rather, but, if he were on earth*—If his priesthood terminated here; *he should, or, rather, could, not be a priest*—Consistently with the

b

a priest, seeing that ² there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

5 Who serve unto the example and ^f shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: ^g for, See (saith he) *that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.*

² Or, they are priests.—Col. ii. 17; Ch. ix. 23; x. 1.—^f Ex. xxv. 40; xxvi. 30; xxvii. 8; Num. viii. 4; Acts vii. 44.

Jewish institutions; *seeing that there are priests, other priests, that offer according to the law*—To whom alone this office is allotted. As if he had said, It appears further that Christ was a minister of the heavenly sanctuary, and was to execute his office in heaven; 1st, Because he did not execute it on earth. For though his priesthood may be considered as being in some sense begun on earth, by his offering the sacrifice of himself upon the cross, yet the continuance and consummation of all is in heaven, by his representing there the merit of his sacrifice, and his making continual intercession. 2d, Because there was a priesthood settled on earth already, and there could not be two orders of priesthood divinely appointed officiating on earth together.

Verse 5. *Who serve*—Which priests, according to the Jewish institutions, serve in the temple, which was not yet destroyed; *unto, or, after, the example, or, pattern, and shadow of heavenly things*—Of gospel mysteries, even of Christ himself, with all that he did and suffered, and still continues to do, including spiritual, evangelical worship, and everlasting glory. In other words, The whole ministry of the Jewish priests was about such things as had only a resemblance and obscure representation of things of the gospel: The word *υποδειγμα*, rendered *example*, or *pattern*, means somewhat expressed by the strokes pencilled out upon a piece of fine linen, which exhibit the figures of leaves and flowers, but have not yet received their splendid colours and curious shades; and *σκια*, the word rendered *shadow*, is that shadowy representation which gives some dim and imperfect idea of the body; but not the fine features, not the distinguishing air, none of those living graces, which adorn the real person. Yet both the *pattern* and *shadow* lead our minds to something nobler than themselves; the pattern to those spiritual and eternal blessings which complete it, the shadow to that which occasions it. Of the shadow, see on chap. x. 1. *As Moses was admonished of God*—*Κεχηματισαι*, an expression which sometimes signifies to receive an oracle, or a revelation, or divine direction: as Heb. xi. 7, *By faith Noah, χρηματισθεις, being directed by a revelation*. Sometimes it denotes a direction from an angel, as Acts x. 22, *Cornelius, χρηματισθεις υπο αγγελου αγιου, being warned by a holy angel*. In the active voice it signifies to deliver an oracle, as Heb. xii. 25, *If they did not escape who refused, τον χρηματισοντα, him delivering oracles on earth*. Here the expression means that

A. M. 4068. 6 But now ^h hath he obtained a more
A. D. 64. excellent ministry, by how much also
he is the mediator of a better ³ covenant, which
was established upon better promises.

^h 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8, 9; Chap. vii. 22.

Moses was divinely instructed, *when he was about to make the tabernacle*, concerning every part of it, by a model which was shown him in the mount, and which exhibited the form, fashion, dimensions, and all the utensils of it. *For see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern, &c.*—"The strictness of this charge implying that the tabernacle and its services were intended to be representations of heavenly things, may we not suppose that this purpose was discovered to Moses as the reason of the exactness required, and that the knowledge thereof was preserved among the Jews by tradition. God's direction to Moses to make all according to the pattern showed him, is here appealed to by the apostle with great propriety, as a proof that the priests worshipped God in the tabernacle with a representation and shadow of heavenly things. For, since by this admonition Moses was required not only to make the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry, exactly according to the pattern showed him in the mount, but also, and indeed chiefly, to appoint the services of the priests in the tabernacles according to that pattern, the strictness of the injunction implied that there was some important reason for this exactness. Now what could that reason be, unless the one assigned by the apostle; namely, that the tabernacle was intended to be a shadow of the heavenly holy place, and the services of the tabernacles to be representations of the ministrations of Messiah as a priest in heaven?" Accordingly the tabernacles are called, Heb. ix. 23, *τα υποδείγματα, the patterns, or representations, of the holy places in the heavens.* And verse 24, *the holy places made with hands* are called *αντιτυπα, antitypes of the true.* The ministry of the priests in the earthly tabernacles is represented as typical of the ministrations of Christ in heaven, chap. ix. 7; and by the absolute exclusion of the priests and people from the most holy place, the representation of heaven, (verse 8,) the Holy Ghost signified that *the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was yet standing;* and (verse 9) that the outward tabernacle with its services was a *figure for the time then present*, by which figure the Jews were taught the inefficacy of all the atonements made by men on earth for cleansing the conscience. To which add, that (verses 11, 12) Christ is called a *High-Priest of good things to come*, is said to have *entered once into the holy place, and to have obtained eternal redemption for us.* "These things show that the ministrations of the Levitical high-priests in the inward tabernacle on earth, were typical of the ministrations of Christ in the true tabernacle, that is, in heaven."—Macknight.

Verses 6, 7. *But now, &c.*—In this verse begins

7 ⁱ For if that first *covenant* A. M. 4068.
had been faultless, then should A. D. 64.
no place have been sought for the se-
cond.

ⁱ Or, *testament.*—ⁱ Chap. vii. 11, 18.

the second part of the chapter concerning the difference between the two covenants, the old and the new, with the pre-eminence of the latter to the former, and of the ministry of Christ to that of the Jewish high-priests. *He hath obtained a more excellent ministry, &c.*—His priesthood as much excels theirs as the promises of the gospel, whereof he is a surety, excelled those of the law; or, the excellence of his ministry above that of the Levitical priests is in proportion to the excellence of the covenant, whereof he is the Mediator, above the old covenant wherein they had ministered. With this argument the apostle closes his long discourse respecting the pre-eminence of Christ in his office above the high-priests of old, a subject to which he could not give too much evidence, nor too full a confirmation, considering that it was the very hinge on which his whole controversy with the Jews depended. *For if that first covenant had been faultless*—If that dispensation had answered all God's designs and man's wants, if it had not been weak and unprofitable; *then should no place, &c.*—"Although the Sinai covenant was well calculated to preserve the Jews from idolatry, and to give them the knowledge of their duty, it was faulty or imperfect in the following respects: 1st, The rites of worship which it enjoined, sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh, but not the consciences of the worshippers. 2d, These rites could be performed nowhere but in the tabernacle, or in the temple, consequently they could not be the religion of mankind. 3d, This covenant had no real sacrifices for sin, consequently it granted no pardon to any sinner. 4th, Its promises were all of a temporal kind. 5th, It required an unerring obedience, which, in our present state, no one can give; and threatened death for every offence. See Gal. iv. 3. *No place have been sought for the second*—Since the *first covenant* is that which God made with the Israelites at Sinai by the publication of the law, the *second covenant* must be that which was made with mankind in general, by the publication of the gospel. Accordingly the publication of the gospel was foretold, (Jer. xxxi. 31,) under the idea of *making a new covenant with the house of Israel, &c.*, and the gospel itself is called (Isa. ii. 3) *the law which went forth from Zion.* But it is to be observed, that the law of Moses is called the *first covenant*, not merely because it was prior to the gospel, but also because it was in some respects the same with the first covenant under which Adam was placed in paradise; for, like it, it required perfect obedience (in many cases) under the penalty of death, and allowed no pardon to any sinner, however penitent. It is likewise to be observed, that the gospel is called the *second covenant*, not merely because it was posterior to the law, but also because it

A. M. 4068. 8 For finding fault with them, he saith, A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64. ¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, saith the Lord.
when I will make a new covenant with the house
of Israel and with the house of Judah :

9 Not according to the covenant that I made
with their fathers, in the day when I took
them by the hand to lead them out of the land
of Egypt ; because they continued not in my

¹ Jer. xxxi. 31-34. — Chap. x. 16. — ⁴ Gr. give.

is actually the same with the second covenant under
which Adam was placed after the fall ; for it requires,
not a sinless, but a sincere obedience, and grants
pardon to sinners on their repentance, see Gal. iii.
10. However, though the rigour of the first cove-
nant, (which, properly speaking, was the law of
nature written on Adam's heart,) was mitigated
under the second or gospel covenant, by the abolition
of its curse, (Gal. iii. 13,) its obligation, as a rule of
life, never was, nor ever could be cancelled, but its
[moral] precepts have constantly remained in force.
Hence all the sins which men commit, and which
are pardoned under the second covenant, are very
properly called *transgressions* of the first, Heb.
ix. 15."

Verses 8, 9. *For*—In this verse the apostle en-
ters upon the proof of his argument proposed in that
foregoing, namely, that the first covenant was not
faultless, or every way sufficient for the end God
had in view, because there was cause for the intro-
duction of another. *For finding fault with them*—
Namely, the people ; *he saith, Behold the days come,*
&c.—This is translated by Grotius and others, *Find-
ing fault, he saith to them,* and understood of *finding
fault with the former covenant.* But it seems much
more proper to understand it of God's *finding fault
with the Jews,* (as he evidently does in the words
preceding those here quoted, Jer. xxxi. 29, 30,) for
using the proverb, against which he expresses so
much displeasure, in Ezek. xviii. 2. And in the words
themselves he also finds fault with them for breaking
this covenant, though he had, with so much tender
care, brought them out of Egypt. It is true, the
first covenant was not every way perfect with respect
to God's general end toward his church ; yet it may
not be proper to say that God complained of it ;
whereas God, in this testimony, actually complains
of the people that they *brake his covenant,* and ex-
presses his indignation thereon, saying, *I regarded
them not.* *He saith*—By the Prophet Jeremiah, in
that celebrated text, which undoubtedly refers to the
gospel dispensation ; *Behold*—As if he had said,
Because the covenant, which they were under before,
was not the means of reforming them, but, notwith-
standing it, they were rebellious still ; therefore *the
days come*—Namely, of the gospel ; *when I will
make a new covenant*—Not new in regard of the
substance of it, but the manner of its dispensation ;
1st, Being ratified by the death of Christ ; 2d, Freed
from the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the
law ; 3d, Containing a more full and clear revelation

b

covenant, and I regarded them not, A. M. 4068.
saith the Lord. A. D. 64.

10 For ¹ this is the covenant that I will make
with the house of Israel, after those days,
saith the Lord ; I will ⁴ put my laws into their
mind, and write them ⁵ in their hearts : and
^m I will be to them a God, and they shall be
to me a people :

⁴ Or, upon.—^m Zech. viii. 8.

of the mysteries of religion, and a more perfect
description of it as spiritual, and having its seat
chiefly in men's hearts ; 4th, Attended with larger
influences of the Spirit ; 5th, Extended to all men ;
6th, Never to be abolished. *With the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah*—That is, with the whole
Jewish nation, including descendants from both
these houses. For although *the houses of Israel and
Judah* had existed separately, the one from the
other, from the time of the first Jeroboam, yet after
the captivity of the ten tribes, who composed *the
house of Israel,* such of them as joined themselves
to *the house of Judah,* were so mixed with them as
not to be distinguished from them. *Not according
to the covenant which I made with their fathers*
—But differing from it in the circumstances above
mentioned, and in others declared afterward ; *when
I took them by the hand*—With the care and tender-
ness of a parent ; or manifested my infinite conde-
scension and almighty power in their deliverance ;
because they continued not—Or, in which covenant
of mine they did not continue ; while their deliverance
was fresh in their memory they obeyed, but pre-
sently after they shook off the yoke, and did not
abide by the terms of the covenant. *And I regarded
them not*—Greek, *καγω ημελησα αυτων, I neglected them.*
So that the covenant was soon entirely broken. The
passage here quoted stands thus in Jeremiah, *Which
my covenant they brake, though I was a husband to
them, saith the Lord.* The apostle's translation of
it is that of the LXX. And to reconcile it with the
Hebrew text, Pocock (in his *Miscel.*, chap. 1) ob-
serves, that in the eastern languages, letters of the
same organ, as they are called, being often inter-
changed, the Hebrew word, *בגל, bagonal, to be a
husband,* is the same with the Arabic word, *בהל,
bahal, which signifies to refuse, despise, nauseate.*
So that the Hebrew clause will bear to be translated
as the apostle and the LXX. have done, *I neglected
them, I nauseated them.* See note on Jer. xxxi. 31, &c.

Verse 10. *For this is the covenant that I will
make after those days*—In the times of the Messiah ;
I will put my laws into their mind—I will open the
eyes of their understanding, and give them light to
discern the true, full, spiritual meaning thereof ;
and write them in their hearts—So that they shall
love them, and shall experience inwardly, and prac-
tise outwardly, whatsoever I command. They shall
have that love to me and all mankind shed abroad
in their hearts, which shall be a never-failing spring of
piety and virtue within them, and which, of my

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A. M. 4068. 11 And ^a they shall not teach
A. D. 64. every man his neighbour, and every
man his brother, saying, Know the Lord:
for all shall know me, from the least to the
greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unright-

^a Isa. liv. 13; John vi. 45; 1 John ii. 27.

mercy and grace, I will accept as the fulfilling of the law. The words are an allusion to the writing of the law on the two tables of stone. *And I will be to them a God*—Their all-sufficient portion, preserver, and rewarder; *and they shall be to me a people*—My beloved, loving, and obedient children. Or the former clause may signify, They shall know, fear, love, and serve me willingly and acceptably as their God, and I will protect, guide, govern, bless, and save them as my people.

Ver. 11, 12. *And they*—Who are under this covenant; *shall not teach*—That is, shall not any more have need to teach; *every man his neighbour, &c., saying, Know the Lord*—Though in other respects they will have need to teach each other to their lives' end; yet they shall not need to teach each other the knowledge of the Lord; for this they shall possess; yea, all real Christians, who believe in Jesus as the true Messiah, with a living faith, a faith working by love, shall know me—Even as a pardoning God, (verse 12,) and therefore savingly; *from the least to the greatest*—From the babe in Christ, the little children spoken of by St. John, whose sins are forgiven them; unto such as are of full age; strong in the Lord, and deeply experienced in his ways. See 1 John ii. 12-14. Or, by the least may be meant the poor and despised, and by the greatest, persons of wealth, authority, and power. In this order, the saving knowledge of God ever did, and ever will proceed; not from the greatest to the least, but from the least to the greatest; from the poor to the rich; from the low to the high; that no flesh may glory in his presence. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness*—I will pardon and accept them through my Son, in consequence of their repentance and faith in him; or, I will justify them, and give them peace with myself, and thus will make them wise unto salvation, truly holy and happy. Observe, reader, justification and peace with God is the root of all true knowledge of God and conformity to him. This, therefore, is God's method; First, a sinner, being brought to true repentance toward God, and faith

cousness, ° and their sins and their A. M. 4068.
iniquities will I remember no more. A. D. 64.

13 ^p In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away.

° Rom. xi. 27; Chap. x. 17.—^p 2 Cor. v. 17.

in our Lord Jesus Christ, is pardoned; then he knows God as gracious and merciful; then God's laws are written on his heart; he is God's, and God is his. *And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*—Namely, so as to punish them. In the Hebrew of Jeremiah, this passage runs thus; *I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more*. Probably the apostle translated the prophet's words freely, to show, that, under the new covenant, every kind of sin is freely forgiven to the truly penitent and believing, which was not the case under the former covenant.

Verse 13. *In that he saith, A new covenant*—In that he expresses himself in this manner; *he hath made the first old*—He hath manifested it to be old, or he hath shown that it is disannulled and out of date. *Now that which decayeth, &c.*—That which is antiquated, and of no further use; *is ready to vanish away*—As the Mosaic dispensation did soon after, when the temple was destroyed. "The Sinai covenant, before it was abrogated by Christ, was become old, or useless, in three respects; 1st, By its curse condemning every transgressor to death without mercy, it was designed to show the necessity of seeking justification from the mercy of God. But that necessity being more directly declared in the gospel, there was no reason for continuing the former covenant, after the second covenant was fully and universally published. 2d, The covenant of the law was introduced to prefigure the good things to come under the covenant of the gospel. But when these good things were actually bestowed, there was no longer any use for the typical services of the law. 3d, The Jewish doctors, by teaching that pardon was to be obtained only by the Levitical sacrifices, and the Judaizing Christians, by affirming that under the gospel itself men are pardoned only through the efficacy of these sacrifices, both the one and the other had corrupted the law; on which account, it was fit to lay it aside as a thing whose tendency now was to nourish superstition."—Mac-knight.

CHAPTER IX.

In this chapter the apostle, returning to his main argument, (1,) Gives an account of the Jewish sanctuary and its utensils, 1-5. (2,) Shows their use and meaning in their figurative services and sacrifices, 6-10. (3,) He illustrates the doctrine of the priesthood and intercession of Christ, 11-14. (4,) He discourses, by way of digression, on the necessity of shedding Christ's blood, and the sufficiency of the atonement made by it, 15-28.

A. M. 4068. **T**HEN verily the first covenant had also ¹ordinances of divine service, and ^aa worldly sanctuary.

² For there was a tabernacle made; the first, ^c wherein was ^d the candlestick, and ^e the

¹ Or, ceremonies.—Ex. xxv. 8.—^b Ex. xxvi. 1.—^c Ex. xxvi. 35; xl. 4.—^d Ex. xxv. 31.—^e Ex. xxv. 23, 30; Lev. xxiv. 5, 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. To show that the old covenant was justly laid aside, the apostle judged it necessary to enter into a particular examination of the religious services which it enjoined, and to prove that these were designed not for cleansing the consciences of the worshippers, but to prefigure the services and blessings of the new or gospel covenant: so that the latter being come, there was no longer occasion for continuing the former to prefigure them. This chapter, therefore, is an illustration of chap. viii. 5, where the apostle affirms that the priests worshipped God in the tabernacles unto the example or pattern and shadow of heavenly things. And it was proper to explain this matter copiously, because it must have had a great influence in weaning the Hebrews from the Levitical services, and in reconciling them to the abrogation of a form of worship which, though of divine appointment, was now become useless, having accomplished its end.

Then verily the first covenant—Many copies read here *πρωτη σκηνη*, the *first tabernacle*; but as that reading does not agree with verse 2, Beza and Mill prefer the reading of the Alexandrian and other MSS. of good authority, which have *πρωτη*, leaving the reader to supply *διαθηκη*, *covenant*, from the preceding verse. This reading our translators likewise have adopted. *Had ceremonial ordinances of outward worship, and a worldly, that is, a visible, material sanctuary, or tabernacle.* The meaning of the apostle is, that the Sinai covenant had these things annexed to it when it was first made, as its privileges and glory. For in the whole discourse he has continual respect to the first making of the covenant, and the first institution of its administrations; and this was that part of divine worship about which God had so many controversies with the people of Israel, under the Old Testament. The law of this worship was a hedge that God had set about them to keep them from superstition and idolatry. And, if at any time they brake over it, or neglected it, they failed not to rush into the most abominable idolatries. On the other hand, oftentimes they placed all their trust and confidence for their acceptance with God, and reception of blessings from him, on the external observance of its institutions. And hereby they countenanced themselves, not only in a neglect of moral duties and spiritual obedience, but in a course of flagitious sins, and various wickednesses. To repress these exorbitances, with respect to both extremes, the ministry of the prophets was, in an especial manner, directed.

Verse 2. *For there was a tabernacle made*—Namely, the first part of it of which he speaks, of

table, and the show-bread; which A. M. 4068. is called ² the sanctuary. A. D. 64.

³ And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all;

⁴ Which had the golden censer, and ^e the

^a Or, holy.—Exod. xxvi. 31, 33; xl. 3, 21; Chap. vi. 19. ^c Exod. xxv. 10; xxvi. 33; xl. 3, 21.

boards and curtains, pillars and coverings, which constituted a little apartment, as a kind of ante-chamber to the oracle; *wherein was the candlestick*—Of pure gold, with its seven lamps perpetually burning with pure oil, and so giving light to all holy administrations. This undoubtedly represented the fulness of spiritual light which was to be in the Messiah, and by him to be communicated to his whole church; *and the table and show-bread*—That is, the bread shown continually before God and his people, consisting of twelve loaves, according to the number of the tribes, and placed on this table in two rows, six upon one another in each row. As the candlestick typified the light, so the bread seems to have been an emblem of the spiritual food provided in Christ, especially in his doctrine, merits, and Spirit for the support of the spiritual life, health, and strength of believers. This is set forth at large, John vi. 27–58. There was also in this first tabernacle the golden altar of incense placed at the west end of it, where the veil opened into the most holy place. On this incense was burned every morning and evening, emblematical doubtless of the prayers of God's people, and especially of the efficacy given to them by the mediation and intercession of Christ.

Verse 3. *And after the second veil*—That is, with respect to them who entered into the tabernacle; for they were to pass through the whole length of the first part before they came to this: nor was there any other way of entering into it. This veil divided the holy place from the most holy, as the first veil did the holy place from the courts; and they are both here called *veils*, because by the first, the people were hindered from entering or even looking into the first part of the tabernacle, into which the priests entered daily; and by the second, the priests who performed services in the holy place were prohibited from entering, or even looking into the most holy. *The tabernacle which is called the holiest of all*—“This represented heaven, not only because in it the glory of the Lord, or visible symbol of his presence, rested between the cherubim, whereby the angelical hosts, surrounding the throne of God in heaven, were typified, but because this tabernacle was hidden from the eyes of all who frequented the outward tabernacle; even as heaven, the habitation of God, is hidden by the veil of their flesh from the eyes of all who live on the earth.”

Verses 4, 5. *Which had the golden censer*—Used by the high-priest only on the great day of atonement. “The apostle may have learned from the priests that this censer was of gold, and that it was left by him in the inward tabernacle, so near to the veil, that when he was about to officiate next year, by putting

A. M. 4068. ark of the covenant overlaid round
B. C. 64. about with gold, wherein *was* ^b the golden pot that had manna, and ⁱ Aaron's rod that budded, and ^k the tables of the covenant;

5 And ^l over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

^b Exod. xvi. 33, 34.—ⁱ Num. xvii. 10.—^k Exod. xxv. 16, 21; xxxiv. 29; xl. 20; Deut. x. 2, 5; 1 Kings viii. 9, 21.

his hand under the veil he could draw it out to fill it with burning coals, before he entered into the most holy place to burn the incense, agreeably to the direction," Lev. xvi. 12, 13; where see the note. *And the ark of the covenant*—This, with the mercy-seat wherewith it was covered, was the most glorious and mysterious utensil of the tabernacle, and afterward of the temple, the most eminent pledge of God's presence, and the most mysterious representation of the divine attributes in Christ. This being the heart, so to speak, of all divine services, was first formed; all other things in the Jewish worship had a relation to it, Exod. xxv. 10, 11. Sometimes it is called *the ark of the testimony*, because God called the tables of the covenant lodged in it by the name of his *testimony*, or that which testified his will to the people, and which, by the people's acceptance of the terms of it, was to be a perpetual witness between God and them. On the same account it is called *the ark of the covenant*, and lastly, it is called *the ark of God*, because it was the most eminent pledge of the special presence of God among the people. As to its fabric, it was *παντοθεν*, *every way*, within and without, overlaid with plates of beaten gold. This being the most sacred and glorious instrument of the sanctuary, all neglects about it, and contempt of it, were most severely punished. From the tabernacle it was carried into the temple built by Solomon, wherein it continued until the Babylonish captivity, and what became of it afterward is altogether uncertain. *Wherein was the golden pot that had manna*—The monument of God's care over Israel. When the manna first fell, every one was commanded to gather an omer for his own eating, (Exod. xvi. 16,) and God appointed that an omer of it should be put into a pot, and kept in the tabernacle before the Lord, verse 33: there it was miraculously preserved from putrefaction, whereas otherwise it would have putrefied in less than two days. The pot was to be made of that which was most durable, as being to be kept for a memorial throughout all generations. Because it is said, 1 Kings viii. 9, *there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone*, the words *ev v*, here used by the apostle, may be translated, *nigh to which*. Or the difficulty may be removed by supposing that the pronoun *v*, *which*, relates to *ακνην*, *tabernacle*, in which *tabernacle* also was the *golden pot*: or because it is said, Deut. xxxi. 26, *Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the ark*, we may conjecture that the book was put into some repository fixed to the side of the ark, and that the pot of man-

6 Now when these things were thus ^{A. M. 4068.} ordained, ^{B. C. 64.} the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God:

7 But into the second *went* the high priest alone ^a once every year, not without blood, ^o which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:

¹ Exod. xxv. 18, 22; Lev. xvi. 2.—^m Num. xxviii. 3.—ⁿ Exod. xxx. 10.—^o Chap. v. 3; vii. 27.

na was laid up before the Lord in the same manner. *Aaron's rod that budded*—The monument of a regular priesthood. The apostle affirms only that it *budded*, but in the sacred story concerning the trial about the priesthood, recorded Num. xvii. 2-10, it is added, that it *brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds*, being originally cut from an almond-tree. This rod Moses took from before the testimony when he was to smite the rock and work a miracle, of which this was consecrated to be the outward sign; *and the tables of the covenant*—The two tables of stone on which the ten commandments were written by the finger of God; the most venerable monument of all. *And over it*—Over the ark; *the cherubim of glory*—"Cherubim being the name of an order of angels, (Gen. iii. 24,) the figures called *cherubim*, placed on the sides of the mercy-seat, with the glory of the Lord resting between them, represented the angels who surround the manifestation of the divine presence in heaven. These figures, therefore, were fitly termed *the cherubim of glory*; and by this glory constantly abiding in the inward tabernacle, and by the figures of the cherubim, that tabernacle was rendered a fit image of heaven." *Shadowing*—With outspread wings; *the mercy-seat*—And represented as looking down upon it; a posture significative of the desire of angels to look into the mysteries of man's redemption, of which the mercy-seat, or *propitiatory*, being a plate of gold covering the ark, was an emblem, 1 Pet. i. 12. See also notes on Exod. xxv. 17-22, where the making and frame both of the mercy-seat and the cherubim are described.

Verse 6. *Now when these things were thus ordained*—*κατεσκευασμενων*, *prepared*. Having given an account of the structure of the tabernacle in the two parts of it, and the furniture of those several parts distinctly, to complete his argument, the apostle adds the consideration of their sacred use; *the priests went always*—Every day; *into the first tabernacle*—Termed the holy place; *accomplishing the service of God*—Performing what was there to be done, namely, burning the incense at the morning and evening sacrifice, dressing the lamps and supplying them with oil, changing the show-bread every sabbath morning. Added to this, as the principal part of the service of this tabernacle, the priests brought into it the blood of the sin-offerings, and sprinkled it before the veil, Lev. iv. 6. At all other times they entered into it without blood, for the blood of the burnt-offerings was sprinkled about the altar, Lev. i. 11.

Verse 7. *But into the second*—The holy of holies;

A. M. 4068. 8 ^{A. D. 64.} The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing :

^p Chap. x. 19, 20.—^q John xiv. 6.

went the high-priest alone—And no other person ; and he was to be so alone as that none were to attend in order to assist him in any part of the service ; yea, no one was allowed to be in the other part of the sanctuary where he might so much as see the veil opened, but all the priests, as well as the people, were kept without the sanctuary, Lev. xvi. 2, 17, 32. Hence it was always provided, in case of the sickness or occasional pollutions of the actual high-priest, the next in succession should perform this office, who was therefore called the *second priest*. From whence, in times of disorder and confusion, they had two high-priests at once. This entrance was a type, both of the entrance of Christ into heaven, and of our entrance by him to the throne of grace, verse 24 ; chap. x. 19, 20. And this was the veil which, in the temple, was rent from top to bottom upon the death of our Lord. For by his death the way was laid open to the most holy place, and the gracious presence of God discovered to all that come to God by him. *Once every year*—That is, on one day only, namely, the day of expiation, Lev. xvi. 2 ; but on that day he went in several times : *not without blood*—To signify that there is no entrance into God's gracious presence but by the blood of Christ. After the high-priest had filled the holy place with a cloud of incense, he returned to the altar of burnt-offerings without the tabernacle, where the sacrifice had been newly slain ; and while the blood of the beasts was fresh, and, as it were, living, he took of it in his hand, and entering again into the most holy place, sprinkled it seven times with his finger toward the mercy-seat. *Which he offered*—Where or when he offered it is not expressed : in the holy place there was no use of blood but for the sprinkling of it, but the sprinkling of blood was always consequential to the offering properly so called. Probably by the word προσφέρει, here used, he intends only *bringing*, and not properly *offering*. *For himself and the errors of the people*—The apostle refers to the distinct sacrifices that were to be offered on that day, the first of which was of a bullock and a ram, which were offered for the high-priest himself ; such being the imperfection of their state, that they could have no priests to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people, but he must first offer for himself. *By the errors of the people*, are meant their sins of ignorance, to which only, and not to sins presumptuously committed, those atonements extended. They were offered for the whole nation, to make atonement for the sins which they had ignorantly committed during the preceding year, and to open the tabernacle for their acts of worship during the succeeding year. And to show this, the high-priest carried the blood of these sacrifices into

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9 Which was a figure for the time A. M. 4068. then present, in which were offered A. D. 64. both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience ;

^r Gal. iii. 21 ; Chap. vii. 18, 19 ; x. 1, 11.

the inward tabernacle, and sprinkled it before the symbol of the divine presence.

Verses 8–10. *The Holy Ghost*—By whom the Mosaic ritual was prescribed ; *signifying*—By this difficulty of entrance, and the necessity of the incense-cloud and the atoning blood ; *that the way into the holiest of all*—Namely, into heaven, the place of God's immediate presence, represented by the inward tabernacle ; *was not yet made manifest*—Not so clearly and fully revealed ; *while the first tabernacle*, and its service, *was yet standing*—Retained its station and use : or, in other words, while the Jewish economy lasted. This lasted, according to the mind of God, until the death of Christ, and no longer : until which time both Christ himself, and all his disciples, continued to observe all its services, for he *was made under the law* of it. So long it continued by divine appointment. Its abolition, however, was, properly speaking, not declared until the day of pentecost, when, by the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost, the foundation of the gospel church, with its state, order, and worship, was solemnly laid ; and a new way of worship being established, the abrogation of the old was shown. But through the patience of God, the Jewish worship, though no longer acceptable to him, continued until the destruction of the temple, city, and people, some years after. *Which tabernacle*, with all its furniture and services, *was a figure*—Παροβολη, a *parable*, that is, a parabolical or emblematical instruction ; *for the time then present*—During the continuance of that service and way of worship. Or, as the original may be interpreted, *Which figure* (or parabolical instruction) *continues till this present time*, namely, in the like service performed in the temple ; *according to which*, namely, time, or during which, *gifts and sacrifices*, προσφέρονται, *are offered*, μη δυναμεναι, *which cannot make him who does the service, τον λατρευοντα, the worshipper, whether the priest, or him who brings the offering, perfect*—As to his conscience, so that he should be no longer conscious of being under the guilt or power of sin, or should have a full assurance that his sins are forgiven. Doddridge understands the verse in a rather different sense, thus : “ *Which*, far from being the grand and ultimate scheme, is only a kind of allegorical figure and parable, referring to the glorious displays of the present time : in which, nevertheless, there is hitherto a continuance of the temple-service ; so that *gifts and sacrifices are still offered, which yet in the nature of things, are not able to make the person who performs the service perfect, with respect to the conscience ; as they refer not to the real expiation of guilt, but only to averting some temporal evils which the law denounces on trans-*

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A. M. 4068. 10 Which stood only in ^a meats and drinks, and ^t divers washings, ^v and carnal ³ ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come ^x a high-priest ^v of good things to come, ^z by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

^a Lev. xi. 2; Col. ii. 16.—^t Num. xix. 7, &c.—^v Eph. ii. 15; Col. ii. 20; Chap. vii. 16.—^z Or, rites, or, ceremonies.—³ Chap. iii. 1.—^x Chap. x. 1.—^v Chap. viii. 2.—^v Chap. x. 4.

gressors." This, he adds, I take to be of the greatest importance for understanding the Mosaic sacrifices, namely, "that they were never intended to expiate offences to such a degree as to deliver the sinner from the final judgment of God in another world; but merely to make his peace with the government under which he then was, and furnish him with a pardon pleadable against any prosecution which might be commenced against him in their courts of justice, or any exclusion from the privilege of drawing near to God, as one eternally at peace with him, in the solemnities of his temple worship." Which service stood, or consisted, only, or chiefly, in meats and drinks—Or in divers ceremonious observances concerning these things; in the distinction between different kinds of meats, clean or unclean, and drinks, some of which were allowed, and others denied, to priests in some circumstances, and to Nazarites in others; and divers washings—Either of the whole body, or of a part of it, in water, as different occasions demanded; and carnal ordinances—Various injunctions relating to the purification of the flesh, imposed on them as necessary to be observed; until the time of reformation—Namely, of the worship of God by Christ, who was to abolish the Levitical services, and to introduce a worship in spirit and in truth, which might be performed in every place.

Verses 11, 12. But Christ being come—As if he had said, Though the types and legal ceremonies could not make the worshippers perfect, yet Christ, the antitype and truth, can. Here he comes to interpret and show the end of the typical services he had spoke of; a high-priest of good things to come—Described verse 15; that is, a dispenser of those benefits and advantages which were prefigured by the Mosaic institutions, but could only be obtained for us, and bestowed upon us, by the Messiah. By a greater and more perfect tabernacle—That is, not by the service of the Jewish tabernacle, (verse 23,) but by a service performed in a greater and more perfect tabernacle above; not made with hands, that is, not of this building—Namely, the building of this worldly sanctuary, or not making any part of this lower creation. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, &c., did he procure a right to enter and minister in that tabernacle, but by his own blood—By the merit of his death; he entered in once into the holy place above—That is, once for all: not once, or one day every year, as the Jewish high-priest

12 Neither ^a by the blood of goats and calves, but ^b by his own blood, he entered in ^c once into the holy place, ^d having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if ^e the blood of bulls and of goats, and ^f the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

^b Acts xx. 28; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; 1 Pet. i. 19; Rev. i. 5; v. 9.—^c Zech. iii. 9; Verses 26, 28; Chap. x. 10.—^d Dan. ix. 24.—^e Lev. xvi. 14, 16.—^f Num. xix. 2, 17, &c.

into the holy place of the emblematical tabernacle: having obtained—By his one perfect sacrifice; eternal redemption and salvation for us—Of which all the remissions, and all the benefits procured by the ministration of the Aaronical priesthood, were but very imperfect figures. Beza, Pierce, and many others, by the greater and more perfect tabernacle, understand our Lord's human nature. In support of which notion Beza says, that his human nature may as properly be called a tabernacle as his flesh is called a veil, Heb. x. 24. "But, not to dispute about the propriety of the figure, it appears an absurdity to say that Christ entered into the holy place through his own human nature, as through a tabernacle. He entered into heaven clothed with his human nature, and not through it, as through a place: for, on that supposition, he did not carry his human nature with him into heaven."—Macknight.

Verses 13, 14. For, &c.—The truth intended to be confirmed in these verses, is that which the apostle had asserted in the two preceding, namely, That Christ by his blood hath obtained for us eternal redemption. And his words contain both an argument and a comparison, to this effect: "If that which is less can do that which is less, then that which is greater can do that which is greater; provided also that less, in what it did, was a type of what was greater in that greater thing which it was to effect. The apostle takes for granted, what he had proved before, namely, 1st, That the Levitical services and ordinances were in themselves carnal, and had only an obscure representation of things spiritual and eternal; and that the office and sacrifice of Christ were spiritual, and had their effects in eternal things. 2d, That those other carnal earthly things were divinely-appointed types and resemblances of those which were spiritual and eternal. From these suppositions the argument is firm: as the ordinances of old, being carnal, had an efficacy to their proper end, to purify the unclean as to the flesh; so the sacrifice of Christ hath a certain efficacy to its proper end, the purging of our consciences, &c. The force of the inference depends on the relation that was between them in the appointment of God. Nay, there was evidently a greater efficacy in the sacrifice of Christ, with respect to its proper end, than there was in those sacrifices, with respect to their proper end: the reason is, because all their efficacy depended on a mere arbitrary institution, having in their own nature neither worth nor efficacy; but in the

A. M. 4068. 14 How much more ^r shall the
A. D. 64. blood of Christ, ^h who through
the eternal Spirit ⁱ offered himself without
spot to God, ^k purge your conscience from
dead works ^m to serve the living God?

15 ^a And for this cause ^o he is the me-

^r 1 Pet. i. 19; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5.—^h Rom. i. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 18.—ⁱ Eph. ii. 5; Tit. ii. 14; Chap. vii. 27.—^k Or, fault.
^m Chap. i. 3.—^a Chap. vi. 1.

sacrifice of Christ there is an innate glorious worth and efficacy, which, suitably to the rules of eternal reason and righteousness, will procure and accomplish its effects."—Owen. Therefore the apostle says, *How much more shall the blood of Christ, &c.* These things being observed, the explication of the apostle's words will not be difficult. As if the apostle had said, That Jesus, by his death, should procure an eternal pardon and deliverance from all the consequences of sin for us, is reasonable; for if the blood of bulls and of goats, of which I have just been speaking, when presented to God, with the appointed circumstances, on the day of general expiation by the high-priest, and, in cases of personal pollution, the ashes of a heifer, (namely, the red heifer, of which see Num. xix. 17-19,) consumed by fire, as a sin-offering, being sprinkled on them who were legally unclean, did sanctify to the purifying of the flesh—Had so much efficacy in consequence of the divine institution, as to reconcile God to the whole Jewish people, in the former instance, and in the other to introduce persons legally unclean to the liberty of approaching him in his sanctuary, which would otherwise have been denied them; how much more reasonable is it to think that the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit—Supporting the infirmities of his human nature, and animating him to the exercise of all those graces which shed such a lustre round all the infamy of his cross; offered himself voluntarily, without spot, a most acceptable sacrifice, to God—How much more, I say, shall that blood of his avail to purge our consciences from dead works, (of which see on chap. vi. 1,) that is, from the pollutions we have contracted by works of sin and death; to serve—That is, that we may freely approach, and acceptably worship and serve the living God?—How surely shall it appease that consciousness of guilt, which might otherwise be very distressing and discouraging to us, and introduce us to present our prayers, praises, and other services in the divine presence, with assurance of acceptance and regard. It is justly observed by Macknight here, that "the ceremonial institutions mentioned, sanctified the bodies of the polluted, not by any natural efficacy, (for they rather defiled them,) but by the appointment of God, who, considering them as acts of obedience, was pleased, on their account, to remit the punishment, which, as their political ruler, he had a right to inflict on the polluted; but the shedding of the blood of Christ, both by the appointment of God, and by its own efficacy, availeth to the procuring an eternal pardon for penitent sinners. The

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diator of the new testament, ^p that A. M. 4069.
by means of death, for the redemp- A. D. 64.
tion of the transgressions that were under
the first testament, ^q they which are called
might receive the promise of eternal inherit-
ance.

^p Luke i. 74; Rom. vi. 13, 22; 1 Pet. iv. 2.—^q 1 Tim. ii. 5.
^r Chap. vii. 22; viii. 6; xii. 24.—^s Rom. iii. 25; v. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 18.—^t Chap. iii. 1.

sanctification effected by the legal rites being the sanctification of nothing but the body, it was, in a religious light, of little use, unless it was a representation and pledge of some real expiation. Now, what real expiation of sin is there in the whole universe, if the sacrifice of Christ is excluded? We must therefore acknowledge that the Levitical rites, which sanctified the flesh, derived their whole virtue from their being, as the apostle affirms, figurative representations of the real atonement which Christ [made upon the cross and] was to make in heaven, [by presenting his crucified body there,] for sanctifying the soul of the sinner. Christ is said to have offered himself through the eternal Spirit, because he was raised from the dead by the Spirit, (1 Pet. iii. 18,) consequently he was enabled by the Spirit to offer himself to God."

Verse 15. *And for this cause*—*Δια τούτο*, on this account, that Christ's blood is so efficacious; or for this end, that he might die and thereby procure redemption, and an eternal inheritance for us; he is the mediator—Between God and man, making peace between them; of the new testament—Or covenant rather, as the word *διαθήκη* is generally rendered in the New Testament, answering to the Hebrew word *berith*, which all the translators of the Jewish Scriptures have understood to signify a covenant. It is, however, such a covenant, as, having been procured for us, and confirmed by his death, is thereby become a testament. For through it we receive the blessings which Christ, by his will, designed for, and declared should be conferred upon believers through faith in his blood. "Thus when he said, *for their sakes I sanctify myself*, John xvii. 19; that is, I offer up myself as a piacular victim, that they might be sanctified, or truly purged from their sins; he adds, as his last will and testament, *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am*. So here he is become a high-priest of good things to come, purchasing eternal redemption for us by his blood: and the mediator of that new covenant, in which God promises to be merciful to our transgressions, and to remember our sins no more, chap. viii. 12; procuring the remission of them by the intervention of his death, that they who believe in him might receive the promise of an eternal inheritance—Which he died to entitle them to, and confer upon them; whence it is styled the purchased possession, Eph. i. 14. This therefore was his will and testament, that they, for whom he died, should live through him. And this testament could not be confirmed but by his death: he, there-

A. M. 4068. 16 * For where a testament is, there
A. D. 64. must also of necessity ^s be the death
of the testator.

17 For ^r a testament is of force after men are
dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while
the testator liveth.

18 ^a Whereupon neither the first testa-

* Wednesday before Easter, verse 16 to the end.—^s Or, be brought in.—Gal. iii. 15.—Exod. xxiv. 6, &c.

fore, was at once the mediator in whom the new covenant, promising to us remission of sins, was made, and the testator by whose death the testament, that they who believed in him should have eternal life, was ratified." So Dr. Whitby, who, however, observes, that the paragraph, to the end of verse 20, will admit of a fair interpretation without supposing that any thing is said in it either of a testament or testator. See on the next verse. That by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions—That is, for the redemption of transgressors from the guilt and punishment of those sins which were committed under the first covenant. In other words, He suffered for this end, that he might procure deliverance, not only from the condemnation due to the sins which have been committed since his death, but from that due to those which were committed during the former dispensation and state of the church, which could not be fully expiated by any of those sacrifices which belonged to the first covenant. They which are called—And obey the call, or are made partakers of the grace of the gospel; might receive the promise of eternal inheritance—The things promised in the new covenant, namely, not a temporary, earthly inheritance, such as the land of Canaan, promised in the first covenant, but that eternal glory which is promised in the new covenant.

Verses 16, 17. For where a testament is—That is, where there is a covenant, which is also a testament; there must of necessity be the death of the testator—As if he had said, The reason why there was a necessity that Christ should die, is taken from the nature of the covenant whereof he is Mediator, which covenant is also a testament, and therefore could not be of force but by his death. For a testament is of force—Has validity; after men are dead—When, and not before, the legatees may claim their legacies. Otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth—And therefore hath power to alter his will at pleasure. But it is not necessary that the expression τὸ διαθεμενόν, at the end of verse 16, should signify a testator, properly so called: it may mean only a promiser, and one that confirms his promise with his own blood. For διατιθεῖν, according to Phavorinus, is, I promise, I covenant; and διατίθεσθαι διαθήκην is very commonly in profane authors, to enter into covenant; and in the same sense the phrase is used in the Old Testament; and therefore the participle διαθεμενός, derived from the same verb, must probably have the same signification here,

ment was ^e dedicated without blood. A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, 'he took the blood of calves and of goats, ^u with water, and ^v scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people,

^e Or, purified.—¹ Exod. xxiv. 5, 6, 8; Lev. xvi. 14, 15, 18. ^u Lev. xiv. 4, 6, 7, 49, 51, 52.—^v Or, purple.

in which it is continually used by the LXX., and which it always bears in the New Testament. Thus, Acts iii. 25, Ye are the children, διαθήκης ἧς διεθερο, of the covenant which God made with our fathers; Luke xxii. 29; καὶ διατίθεμαι ὑμῖν, and I appoint to you a kingdom, καθὼς διεθερο, as my Father hath appointed to me. So in this epistle, chap. viii. 10; x. 16, ἀντὶ ἧς διαθήκης ἡ διαθήσομαι, This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel. And because covenants were usually made *victimis cædendo*, by sacrifices, as the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin expressions used in the making of covenants show; accordingly, the new covenant was established in the blood of Jesus. Hence the apostle speaks thus of this covenant, and the appointed disposer or maker of it. This sense of the passage is defended at large by Dr. Macknight, in a note too long to be here quoted. His paraphrase on it is as follows: "And for this reason, that the death of Christ is so efficacious, [namely, as is set forth in verses 13, 14,] of the new covenant he is the Mediator, or High-Priest, by whom its blessings are dispensed; and also the sacrifice by which it is procured and ratified; that his death being accomplished for obtaining the pardon of the transgressions of the first covenant, believers of all ages and nations, as the called seed of Abraham, (Rom. viii. 28,) may receive the promised eternal inheritance. For where a covenant is made by sacrifice, there is a necessity that the death of the appointed sacrifice be produced. For—According to the practice of God and man; a covenant is made firm or dead sacrifices, seeing it never hath force while the goat, calf, or bullock, appointed as the sacrifice of ratification, liveth. Because from the beginning God ratified his covenant by sacrifice, to preserve among men the expectation of the sacrifice of his Son; hence not even the covenant of Sinai was made without sacrifice."

Verses 18-20. Whereupon—On which principle we may observe; neither was the first—Covenant, of which we have been speaking, I mean that of Moses; dedicated without blood—Namely, that of an appointed sacrifice. "In the original, the word covenant is wanting; and our translators, by supplying the word testament, have made the Sinai covenant or law of Moses, of which the apostle is speaking, a testament, than which," says Macknight, "nothing can be more incongruous. The word to be supplied is not testament, but covenant. For when Moses had spoken every precept—The pre-

A. M. 4068. 20 Saying, * This is the blood of
A. D. 64. the testament which God hath en-
joined unto you.

21 Moreover, † he sprinkled likewise with
blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels
of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are by the law

* Ex. xxiv. 8; Matt. xxvi. 28.—† Ex. xxix. 12, 36; Lev. viii.

cepts of the law which Moses read to the people on this occasion, were chiefly those contained in Exod. xx-xxiii, as is evident from Exod. xxiv. 5. See the margin. *To all the people according to the law*—The will, appointment, or express order of God; *he took the blood of calves, &c., with water*. The blood was mixed with water, to prevent its growing too stiff for sprinkling, perhaps also to typify the blood and water which should issue out of Christ's side, signifying the expiating and cleansing virtue of his sufferings. *And scarlet wool and hyssop*—All these circumstances are not particularly mentioned in that chapter of Exodus, but are supposed to be already known from other passages of Moses; *and sprinkled both the book*—Which contained all he had said; *and all the people*—Who were near him. The book was sprinkled to show, 1st, That the law itself was not able to reconcile them to God, and give life without the blood of Christ added to it. 2d, That atonement was to be made by blood for sins committed against the law. 3d, That every thing is unclean to us that is not sprinkled with the blood of Christ. *Saying, (Exod. xxiv. 8,) This is the blood of the covenant, &c.*—This sprinkling of the blood is a ceremony instituted by God to signify the mutual consent of both parties to the terms of the covenant; or, this is the blood whereby the covenant is ratified on both sides; *which God hath enjoined unto you*—Hath required me to deliver unto you: or, *hath commanded with respect to you*, as *ἡς ἐνεκεν* *ἔλατο πρὸς υἱας* literally signifies, requiring you to declare your consent to the terms of it.

Verses 21, 22. *Moreover*—To prefigure the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ to render our acts of worship acceptable; *he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle*—The altar, and mercy-seat; *and all the vessels of the ministry*—All that were used in the tabernacle service. See the margin. *And almost all the things*—Pertaining to the tabernacle and service of God, (the apostle says *almost all things*, because some were cleansed with water, and some with fire, Num. xxxi. 23, and some with the ashes of the red heifer, Num. xix. 2-10,) *are by the law purged* from any ceremonial defilement *with blood*—Offered or sprinkled; *and without shedding of blood*—According to the law; *is no remission*—Of sins, neither typical nor real. Or he means, no remission was granted on the day of atonement without blood. All this pointed to the blood of Christ, effectually cleansing from all sin, and intimated that there can be no purification from it by any other means. Because some fancy that a real pardon of sin was obtained

purged with blood; and * with- A. M. 4068.
out shedding of blood is no remis- A. D. 64.
sion.

23 *It was* therefore necessary that * the pat-
terns of things in the heavens should be puri-
fied with these; but the heavenly things them-
selves with better sacrifices than these.

15, 19; xvi. 14, 15, 16, 18, 19.—† Lev. xvii. 11.—‡ Ch. viii. 5.

by the atonements of the Mosaic law, and especially by those made on the tenth of the seventh month, concerning which it is said, (Lev. xvi. 30,) *on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you that you may be clean from all your sins*: it may be proper to observe here, that "this cleansing of the people from all their sins could not possibly have any reference to the punishments of the life to come, because the atonement was made *for all the people* indiscriminately, whether penitent or not, consequently it could not be a cleansing of their consciences, but of their bodies; redeeming them from those civil penalties which God, in the character of their chief magistrate, would have inflicted on them for breaking the laws of the state, unless these atonements had been made. A remission of that kind all the people of the congregation might receive, and it was the only remission which, in a body, they could receive through the sacrifices mentioned. And from the inefficacy of the annual atonements, made on the day above mentioned, to procure for the people the eternal pardon of their sins, it follows that the daily atonements, made by the ordinary priests, had no greater efficacy in procuring their pardon."—Macknight. See notes on verses 8-10; chap. x. 4.

Verse 23. *It was, therefore, &c.*—That is, it plainly appears from what has been said, *it was necessary*—According to the appointment of God; *that the patterns of things in the heavens*—Termed the *figures of the true*, (verse 24,) namely, the covenant, the book, the tabernacle, with all the vessels of its ministry, which were shadowy representations of *heavenly things*—That is, of the things of the gospel, whether belonging to the church militant or the church triumphant; *should be purified with these*—Should be procured for, or opened and sanctified to the enjoyment of the priests and people, by these oblations and sprinklings with blood, and those other things which were appointed by the law to be all used for their purification. He says *purified, or cleansed*, not because the tabernacle and its utensils, the book of the law, &c., were unclean in themselves, but because through the uncleanness of the people they would have been considered as polluted if not thus purified. *But the heavenly things themselves*—That is, the things whereof the others were patterns,—the redemption, worship, salvation, and eternal glory of the church; *by better sacrifices than these*—Namely, by the one sacrifice of Christ, expressed in the plural number, because it included the signification of all other sacrifices, exceeded them in

A. M. 4068. 24 For ^b Christ is not entered into ^c the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of ^e the true; but into heaven itself, now ^d to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as ^e the high-priest entereth into the holy

^b Chap. vi. 20.—^c Chap. viii. 2.—^d Rom. viii. 34; Chap. vii. 25; 1 John ii. 1.—^e Verse 7.

dignity, and was of more use and efficacy than they all. For by this alone could spiritual and eternal blessings, the privileges of God's church on earth and in heaven, be laid open to the enjoyment of guilty and polluted sinners. In other words, and especially as the Jewish tabernacle, including the holy and the most holy place, could not be entered by the priests, and opened to the prayers and other acts of religious worship of them and of the people, nor the utensils and ceremonies of the tabernacle service be sanctified to them, without the sacrifices and atonements appointed in the law; so the heavenly holy places represented by them, could not be opened for the reception of the prayers and praises of God's people while they are here, nor of their persons hereafter, except through the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. Or, as Mr. Scott paraphrases the passage, "It was then necessary by the appointment of the law for the exemplars or types of heavenly things to be purified by the sacrifice of innocent animals, and by the application of their blood, or they could not be acceptably used in the worship of God; but it was necessary, for more durable and immutable reasons, that the heavenly things themselves should be purified by an atonement of superior excellence, even by the one sacrifice of the death of Christ. In order to his efficaciously interceding for sinners in heaven, and opening for them the way to the mercy-seat, it was necessary that Christ should on earth, in our nature, shed his blood, and die a sacrifice on the cross; that he might have the infinite merit of that sacrifice to plead before the throne, in behalf of all who should come unto God by him; otherwise mercy, shown to sinners, would dishonour the justice and holiness of God, and their admission into heaven would, as it were, defile that holy place."

Verse 24-26. For Christ is, or, hath, not entered—With the sacrifice of his crucified body; into the holy places made with hands—He never went into the holy of holies of the temple at Jerusalem; the figures of the true tabernacle in heaven; Greek, *αντιτυπα*, the antitypes. "In the mount Moses had *τυπος*, the type, or model of the tabernacles, and of the services to be performed in them, showed to him. Hence the tabernacles, with their services, which he formed according to that model, are called antitypes, or images of that model; consequently images of heaven itself, and of the services to be performed by Christ as the High-Priest of the heavenly holy places, of all which the model showed to

place every year with blood of ^c others; ^d others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now ^e once ^e in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

^f Verse 12; Chap. vii. 27; x. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18.—^g 1 Cor. x. 11; Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10.

Moses in the mount was a shadow or dark representation." *But unto heaven itself, now to appear*—As our glorious High-Priest and powerful Intercessor; *in the presence of God for us*—That is, before the manifestation of the divine presence, to officiate on our account. *Nor yet*—Was it needful that he should offer himself often—The atonement made by Christ being founded on the sovereign pleasure of God, it was to be made according to the appointment of God. Wherefore Christ having made that atonement only once, it follows that no more atonement was required by God in order to his pardoning believers in all nations and ages. *As the high-priest entereth into the earthly holy place every year*—On the day of atonement; *with the blood of others*—Of another kind of creatures, that is, of bullocks and goats. *For then must he (Christ) often have suffered since the foundation of the world*—"This reasoning," says Macknight, "merits the reader's particular attention, because it supposes two facts which are of great importance. The first is, that from the fall of Adam to the end of the world, no man will be pardoned but through Christ's offering himself to God a sacrifice for sin. The second is, that although Christ offered himself only once, that one offering is in itself so meritorious, and of such efficacy in procuring pardon for the penitent, that its influence reacheth backward to the beginning of the world, and forward to the end of time; on which account Christ is with great propriety termed, (Rev. xiii. 8,) *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*;" or from the time of man's fall, for the necessity of Christ's offering himself a sacrifice for sin did not take place immediately at the creation, but at the fall. *But now once in the end of the world*—At the conclusion of the Mosaic dispensation, and the entrance of gospel times, which are the last season of God's grace to the church. The apostle's expression, *συντελεια των αιωνων*, may be properly rendered, *the consummation*, or conclusion, *of the ages*, or divine dispensations, termed the dispensation of the fulness of times, Eph. i. 10. See also Gal. iv. 4. The sacrifice of Christ divides the whole age or duration of the world into two parts, and extends its virtue backward and forward. *He hath appeared*—*Πεφανερωται*, *been manifested*; *to put away sin*—Or, *for the abolition of sin*, as the original expression signifies; that is, to remove both its guilt and power, (and not merely, or chiefly, to abolish the Levitical *sin-offerings*, as Macknight strangely interprets the clause,) *by the sacrifice of*

A. M. 4068. 27 ^b And as it is appointed unto
A. D. 64. men once to die, ¹ but after this the
judgment :

28 So ^b Christ was once ¹ offered to bear

^b Gen. iii. 19; Eccles. iii. 20.—¹ 2 Cor. v. 10; Rev. xx. 12, 13.
¹ Rom. vi. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

himself—Which at once purchases the pardon of it for us, and grace to subdue it, and effectually teaches us to mortify it, when we see such a ransom paid for our forfeited lives.

Verses 27, 28. *And as it is appointed, &c.*—Inasmuch as this is the constitution of God, that sinful men shall die once, and but once; (see the margin;) and after this the judgment—Of the great day, between which and death nothing shall interpose to make any alteration in the state or condition of any one, for at death every man's final state is determined; but we do not find a word in the Scriptures of any particular judgment taking place immediately after death. *So Christ, &c.*—In correspondence to that state of things, and for a remedy against it; and the relief (O wonderful effect of infinite wisdom!) is eminently proportionate to the evil, the remedy to the disease. *Christ was once offered to bear the sins*, Matt xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Cor. v. 21; the guilt and punishment due to them; *of many*—Even of as many as are born into the world; or the expression, *ἀνεγκειν αμαρτίας*, may be rendered, *to carry away sins*; in allusion, perhaps, to the scape-goat, which bore all the iniquities of the congregation into a land not inhabited. The meaning, however, if the word be so rendered, will be the same in effect, namely, that Christ was once offered to make atonement for the sins of many. *And unto them that look for him*—Which all true believers do; see Rom. viii. 23; 2 Cor. v. 2; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Tit. ii. 13; 2 Pet. iii. 12. *Shall he appear the second time*—ὀφθησεται, he shall be seen, by every eye, Rev. i. 7; there shall be a public sight of him in the heavens, when he comes to raise the dead and judge mankind; *without sin*—Not bearing men's sins as formerly, or without any thing that wears the marks of humiliation and abasement, or resembles the form in which he came to make an atonement for sin; *unto salvation*—To bestow complete happiness of soul and body upon us. Thus Archbishop Tillotson; "What is the meaning of this opposition, that at his first coming he bare our sins, but at his second coming he shall appear without sin unto salvation?"

the sins ^m of many; and unto A. M. 4068.
them that ^a look for him shall he ^a appear
appear the second time without sin unto sal-
vation.

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 24; 1 John iii. 5.—^m Matt. xxvi. 28; Rom. v. 15.
^a Tit. ii. 13; 2 Pet. iii. 12.

These words can have no other imaginable sense but this, that at his first coming he sustained the person of a sinner, and suffered instead of us, but his second coming shall be on another account, and he shall appear, not as a Sacrifice, but as a Judge." Thus the Jewish high-priest, after entering into the holy of holies in the plain dress of an ordinary priest, in linen garments, making atonement for the people, came out thence arrayed in his magnificent robes to bless the people, who waited for him in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. To this transaction, as Limborch and many others have supposed, there evidently seems to be an allusion here. And as the trumpet of jubilee, each fiftieth year, sounded at that time to proclaim the commencement of that happy period, there is not, says Doddridge, perhaps, an image that can enter into the mind of man more suitable to express the grand idea which the apostle intended to convey, than this would be to a Jew, who well knew the grand solemnity to which it referred. "But there will be this difference between the return of Christ to bless his people, and the return of the high-priest to bless the congregation. The latter, after coming out of the most holy place, made a new atonement in his pontifical robes for himself and for the people, Lev. xvi. 24; which showed that the former atonement was not real, but only typical. Whereas Jesus, after having made atonement, with his own blood, will not return to the earth for the purpose of making himself a sacrifice a second time; but having procured an eternal redemption for his people by the sacrifice of himself once offered, he will return for the purpose of publicly absolving them, and bestowing on them the great blessing of eternal life, which absolution and reward he, being surrounded with the glory of his Father, Matthew xvi. 27, will give them in the presence of the assembled universe, both as their king and their priest. And this is the great salvation which Christ himself began to preach, and which was confirmed to the world by them who heard him, chapter ii. 8."—Mac-knight.

CHAPTER X.

The apostle, returning from his digression, (1.) Proves that the legal ceremonies could not purify the conscience; and from thence argues the insufficiency of the Mosaic law, and the necessity of looking beyond it, 1-15. (2.) He urges Christians to improve the privileges which such a High-Priest and covenant gave them, to the purposes of a fiducial approach to God, a constant attendance on his worship, a sincere love to each other, and all good works, 15-25. (3.) He enforces his exhortation steadily to adhere to their Christian faith, by reminding them of the extremities they had endured in its defence, and of the fatal consequences of apostacy, 26-39.

b

A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64. **FOR** * the law having * a shadow
of good things to come, and
not the very image of the things, ° can never
with those sacrifices, which they offered year by
year continually, make the comers thereunto
d perfect.

2 For then 1 would they not have ceased to

* Good Friday, epistle, verse 1 to verse 26.—^a Col. ii. 17; Chap. viii. 5; ix. 23.—^b Chap. ix. 11.—^c Chap. ix. 9.
^d Verse 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verse 1. The apostle, in order to display Christ's dignity as a High-Priest, having illustrated what he affirmed, (chap. viii. 7,) namely, that the Levitical priests worshipped God in the tabernacle with the representations of the services to be performed by Christ in heaven; also having contrasted the ineffectual services performed by these priests in the tabernacle on earth, with the effectual services performed by Christ in heaven; and the covenant of which they were the mediators, with the covenant of which Christ is the Mediator; and the blessings procured by the services of the Levitical priests in the earthly tabernacle, with the blessings procured by the services performed by Christ in heaven; he, in the beginning of this chapter, as the necessary consequence of these things, infers, that since the law contained nothing but a shadow, or emblematical representation, of the blessings to come, through the services of the greater and more perfect heavenly tabernacle, and not these blessings themselves, it never could, with the same emblematical sacrifices which were offered annually by the high-priest on the day of atonement, make those who came to these sacrifices perfect in respect of pardon. Thus, For, &c.—As if he had said, From all that has been advanced, it appears that the law—The Mosaic dispensation; being a bare unsubstantial shadow of good things to come—Of gospel blessings and gospel worship; and not the very image—The substantial, solid representation, or complete delineation; of the things, can never, with the same kind of sacrifices—Though continually repeated; make the comers thereunto perfect. In the terms shadow and image, there seems to be an allusion, as Doddridge observes, "to the different state of a painting, when the first sketch only is drawn, and when the picture is finished; or to the first sketch of a painting, when compared with what is yet more expressive than even the completest picture, and exact image?" or between the shadow of a man, made by his body's intercepting the sun's rays, and a good portrait or statue of him, or the reflection of his person in a mirror. The good things of which the law contained only a shadow, were, 1st, The cleansing of the mind of believers from evil dispositions, by the doctrines of the gospel, and by the influences of the Spirit of God. Of this the washings and purifications of the bodies of the Israelites, enjoined in the law, were a shadow. 2d, That real atonement for

be offered? because that the worship- A. M. 4068.
pers once purged should have had no A. D. 64.
more conscience of sins.

3 ° But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 For 'it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

¹ Or, they would have ceased to be offered, because, &c.
^a Lev. xvi. 21; Chap. ix. 7.—^b Mic. vi. 6, 7; Chap. ix. 13; Verse 11.

sin, which was made by the offering of the body of Christ once for all, verse 10. Of this the Levitical atonements, made by the offering of beasts, were a shadow. 3d, The eternal pardon of sin, procured for believers by the atonements which Christ made. Of this the political pardon, obtained for the Israelites by the sacrifice of beasts which the priests offered, was a shadow. 4th, Access to worship God on earth through the blood of Christ with the hope of acceptance. Of this the drawing nigh of the Israelites to worship in the court of the tabernacle, through the blood of the Levitical sacrifices, was a shadow. 5th, The eternal possession of heaven, through believing and obeying the gospel. Of this the continued possession of Canaan, secured to the Israelites by their obedience to the law, was a shadow. Now since the good things which Christ hath obtained for believers through his ministrations in the heavenly tabernacle, were not procured, but only typified, by the ministrations of the high-priests in the tabernacle on earth, it was fit that those shadows should be done away after the things of which they were shadows were accomplished.

Verses 2, 3. For then would they not have ceased, &c.—There would not have been need to have offered them more than once: that is, if these sacrifices had made the worshippers perfect, in respect of pardon, they would have ceased to be offered; because the worshippers once purged—Or fully discharged from the guilt of their transgressions; should have had no more conscience of sin—There would have remained no more sense of guilt upon their consciences to have troubled them, and no more fear of future punishment in consequence thereof. But it was not so with them, as appears by the yearly repetition of these sacrifices, wherein there was a continual remembrance made of sin—A consciousness of their sins, as unpardoned, still remained even after those sacrifices were offered, as is evident from this, that in the annual repetition of their sacrifices, the people's sins, for which atonement had formerly been made, were remembered; that is, confessed as needing a yet further expiation. And, though it is true we are daily to remember and confess our sins, yet that respects only the application of the virtue and efficacy of the atonement already made to our consciences, without the least desire or expectation of a new propitiation.

Verse 4. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats—Or of any brute animals; should

A. M. 4068. 5 Wherefore, when he cometh into
A. D. 64. the world, he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body" ² hast thou prepared me :

† Psa. xl. 6, &c. ; l. 8, &c. ; Isa. i. 11 ;

take away sins—Should make full satisfaction and atonement for them, so as to procure the pardon of them on its own account. To understand the apostle, we must remember, that though remission of sins be originally from mere grace and mercy, yet it is not to be accomplished by sovereign grace alone, which would be inconsistent with God's truth, holiness, and righteous government of the world. Hence shedding of blood has been the appointed means of obtaining it in all ages ; and the psalmist, Psa. l. 5, represents all God's true people as making *a covenant with him by sacrifice*. And for this appointment much may be said on the principles of reason. For as the most ancient way of teaching was by symbols, emblems, or hieroglyphics, God, by requiring sacrifices of mankind in order to the pardon of their sins, intended hereby to teach them, 1st, Their guilt, and desert of death and destruction : 2d, The great evil of sin, its odious nature, and destructive consequences, in that it could not be expiated without blood : 3d, The necessity of mortifying it, and the carnal principle whence it proceeds : 4th, Hereby to lay a foundation for the confidence and hope of the sinner, with respect to pardon, as the substitution, by divine appointment, of the life of the animal in the stead of the life of the sinner, manifested grace and promised forgiveness : 5th, Hereby also provision was made both for condemning and pardoning sin, both which things, in order to the glory of God and the salvation of mankind, were absolutely necessary to be done. Now, though these ends might be answered, in some faint degree, or, to speak more properly, though a shadow of them might be exhibited in the sacrifices of brute animals, yet they could not be accomplished in an adequate manner, nor the very images of the things be exhibited thereby. For, 1st, These sacrifices could not fully manifest the great evil of sin, and its destructive nature. For what great evil was there in it, if only the death of an inferior creature, or of a number of inferior creatures, was required in order to the expiation of it ? Nor, 2d, For the same reason could the sacrifice of these animals adequately manifest the great guilt of mankind in committing sin, and the punishment they thereby deserved : nor, 3d, God's infinite hatred to it, and the infinite retribution of his nature, and dignity of his government. Add to this, as the sacrificed animals were not of the same nature with man, who had sinned, their death could not dissolve the debt of death and destruction which the human nature had contracted. Nay, being irrational, they were of an inferior nature, and the lives of ten thousands of them were not worth the life of one man, even if man were no more immortal than they. "In satisfaction to justice, by way of compensation for injuries, there must be a proportion between the in-

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6 In burnt-offerings and *sacri-* A. M. 4068.
fices for sin thou hast had no plea- A. D. 64.
sure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of

Jer. vi. 20 ; Amos v. 21, 22.—³ Or, *thou hast fitted me*.

jury and the reparation, that justice may be as much exalted and glorified in the one, as it is depressed and debased in the other. But there could be no such proportion between the affront put on the righteousness of God by sin, and the reparation by the blood of bulls, &c." If a nobleman forfeit his head by high treason, his giving up his flocks and herds would not expiate his offence, and satisfy the law. And if the blood of thousands of them would not be an adequate ransom for the life of one man, much less for the lives of all men. They are in their own nature mortal ; man is immortal ; and surely the sacrifice of their temporal, yea, short lives, could be no adequate price for men's everlasting lives. The appointment of these sacrifices, however, was not made in vain. Though they could not take away sin, they had their use. 1st, They purified the flesh from ceremonial defilement, and gave, or restored, to those that offered them, a right to the benefits of the Mosaic dispensation, namely, access to God in his worship, and life and prosperity in the land of Canaan ; although they did not purify their conscience so as to procure them admission into the heavenly Canaan. 2d, They continually represented to sinners the curse and sentence of the law, or that death was the wages of sin. For although there was allowed in them a *commutation*, namely, that the sinner himself should not die, but the beast sacrificed in his stead ; yet they all bore testimony to the sacred truth, that, *in the judgment of God, they who commit sin are worthy of death*. 3d, They were intended, as we have repeatedly seen, to be typical of the sacrifice of Christ ; and the temporal benefits obtained for the Israelites by them were emblematical of the everlasting blessings procured for believers by his sacrifice.

Verses 5-10. *Wherefore*—As if he had said, Because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins, therefore Christ offered himself as a sacrifice to do it. *When he cometh into the world*—That is, when the Messiah is described by David as making his entrance into the world ; *he saith*—He is represented by that inspired writer as saying, *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not*—Accept for a sufficient expiation and full satisfaction for sin ; *but* thou hast provided something of another nature for this purpose ; *thou hast given me a body*—Miraculously formed, and qualified to be an expiatory sacrifice for sin. The words, *a body hast thou prepared me*, are the translation of the LXX. ; but in the Hebrew it is, *Mine ears hast thou opened, or bored* ; an expression which signifies, I have devoted myself to thy perpetual service, and thou hast accepted of me as thy servant, and signified so much by the boring of mine ears. So that, though the words of the translation of the LXX., here used by

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A. M. 4068. the book it is written of me) to do thy
A. D. 64. will, O God.

8 Above, when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 ^b By the which will we are sanctified ¹ through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

11 And every priest standeth ¹ daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, ¹ which can never take away sins:

12 ^a But this man, after he had offered one

^b John xvii. 19; Chapter xiii. 12.—¹ Chapter ix. 12.
^a Numbers xxviii. 3; Chapter vii. 27.—¹ Verse 4.—^m Chap. i. 3; Col. iii. 1.

the apostle, are not the same with those signified by the original Hebrew, the sense is the same; for the *ears* suppose a body to which they belong, and the preparing of a body implies the preparing of the ears, and the obligation of the person for whom a body was prepared, to serve him who prepared it; which the boring of the ear signified. How far the rest of the psalm is applicable to Christ, see the notes there. *Then, &c.*—That is, when the way appointed for the expiation of sin was not perfectly available for that purpose; *I said, Lo, I come*—To make expiation; *in the volume of the book*—That is, according to what is foretold of me in Scripture, even in this very psalm; *to do thy will, O God*—To suffer whatsoever thy justice shall require of me in order to the making of a complete atonement. *Above when he said*—That is, when the psalmist pronounced those words in his name; *Sacrifice, &c., thou wouldest not*—Or thou hast not chosen; *then said he*—In that very instant he subjoined; *Lo, I come to do thy will*—By offering myself a sacrifice for sin. *He taketh away the first, &c.*—That is, by this very act he taketh away the legal, that he may establish the evangelical, dispensation. *By which will*—Namely, that he should become a sacrifice; *we*—Believers under the gospel; *are sanctified*—Are both delivered from the guilt of sin, and dedicated to God in heart and life; yea, are conformed to his image, and made truly holy; *through the offering of the body of Christ*—Which, while it expiates our sins, procures for us the sanctifying Spirit of God, and lays us under an indispensable obligation to die to those sins, the guilt of which required such an expiation, and to live to him who made it. “Here we learn it was by the express will of God that the sacrifice of Christ was appointed a propitiation for the sins of mankind; and it must ever be remembered, that the will of God is the true foundation on which any atonement of sin can be established.

sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on ^{A. M. 4068}
the right hand of God; ^{A. D. 64.}

13 From henceforth expecting ^a till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering ^o he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 ^p This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 ^q And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now, where remission of these is, *there* is no more offering for sin.

^a Psa. cx. 1; Acts ii. 35; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Ch. i. 13.—^o Verse 1.—^p Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Chap. viii. 10, 12.—^q Some copies have, *Then he said, And their.*

Wherefore, since the death of Christ is by God made the propitiation for men's sins, it rests on the foundation of his will, secure from all the objections raised against it, either by erring Christians or by obstinate infidels, on account of our not being able to explain the reasons which determined God to save sinners in that method, rather than in any other.”

Verses 11-18. *And every priest standeth, &c.*—In token of humble service and subjection; *daily*—Morning and evening; *ministering and offering often the same sacrifices*, which shows that these sacrifices can never take away sins—Can never fully expiate them, so as to make it consistent with the justice of God to forgive them to the penitent and believing. *But this man*—*Αυτος δε, but He*, the virtue of whose one sacrifice remains for ever, so that it need not be any more repeated; *sat down on the right hand of God*—As a Son in majesty and honour, and in token of the continuance of his priesthood, and of his dignity there as Lord; *from henceforth*, (*το λοιπον, what remains*), *expecting*—Waiting; *till his enemies be made his footstool*—Till his ministry as High-Priest, and government as King, shall issue according to God's promise, (Psa. cx. 1,) in the utter destruction of his enemies. *For by one offering*—Of himself; (and it appears that he did not need to offer himself more than once;) *he hath perfected for ever*—Hath fully reconciled to God; *them that are sanctified*—Those who in true repentance, living faith, and new obedience, give themselves up to the love and service of God. *Whereof*—Of the perfection of whose sacrifice; *the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us*—Namely, in the form of the new covenant recorded by him Jer. xxxi. 31. *This is the covenant, &c.*—See on chap. viii. 10. In these three verses, the apostle winds up his argument concerning the excellence and perfection of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ. He had proved

A. M. 4068. 19 Having therefore, brethren, ^abold-
A. D. 64. ness ⁴ to enter ² into the holiest by the
blood of Jesus,

20 By ^a a new and living way, which he hath
⁵ consecrated for us, ¹ through the veil, that is
to say, his flesh;

21 And *having* ^a a high-priest over ² the
house of God;

^a Rom. v. 2; Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12.—⁴ Or, liberty.—² Chap. ix. 8, 12.—¹ John x. 9; xiv. 6; Chap. ix. 8.—⁵ Or, new-made.—¹ Chap. ix. 3.—² Chap. iv. 14.—¹ Tim. iii. 15. ² Chap. iv. 16.

this before by a quotation from Jeremiah, which he here repeats, describing the new covenant as now completely ratified, and all the blessings of it secured to us by the one offering of Christ, which renders all other expiatory sacrifices, and any repetition of his own, utterly needless.

Verses 19–22. *Having therefore*—The apostle, having finished the doctrinal part of his epistle, now proceeds to exhortation, deduced from what has been treated of from chap. v. 4. For though there are some occasional intermixtures of doctrines, consonant to those before insisted on, yet his professed design henceforward is to propose to, and press on, the believing Hebrews, such duties as the truths he had insisted on laid a foundation for, and showed to be necessary to be practised. *Having therefore boldness*—The word *παρρησια*, thus rendered, properly means *liberty of speech*; and by an easy figure, *boldness, or confidence*, as it is rendered chap. iii. 6. Here it signifies that boldness which arises from a firm persuasion of our title to appear before God as pardoned persons, through the blood of Christ. *To enter into the holiest*—That is, the true sanctuary, the holy place not made with hands, the immediate gracious presence of God himself in Christ Jesus. Whatever was typically represented in the most holy place of old, we have access to, especially into the favour and friendship of God, and a state of fellowship with him. Of this privilege the blood of Christ, or his sacrifice, is the procuring cause. By this, all causes of distance between God and believers are removed. For on the one hand, it made atonement for our sins, and procured our free justification; and on the other gives peace to our consciences, and removes every discouraging fear of approaching him, whether in his ordinances here, or in his kingdom and glory hereafter. *By a new and living way*—He calls it a new way, because it was but newly made and prepared; belongs to the new covenant, and admits of no decays, but is always new, as to its efficacy and use, as in the day of its first preparation; whereas that of the tabernacle waxed old, and so was prepared for a removal. And he terms it a *living way*, because all that use it are alive to God, and in the way to life everlasting. And this is no other than the way of faith, or confidence in the mercy and promises of God, through the sacrifice of Christ, according to the revelation made thereof in the gospel; *which he hath consecrated*—Pre-

b

22 ² Let us draw near with a true ^a heart, ² in full assurance of faith, ^a having our hearts sprinkled ^a from an evil conscience, and ^b our bodies washed with pure water.

23 ^o Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; for ^d he is faithful that promised:

² Eph. iii. 12; James i. 6; 1 John iii. 21.—^a Chap. ix. 14.—^b Ezek. xxxvi. 25; 2 Cor. vii. 1.—^c Chapter iv. 14. ^d 1 Cor. i. 9; x. 13; 1 Thess. v. 24; 2 Thess. iii. 3; Chapter xi. 11.

pared, dedicated, and established; *through the veil, that is, his flesh*—He refers to the veil that was interposed between the holy and the most holy place of the Jewish tabernacle and temple: see chap. ix. 3. This veil, on our Lord's death, was rent from the top to the bottom, by which the most holy place became visible and accessible to all that were in the outward tabernacle; by which fact was signified, that by virtue of Christ's sacrifice, whereby his flesh was torn and rent, the God of heaven was manifested, and the way to heaven laid open to all true believers. *And having a High-Priest over the house*—Or family; *of God*—Who continually appears in the presence of God, and ever lives to make intercession for us; *let us draw near*—To God; *with a true heart*—In godly sincerity, and with fervent desire after such blessings of the gospel as we have not yet received; *in full assurance of faith*—That we shall find acceptance with God through the mediation of our High-Priest, and the answer of our petitions; *having our hearts sprinkled*—That is, cleansed, by the application of Christ's blood; *from an evil conscience*—Namely, a conscience defiled with the guilt of past sin. See on chap. ix. 14. When the Israelites were ceremonially polluted, they were to be cleansed by sprinkling them with the water of separation, described Num. xix. 2–10; but the sprinkling or cleansing here recommended is not of the body from ceremonial pollution, but of the soul from the guilt and distress of an accusing conscience. This cleansing is effected neither by water nor by the blood of beasts, but by faith in Christ's blood, shed as a sin-offering, whereby the repenting sinner hath a full assurance of pardon. *And our bodies washed with pure water*—All our conversation unblameable and holy, through the influence of God's sanctifying Spirit. This seems to be spoken with an allusion to the high-priest's washing his body with water before he entered the inward tabernacle, Lev. xvi. 4. In that manner also the Levites were purified, (Num. viii. 7.) to prepare them for the service of the sanctuary.

Verses 23–25. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith*—Or, rather, *of our hope*, as the most approved MSS., indeed all but one, read the clause. The apostle referred to that *profession or confession* of their hope of eternal life, which believers made at their baptism. For being God's children, and heirs through faith in Christ, (John i. 12; Gal. iii. 26.) they had an undoubted right to hope for the heavenly

A. M. 4068. 24 And let us consider one another, to
A. D. 64. provoke unto love, and to good works:

25 * Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and † so much the more, as ye see ‡ the day approaching.

26 For † if we sin wilfully † after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judg-

* Acts ii. 42; Jude 19.—† Rom. xiii. 11.—‡ Phil. iv. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 9, 11, 14.—§ Num. xv. 30; Chap. vi. 4.—¶ 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.—‡ Ezek. xxxvi. 5; Zeph. i. 18; iii. 8; 2 Thess. i. 8; Chap. xii. 29.

inheritance: *without wavering*—Without giving way to any doubt or fear in a case where we have such certain and indubitable evidence; or unmoved by the threats of our persecutors. *For he is faithful that promised*—That is, all the promises of God shall be made good to us, if we continue steadfast. *And let us consider one another*—Let us reflect seriously on one another's temptations, trials, infirmities, failings, and other circumstances attending us, that we may judge what influence we can have over one another for our mutual advantage: and especially to *provoke* and excite one another *unto love* to God, his people, and all mankind; and *to good works*—Of all kinds, the proper fruits of love. *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*—For public or social worship; *as the manner of some is*—Either through fear of persecution, or from a vain imagination that they are above external ordinances; *but exhorting one another*—To constancy in the faith, zeal and diligence in all works of piety and virtue; and *so much the more as ye see the day approaching*—That awful day, in which we must appear before the tribunal of God, preceded by the day of death, which is drawing continually nearer, and will fix our character and condition for ever. As also that day of vengeance coming on the Jewish nation, which Christ hath described as so terrible an emblem of the day of final judgment, and the conflagration of the world. From what Christ had said concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the dreadful calamities awaiting the Jews, as events that should happen during the lives of some who had been present with him about thirty years before the date of this epistle, these Hebrews might infer that these judgments were now near, and doubtless might see them approaching, by the appearing of those signs which our Lord had said should precede them.

Verses 26, 27. *For, &c.*—As if he had said, It concerns us to use all means to ensure our perseverance, because apostacy is so dangerous; *if we*—Any of us Christians; *sin wilfully*—By total apostacy from God; (see on chap. vi. 4;) *after we have received the knowledge of the truth*—As it is in Jesus, namely, an experimental and practical knowledge thereof, so as to have been made free thereby from the guilt and power of sin; *there remaineth no more sacri-*

ment and † fiery indignation, which A. M. 4068. shall devour the adversaries. A. D. 64.

28 † He that despised Moses's law, died without mercy † under two or three witnesses:

29 † Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and † hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, † and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

† Chap. ii. 2.—‡ Deut. xvii. 2, 6; xix. 15; Matt. xviii. 16; John viii. 17; 2 Cor. xiii. 1.—§ Chap. ii. 3; xii. 25. ¶ 1 Corinthians xi. 29; Chapter xiii. 20.—‡ Matthew xii. 31, 32; Eph. iv. 30.

fice for sins—None but that which we obstinately reject. "As the apostle, in the former part of the epistle, had proved that the sacrifices of the law were all abolished, and that the only sacrifice for sin remaining was the sacrifice of Christ, it followed that apostates, who wilfully renounced the benefit of that sacrifice, had no sacrifice for sin whatever remaining to them." *But a certain fearful looking for*—*φοβερα δε τις εκδοχη*, a kind of fearful expectation, intimating something inexpressible, such as no heart could conceive or tongue describe. Thus St. Peter, 1 Epist. iv. 17, 18, *What shall be the end of them who obey not the gospel? Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Of judgment and fiery indignation.* The apostle refers both to the final judgment of the great day, when apostates from the religion of Jesus, as well as those who obstinately rejected it, shall be *punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, &c.* 2 Thess. i. 9; and also to the dreadful and fiery indignation which God was about to bring on the unbelieving and obstinate Jews, in the total destruction of their city and temple by sword and fire, devouring them, as *adversaries* to God and his Christ, of all others the most inexcusable. The reader should observe that the apostle lays it down here as certain, that God will not pardon sinners without some sacrifice or satisfaction. For otherwise it would not follow, from there remaining to apostates no more sacrifice for sin, that there must remain to them a dreadful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation. In these last words, the conflagration of the heaven and the earth at the day of judgment seems especially to be referred to.

Verses 26, 29. *He that*—In capital cases, such as by the sins of sabbath-breaking, disobedience to parents, blasphemy, adultery, murder; *despised*—Presumptuously transgressed; *Moses's law, died*—Was put to death; *without mercy*—Without any delay or mitigation of his punishment, if convicted by *two or three witnesses*—See the margin. *Of how much sorer punishment*—Than that of the death of the body; *shall he be thought worthy, who*—By wilful, total apostacy; (to which only it appears that this passage refers;) *hath*, as it were, *trodden under foot the Son of God*—A lawgiver far more honourable than Moses, and the true Messiah, the only Saviour of the

A. M. 4068. 30 For we know him that hath said, A. D. 64. *Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.*

31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

32 But *call to remembrance the former days,*

† Deut. xxxii. 35; Rom. xii. 19.—† Deut. xxxii. 36; Psa. l. 4; cxxxv. 14.—† Luke xii. 5.—† Gal. iii. 4; 2 John 8.

world; him whom God hath exalted above principalities and powers, and whom therefore all mankind ought to exalt and adore in their souls; but who now, by this sort of persons, was esteemed an evil-doer, a seducer; one not in any sense sent of God, but a malefactor, justly condemned and executed for his crimes: herein they *trod under foot the Son of God* with all contempt and scorn. *And hath counted the blood of the covenant*—That is, the blood of Christ, whereby the new covenant was confirmed; *where-with he was sanctified*—Dedicated to God, and taken into covenant with him, and even inwardly renewed in the spirit of his mind; *an unholy*—*Κοινον*, a common thing, of no value or virtue; a worthless thing; not even of so much use to the glory of God as the blood of beasts in legal sacrifices. Observe, reader, those by whom the efficacy of Christ's blood, for the expiation of sin, is denied, may be truly said to make it a *common thing*; *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace*—*Ευβόιας*, having treated with contumely or reproach that Holy Spirit which the grace of God confers upon his people, and which is the author of saving grace to them. Macknight renders it, *Hath insulted the Spirit of grace*; observing, "the apostle means the Holy Spirit, whose gifts were bestowed in the first age on believers, for the confirmation of the gospel. Wherefore if one apostatized in the first age, after having been a witness to the miraculous gifts, much more, after having possessed them himself, he must, like the scribes and Pharisees, have ascribed them to evil spirits; than which a greater indignity could not be done to the Spirit of God."

Verses 30, 31. *For we know him*—As if he had said, We may well think that such shall be punished very severely, because God has declared as much, saying, *Vengeance belongeth unto me*, Deut. xxxii. 35; Psa. xciv. 1, 2. Though this was originally said of the idolatrous nations who oppressed the Israelites, it was very properly applied by the apostle to apostates, being a general maxim of God's government, according to which he will act in all cases where vengeance or punishment is due. *I will recompense*—Recompense is the actual exercise of vengeance, and vengeance is the actual execution of judgment on sinners, according to their desert, without mitigation by mercy. He however oftentimes exercises great patience and forbearance even then, when vengeance might justly be expected. And this commonly adds to the security of wicked men, who take occasion from it to despise all the threatenings of the divine judgments which they

in which, *after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions*;

33 Partly, while ye were made *a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions*; and partly, while *ye became companions of them that were so used.*

† Chap. vi. 4.—† Phil. i. 29, 30; Col. ii. 1.—† 1 Cor. iv. 9. † Phil. i. 7; iv. 14; 1 Thess. ii. 14.

have deserved; concluding from it, that either vengeance doth not belong to God, or that it shall be executed when and where they are not concerned. *And the Lord will judge his people*—If they rebel against him; and that far more rigorously than he will judge the heathen. *It is a fearful thing*—A thing above all others the most to be dreaded; *to fall into the hands*—To be exposed to the avenging justice; *of the living God*—Who, living for ever, can for ever punish, in what degree he pleases, the wretched creatures who have made themselves the objects of his final displeasure.

Verses 32–34. *But*—As if he had said, I trust you will be preserved from so terrible a ruin; and in order that you may, I exhort you to *call to remembrance the former days*—To look back upon past events, which, if duly considered, may be very instructive, and may prove the means of establishing you in your resolution of adhering to the gospel. In particular, reflect on what you have suffered, and how you have been supported and delivered, that you may not despond upon the approach of similar evils, but may still trust in God and persevere in his service; *in which, after you were enlightened*—With the knowledge of God and of his truth; *ye endured*—Courageously sustained, through God's help; *a great fight of afflictions*—A grievous persecution from your unbelieving brethren, and great and various troubles and distresses, on account of your faith in, and profession of, the gospel; and therefore you should not fall off now at last, lest you lose the fruit of all these sufferings. There were various persecutions of the Christians in Judea, particularly the great persecution after the death of Stephen, Acts viii. 1, and Herod's persecution, Acts xii. 1. But perhaps the apostle here refers to the persecution in Judea, mentioned 1 Thess. ii. 14, in which the believing Hebrews showed great love to their suffering brethren, Heb. vi. 10. Their enduring this persecution with fortitude and patience, the apostle calls here *πολλην ἀθλησιν*, a *great combat*, in allusion to the combats in the Grecian games. *Partly, &c.*—Both in respect of your own sufferings and of your sympathy with others in theirs; *while ye were made a gazing-stock*—*θεαριζόμενοι*, made a *public spectacle, or openly exposed, as in a theatre*. See on 1 Cor. iv. 9. *By reproaches*—Cast on you as atheists, or enemies to the true God, for deserting the institutions of Moses; *and afflictions*—Which beset you on that and other accounts; *and partly while ye became companions of them that were so used*—In pitying, owning, visiting, and relieving them who

A. M. 4068. 34 For ye had compassion of me
A. D. 64. ^a in my bonds, and ^b took joyfully the
spoiling of your goods, knowing ^c in yourselves
that ^d ye have in heaven a better and an en-
during substance.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence,
^d which hath great recompense of reward.

36 ^e For ye have need of patience, that,
after ye have done the will of God,

^f ye might receive the promise. A. M. 4068
37 For ^g yet a little while, and ^h he ⁱ he
A. D. 64.
that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

38 Now ^j the just shall live by faith: but if
any man draw back, my soul shall have no
pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them ^k who draw back
unto perdition; but of them that ^l believe to
the saving of the soul.

^a Phil. i. 7; 2 Tim. i. 16.—^b Matt. v. 12; Acts v. 41;
James i. 2.—^c Or, that ye have in yourselves, or, for yourselves.
^d Matt. vi. 20; xix. 21; Luke xii. 33; 1 Tim. vi. 19.—^e Matt.
v. 12; x. 32.

^f Luke xxi. 19; Galatians vi. 9; Chapter xii. 1.—^g Col.
iii. 24; Chapter ix. 15.—^h Luke xviii. 3, 8.—ⁱ Hab. ii. 3, 4.
^j Romans xi. 17.—^k 2 Peter ii. 20, 21.—^l Acts xvi. 30, 31;
1 Thess. v. 9.

were treated in the same cruel manner. *For ye had compassion on me*—Ye sympathized with all your suffering brethren, and with me in particular; *in my bonds*—Both at Jerusalem and at Cesarea; and ye *took joyfully*—For the sake of him who died for you; *the spoiling of your goods*—The loss of your property; *knowing in yourselves*—Or, rather, *knowing that you have for yourselves; in heaven*—Laid up for you there; *a better*, than any which you lose, *and an enduring substance*—Even unspeakable and eternal riches, glory, and felicity, when all the possessions of earth have perished, and all its sorrows have come to a perpetual period.

Verses 35–37. *Therefore*, having formerly behaved with such fortitude, *cast not away your confidence*—As cowardly soldiers cast away their shields, and flee in the day of battle; but since God has supported you under, and brought you through all your sufferings hitherto, with much patience and joy maintain and improve your confidence and courage against all difficulties and dangers; *which hath*—That is, will receive; *great recompense of reward*—That is, a great reward, (namely, eternal glory,) by way of recompense for your obedience. *For ye have need of patience*—Or, of perseverance, as *προμονης* may be properly rendered; that is, ye have need of the continual exercise thereof in well-doing, and waiting for the accomplishment of the promises; *that after ye have done the will of God*—Have conducted yourselves as it is God's will you should, by enduring whatsoever he is pleased to lay upon you; *ye might receive the promise*—The promised reward of glory. *For yet a little while*—*Μικρον οσον οσον, a little, a very little time.* *And he that shall come*—*Ο ερχομενος, he who is coming*; the appellation given by the Jews to Messiah, Matt. xi. 3, *Art thou he, ο ερχομενος, who should come? will come*—As if he had said, Be patient, for it will not be long before he will take you hence by death, and release you from all your trials. Or rather, It will not be long before Christ will come to take vengeance on your persecutors, the unbelieving and obdurate Jews, and deliver you from all the sufferings to which you are exposed from them; *and will not tarry*—Beyond the appointed time. It must be observed, though the apostle in this verse uses some words of the Prophet Habakkuk, (chap. ii. 3,) he doth not introduce them as a quotation from him, containing a prophecy

of any coming of Christ. There is therefore no necessity of endeavouring to show that, as they stand in Habakkuk, they may be interpreted of Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem. In the passage where they are found, the prophet exhorted the Jews to trust in God for deliverance from the Chaldeans, by putting them in mind of the faithfulness of God in performing his promises. Wherefore, as the faithfulness and power of God are a source of consolation to which good men, at all times, may have recourse in their distresses, the apostle might, with great propriety, apply Habakkuk's words, by way of accommodation, to Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem and the Jewish state. Christ had promised to come for that purpose before the generation then living went off the stage; and as the believing Hebrews could entertain no doubt of his being faithful to his promise, the apostle, to encourage them to bear their afflictions with patience, very fitly put them in mind of that event in the words of this prophet, because it assured them that the power of their persecutors would soon be at an end.

Verses 38, 39. *Now*—That is, in the mean time, as it is there added; *the just, δικαιοι, the righteous*—He that is pardoned and renewed, or justified and regenerated, and who therefore is humble, meek, sincere, resigned to the will of God, and relying on his wisdom, power, goodness, and faithfulness; *shall live*—Shall be supported and preserved even in the midst of surrounding dangers, trials, and troubles, and shall live in God's favour a spiritual and holy life; *by faith*—See on Rom. i. 17; namely, as long as he retains that gift of God. In this passage the prophet, as well as the apostle, speaks of the efficacy of faith to support and comfort a man under temptations and afflictions in such a manner, that he neither faints in the combat, nor withdraws from it. *But if any man*—The words *any man* are not in the original, and certainly are not necessary to be here supplied. The Greek, *και εαν υποσειληται, are, and, or but, if he* (who lived by faith) *draw back*—If he make shipwreck of his faith, and cease to believe and rely on God's promises; or if, by reason of sufferings and temptations, he cease to exercise faith in Christ, and in the truths and promises of the gospel, and in consequence thereof renounce his profession of Christ, and withdraw himself from communion with other professors; *my soul shall*

have—Or rather, *hath*, (the word being in the present tense,) *no pleasure in him*—That is, I withdraw my favour from him, nay, and cast him off in my displeasure. *But we are not*—But I am persuaded that the persons to whom I address my letter, together with myself and my fellow-labourers; are

not of the number of those that draw back unto perdition—Like him who backslides and apostatizes, as mentioned in the preceding verse; *but of them that believe*—That continue in the faith grounded and settled; *to the saving of the soul*—To the attaining of final eternal salvation.

CHAPTER XI.

In this chapter, the apostle, (1.) Describes the nature, excellence, and enlightening efficacy of faith, 1-3, and the necessity of it, 6. (2.) He proposes to the believing Hebrews many illustrious examples of it, which had appeared in holy men, whose history is recorded in their Scriptures, and particularly in Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah, and the other patriarchs, as far as Moses, 4, 5, 7-29. (3.) He mentions many other glorious instances of it, and besides several recorded in their Scriptures refers also to the case of those who suffered under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, 30-40.

A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

NOW faith is the ¹ substance of things hoped for,

the evidence ^a of things not seen : A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

¹ Or, ground, or, confidence.

^a Rom. viii. 24, 25 ; 2 Cor. iv. 18 ; v. 7.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verse 1. Knowing that the believing Hebrews had been, and still were exposed to persecution on account of the gospel, and fearing lest they should be thereby cast down, and moved from their steadfastness, the apostle had endeavoured to support them in their adherence to Christ and his cause by suggesting the declaration whereby the prophet Habakkuk had directed and encouraged the Jews on the approach of the Chaldean invasion, namely, *the just shall live by faith*. He now proceeds to illustrate and improve that saying, by bringing into the view of these Hebrews examples from their own Scriptures of persons who, by a strong faith in God and in his promises, resisted the greatest temptations, sustained the heaviest persecutions, were preserved in imminent dangers, performed most difficult acts of obedience, and at length obtained a distinguished reward. This beautiful discourse, therefore, may be considered as an animated display of the triumphs of faith over the allurements and terrors of the world. But first, to prevent all mistakes, and to show that the noble grace which he speaks of is attainable by men in every age and country, he gives a concise but clear description of it in the following words.

Now faith—As if he had said, Now that you may understand what the faith is of which I speak, and may be encouraged to exercise it, and to persevere in so doing, consider its excellence and efficacy. *It is the substance of things hoped for*—The word *υποστασις*, here rendered *substance*, is translated *confidence*, (Heb. iii. 14,) and may be rendered *subsistence*, which is its etymological meaning, and also *ground, basis, or support*. The meaning of the clause seems to be, that faith is a *confidence* that we shall receive the good things for which we hope, and that by it we enjoy, as it were, a present subsistence or anticipation of them in our souls. It also gives a *foundation or ground* for our expecting them; be-

cause by it we are justified, adopted into God's family, and born of God's Spirit, and, therefore, being his children, are heirs of the things for which we hope; namely, of happiness with Jesus immediately after death, of the glorious resurrection of the body at the time of Christ's second coming, of acquittance and a gracious reception at his judgment-seat, and felicity and glory with him in the new heavens and new earth for ever. *The evidence*—*ελεγχος*, *the conviction, persuasion, or demonstration*, wrought in the mind; *of things not seen*—Of things invisible and eternal, of God and the things of God; giving us an assurance of them in some respects equal to that which our outward senses give us of the things of this visible and temporal world. "The word *ελεγχος*," says Macknight, "denotes *a strict proof, or demonstration*; a proof which thoroughly convinces the understanding, and determines the will. The apostle's meaning is, that faith answers all the purposes of a demonstration, because, being founded on the veracity and power of God, these perfections are to the believer complete evidence of the things which God declares have happened, or are to happen, however much they may be out of the ordinary course of things." The objects of *faith*, therefore, are much more numerous and extensive than those of *hope*: the latter are only things *future*, and apprehended by us to be *good*; whereas those of *faith* are either future, past, or present, and those either good or evil, whether to us or others: such as "the creation of the world without any pre-existing matter to form it of, the destruction of the old world by the deluge, the glory which Christ had with his Father before the world began, his miraculous conception in the womb of his mother, his resurrection from the dead, his exaltation in the human nature to the government of the universe, the sin and punishment of the angels, &c. All which we believe on the testimony of God, as firmly as if they were set before us by the evi-

A. M. 4068. 2 For ^b by it the elders obtained a
A. D. 64. good report.

3 Through faith we understand that ^c the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

^b Verse 39.—^c Gen. i. 1; Psa. xxxiii. 6; John i. 3; Chap. i. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 5.—^d Gen. iv. 4; 1 John iii. 12.

dence of sense." The reader will easily observe, that though the definition of faith here given, and exemplified in the various instances following, undoubtedly includes or implies justifying faith, yet the apostle does not here speak of it as *justifying*, or treat of *justification* at all, but rather shows the efficacy and operation of faith in *them who are justified*. Faith justifies only as it refers to, and depends on Christ, and on the promises of God through him; in which light it is represented Rom. iv., where the apostle professedly describes it. But here is no mention of him as the object of faith: and in several of the instances that follow no notice is taken of him or his salvation, but only of temporal blessings obtained by faith; and yet most of these instances may be considered as evidences of the power of justifying faith, and of its extensive exercise in a course of steady obedience amidst trials and troubles, difficulties and dangers of every kind. Before we proceed to the particular instances of the power of faith here recorded, it may be proper to remark, that it is faith alone which, from the beginning of the world, under all dispensations of divine grace, and all the alterations which have taken place in the modes of divine worship, hath been in the church the chief principle of living unto God, of obtaining the promises, and of inheriting life eternal.

Verse 2. *By it the elders*—Our forefathers, or the pious of former ages; *obtained a good report*—*ἔμαρτυρήσαν*, *received testimony*, of God's approbation of them, or were borne witnesses to by God as persons accepted of him. The word is very comprehensive, implying that God gave a testimony, not only of them, but to them, and they received his testimony, as if it had been the things themselves, of which he testified, verses 4, 5, 39. Hence they also gave testimony to others, and others testified of them. This chapter is a kind of summary of the Old Testament, in which the apostle comprises the designs, labours, sojournings, expectations, martyrdoms of the ancients. The former of them had a long exercise of their patience; the latter suffered shorter, but sharper trials.

Verse 3. *Through faith we understand that the worlds*—Although the expression, *τὰς αἰώνας*, generally signifies *the ages*, yet here the subsequent clause determines its signification to the material fabric of the world, comprehending the sun, moon, and stars, &c., (called by Moses the heaven and the earth, Gen. i. 1,) by whose duration and revolutions time, consisting of days, months, years, and ages, is measured; *were framed*—*Formed, fashioned*, and *finished*, as the word *κατεργασθαι* implies, properly signifying to place the parts of any body or ma-

4 By faith ^d Abel offered unto A. M. 4068.
God a more excellent sacrifice than A. D. 64.

Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead ^e yet ^f speaketh.

^e Gen. iv. 10; Matthew xxiii. 35; Chapter xii. 24.—^f Or, *is yet spoken of*.

chine in their right order, Eph. iv. 12. It, however, also signifies *to make, or produce*, as Heb. x. 5, where it is applied to the body made for Christ. And that it here signifies, not merely the orderly disposition of the parts of the universe, but their production, is plain from the following clause. *By the word of God*—The sole command of God, without any instrument or preceding matter. The word *ῥημα*, here used, properly signifies *a word spoken, or a command*. It is nowhere used in Scripture to denote the Son of God. His proper title is *ὁ Λόγος, the Word*. That the worlds were made by the *word, order, or command of God*, is one of the unseen things which cannot be known but by divine revelation. The apostle, therefore, doubtless refers to the Mosaic account of the creation, Gen. i. 3, &c., where Moses informs us, *God said, let there be light, and there was light, &c.* As the creation is the fountain and specimen of the whole divine economy, so faith in the Creator is the foundation and specimen of all faith; *so that the things which are seen*—The earth and heavens, with all that they contain; *were not made of things which do appear*—Or, *of things appearing, or which did appear*, as *φαίνοντες* may be properly rendered; that is, they were not made of any pre-existing matter, but of matter which God created and formed into the things which we see; and having formed them, he placed them in the beautiful order which they now hold, and impressed on them the motions proper to each, which they have retained ever since. "This account of the origin of things, given by revelation, is very different from the cosmogony of the heathen philosophers, who generally held that the matter of which the worlds were composed was uncreated and eternal; consequently, being independent of God, and not obedient to his will, they supposed it to be the occasion of all the evil that is in the world. But revelation, which teaches us that the things which are seen were not made of matter which did appear before they were made, but of matter which God had brought into existence; by thus establishing the sovereignty of God over matter, hath enlarged our ideas of his power, and strengthened our faith in his promises concerning the felicity of good men in the life to come. For the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, and the glories of the city of the living God, do not, in order to their formation, require more power than the creation of the present universe; and therefore, if we believe that the worlds were formed by the word of God from nothing, every other exercise of faith will be easy to us.

Verse 4. *By faith*—In the divine command or

A. M. 4068. 5 By faith [†] Enoch was translated, A. D. 64. that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

[†] Gen. v. 22, 24; Wisd. iv. 10;

appointment, signified unto him by some supernatural revelation, and by faith in the future Redeemer; *Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice*—The firstlings of his flock, implying both a confession of what his own sins deserved, and a desire of sharing in the great atonement; *than Cain*—Whose offering testified no such faith, but was merely a bare acknowledgment of God as the Creator. Macknight, after Kennicott, translates *πλειονα θυσιαν, more sacrifice*, observing, “In this translation I have followed the critics, who tell us that *πλειονα*, in the comparative degree, signifies more in number rather than more in value.” Accordingly it is said, (Gen. iv. 4,) *Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof*; “that is, beside the fruit of the ground, which was one of his gifts, he also brought the fattest of the firstlings of his flock; so that he offered a sin-offering as well as a meat or bread-offering, and thereby showed both his sense of the divine goodness, and of his own sinfulness. Whereas Cain, having no sense of sin, thought himself obliged to offer nothing but a meat-offering; and made it, perhaps, not of the first-fruits, or of the best of the fruits.” *By which faith Abel obtained* both righteousness, and a testimony of it, *God testifying* visibly that *his gifts* were accepted. Moses does not say in what manner God testified his respect to Abel and his offering, but from Cain’s being very wroth, as we learn Gen. iv. 5, we may believe it was by some outward visible sign. And as in after-times God testified his acceptance of particular sacrifices by sending down fire upon them to consume them, it is probable that he bore witness to Abel’s in that way, thus giving a token that justice seized on the sacrifice instead of the sinner. It is of importance to observe, that God’s acceptance of Abel’s sin-offering is a proof that propitiatory sacrifices were of divine appointment, otherwise his offering, being will-worship, must have been offensive to God, and rejected. Besides, as Hallet justly observes, flesh not being permitted to be eaten by men till after the flood, Abel must have thought it unlawful to kill any animal, unless God had ordered it to be killed as a sacrifice. *And by it*—By his faith; *he, being dead, yet speaketh*—That a sinner is accepted only through faith in the great Sacrifice. See notes on Gen. iv. 3-5.

Verses 5, 6. *By faith*—That is, his firm faith in the being and perfections of God, especially his omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence; his truth, justice, mercy, and goodness; and in consequence of that exemplary holiness which was the fruit of this faith; *Enoch was translated*—*Μετερεθη, was removed*, namely, in a miraculous manner, from among men, God taking him out of this sinful and miserable

6 But without faith *it is impossible* A. M. 4068. to please *him*: for he that cometh A. D. 64. to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Eccles. xlv. 16; xlix. 14.

world to himself. See notes on Gen. v. 22-24. *That he should not see death*—He was changed probably in a moment, as Elijah afterward was, and as those saints shall be that are found alive at Christ’s second coming; *and was not any longer found*—Among men; an expression which implies he was translated privately, and that some (his relations and friends, doubtless) sought for him, as the sons of the prophets sought for Elijah; (2 Kings ii. 17;) *because God had translated him*—To what place these holy men were translated is not said; but their translation in the body, as Macknight observes, is recorded for an example, to assure believers that, in due time, they also shall live in the heavenly country in the body, and to excite them in that assurance to imitate Enoch’s faith. *For before his translation he had this testimony*—From God in his own conscience; *that he pleased God*—The verb *εωαρετησα*, here used, occurs only in this epistle, namely, in this and the following verse, and in chap. xiii. 16, in the passive voice, where it is rendered, *God is well pleased*. Three things are included in our pleasing God; that our persons be accepted; that our duties be approved of; and that we have a testimony that we are righteous or justified, as Abel and Enoch had, and as all true believers have. This is that pleasing of God which is appropriated to faith alone, and which alone shall receive an eternal reward. In a lower sense, however, there may be many acts and duties with which, as to the matter of them, God may be pleased, and which he may reward in this world without faith; as the destruction of the house of Ahab by Jehu. Enoch *walked with God*, and therefore is said to please him; that is, he set God always before him, and thought, spoke, and acted as one that considered he was always under God’s eye, and he made it his daily business to worship and serve him acceptably. *But without faith*—In the being, attributes, superintending providence, and grace of God; *it is impossible*—For a fallen, sinful, and weak creature, such as man is, and such as Enoch undoubtedly was; *to please him*—Though no particular revelation is mentioned as the object of Enoch’s faith, yet from Moses’s telling us that he walked with, or pleased God, it is certain that his faith in those doctrines of religion, which are discoverable by the light of nature, and which are mentioned in this verse, must have been very strong, since it led him habitually to walk with God, so as to please him; *for he that cometh to God*—In prayer, or any other act of worship, or who endeavours to serve him; *must believe that he is*—That he exists; *and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him*—And therefore, that he is wise and mighty, holy, just, and good. “By representing the existence of God and

A. M. 4069. 7 By faith ^a Noah, being warned
A. D. 64. of God of things not seen as yet,
³ moved with fear, ^b prepared an ark to the

^a Gen. vi. 13, 22; Eccles. iv. 17.—³ Or, being wary.

his government of the world as objects of faith, the apostle hath taught us, that the truths of natural religion are equally the objects of faith with the truths of revelation. And this doctrine is just. For the evidence by which the truths of natural religion are supported, being of the same kind with the evidence which supports the truths of revelation, namely, not demonstrative, but probable evidence, the persuasion produced by that kind of evidence in matters of natural religion, is as really *faith* as the persuasion which the same evidence produces in matters of revelation. Further, *the faith* or persuasion of the truths of natural religion which men attain, being as much the effect of attention, impartial search, and prayer, as the faith which they attain of the truths of revelation, it is as much a matter of duty, and as pleasing to God, [as far as it extends,] as faith in the truths of revelation."—Macknight.

Verse 7. *By faith Noah*—The third person mentioned in Scripture, to whom testimony was particularly given that he was righteous; and therefore, the apostle brings him forward as a third example of the power and efficacy of faith, declaring also wherein his faith wrought and was effectual. *Being warned of God*—*Χρηματισθεως*, literally, *being admonished by a divine oracle*, or by a particular and express revelation; of which see Gen. vi. 13; *of things not seen as yet*—That is, not only as being future, but of such a nature that no one had ever seen or heard of any thing like them, namely, the dissolution of the world by a flood, and the destruction of all its inhabitants; yet this discovery Noah received with faith, a discovery which had two parts; the first, a declaration of the purpose of God to destroy the whole world; the second, a direction respecting the steps which Noah was to take for the preservation of his family from the impending ruin. Accordingly it had a two-fold effect on Noah; producing, 1st, Fear from the threatening; 2d, Obedience in building the ark, according to the direction. The application of this example of Noah to these Hebrews was highly proper and reasonable; for they stood now on their trial, whether they would be influenced by faith or unbelief; for here they might see, as in a glass, what would be the effect of the one and the other. *Moved with fear*—*Ευλαβηθεις*, a religious, reverential, and awful fear; *prepared an ark*—Doubtless amidst many insults of profane and wicked men, the preparing of such a vessel, or any thing like it, being a new thing on the earth, and not to be effected without immense labour and cost; *to the saving*—*Εις σωτηριαν*, *for the salvation*; *of his house*—We have here an instance in which salvation signifies a temporal deliverance. *By the which*—*Δι ης*, by which faith, or by which ark, for the relative may agree with either; *he condemned the world*

saving of his house; by the which he A. M. 4069.
condemned the world, and became A. D. 64.
heir of ⁱ the righteousness which is by faith.

^b 1 Pet. iii. 20.—¹ Rom. iii. 22; iv. 13; Phil. iii. 9.

—Who neither believed nor feared. Persons are said, in other places of Scripture, to condemn those against whom they furnish matter of accusation and condemnation. See Tit. iii. 11. It appears, from 2 Pet. ii. 5, that during the time in which the ark was building, Noah was a preacher of righteousness to the people of that generation, calling them to repentance, and warning them of approaching destruction, if they remained impenitent; and that on the ground of the revelation which God had made to him, with which he doubtless acquainted them. But all the time of warning, being carnally secure, and unmoved by his threatenings, they continued to be unbelieving, impenitent, and disobedient, even to the last hour, Matt. xxiv. 38, 39; for which cause they were not only destroyed temporally, but shut up in the everlasting prison, 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. *And became heir*—A partaker of; *the righteousness which is by faith*—And entitled to the rewards thereof in a future and eternal world, of which his temporal deliverance, though so amazing, was only an emblem. "The faith of Noah is proposed for our imitation, to assure us that they who believe and obey God shall be safe in the midst of a fallen world, while the wicked shall be condemned and destroyed."

The apostle has now passed through the first period of Scripture records from the beginning of the world to the flood; and therein hath considered the examples of all, concerning whom it is testified in particular that they pleased God; and he hath shown, that they all pleased him, and were righteous, by faith; and that their faith was effectual to preserve them in that state of divine favour, by enabling them to persevere in the practice of all the duties required of them, notwithstanding the difficulties and oppositions they met with. Hereby he confirms his doctrine respecting the necessity and efficacy of faith, and proves to these Hebrews, that if they did not persevere in their profession, it was because of their unbelief, seeing that true faith would certainly render them steadfast in their adherence to it, whatever difficulties they should have to encounter. Hence he proceeds to the next period, (extending from the renovation of the world in the family of Noah to the giving of the law,) to manifest that in every state of the church the way of pleasing God was one and the same; as also that faith still retained its efficacy under all economical alterations. The person whom, in this period, he first speaks of as having a testimony in the Scripture of being righteous, is Abraham; on whose example, by reason of the eminence of his person, the relation of the Hebrews to him, (deriving from him, under God, all their privileges, temporal and spiritual,) the efficacy of his faith with the various successful exercises of it, he dwells at large from hence to the end of verse 18.

A. M. 4068. 8 By faith ^k Abraham, when he
A. D. 64. was called to go out into a place
which he should after receive for an inher-
itance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing
whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of pro-
mise, as in a strange country, ^l dwelling
in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, ^m the

^k Gen. xii. 1. 4; Acts vii. 2-4.—^l Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3, 18;
xviii. 1, 9.—^m Chap. vi. 17.—ⁿ Chap. xii. 22; xiii. 14.

Verse 8. *By faith*—In the divine promises; *Abraham when he was called*—The call here intended is referred to Gen. xii. 1; to *go out*—From his father's house and native land; *into a place* far distant, which God promised he should afterward receive for an inheritance—Without disputing or murmuring, obeyed; and—Relying on the power and veracity of God; *went out, not knowing whither he went*—Although he did not know the country to which he was going, nor whether it was a good or a bad land.

Verses 9, 10. *By faith, &c.*—Believing that Canaan was promised to him and his seed only as a type of a better country, he acquired no possessions therein except a burying-place, and built no houses there; but *sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country*—*Ἀλλοτριαν, a country belonging to others, dwelling in tents*, as a sojourner; *with Isaac and Jacob*—Who by the same manner of living showed the same faith. Jacob was born fifteen years before the death of Abraham, as is evident from the account of the lives of the patriarchs given in Genesis. Isaac and Jacob are said to be heirs with Abraham of the same promise, because they all had the same interest therein; and Isaac did not receive this inheritance from Abraham, nor Jacob from Isaac, but all of them from God. In saying that Abraham dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the apostle does not mean that they all three dwelt together in one family, and one place, while they were in Canaan; for Abraham and Isaac had separate habitations when Jacob was born. But he means that, while in Canaan, they all dwelt in tents; and by applying this observation to the two latter, as well as to Abraham, the apostle praises their faith likewise. For, since Canaan belonged to them as joint heirs with their father, by dwelling there in tents as sojourners, they showed that they also knew the true meaning of the promise, and looked for a better country than Canaan. *For he looked for*—He expected at length to be led on to; *a city which hath foundations*—Whereas a tent hath none. Grotius thinks Abraham hoped that his posterity should have, in the land of promise, a city that God would prepare for them, in a special manner, namely, Jerusalem. But such an interpretation is, 1st, Expressly contrary to the exposition given by the apostle himself of this expression, verse 16: 2d, It is not suitable to God's dealing with Abraham, and to the nature and effects of the holy patriarch's faith, that he should have nothing to en-

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heirs with him of the same promise: A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

10 For he looked for a ^a city which
hath foundations, ^o whose builder and maker is
God.

11 Through faith also ^p Sara herself received
strength to conceive seed, and ^q was delivered
of a child when she was past age, because she
judged him ^r faithful who had promised.

^o Chap. iii. 4; Rev. xxi. 2, 10.—^p Gen. xvii. 19; xviii. 11,
14; xxi. 2.—^q Luke i. 36.—^r Rom. iv. 21; Chap. x. 23.

courage him in his pilgrimage but a hope that, after many generations, his posterity should have a city to dwell in, in the land of Canaan, wherein the condition of most of them was not better than his in tents; 3d, To suppose that this was only an earthly city, not to be possessed by his posterity until eight hundred years afterward, and that but for a limited time, is utterly to overthrow his faith, the nature of the covenant of God with him, and his being an example to gospel believers, as he is here proposed to be. This city, therefore, which Abraham looked for, is that *heavenly city*, that everlasting mansion which God hath prepared for all true believers with himself after this life; it being the place of their everlasting abode, rest, and refreshment, and that with the expectation of which Abraham and the following patriarchs comforted and supported themselves amidst all the toil and labour of their pilgrimage. *Whose builder and maker is God*—Of which God is the sole contriver, former, and finisher. "The word *τεκτηνης*, translated *builder*, denotes one who constructs any house or machine; an architect. But the other word, *δημιουργος*, signifies one who forms a people by institutions and laws. The apostle joins this term to the other to show that God is both the Founder and the Ruler of that great community of which the spiritual seed of Abraham is to make a part. From God's being both the *Founder* and *Ruler* of the city which the seed of Abraham are to possess, it may justly be inferred that the glory, security, privileges, and pleasures of their state are such, that in comparison of them, the advantages or security found in any city or commonwealth on earth are nothing, and but of a moment's duration."—Macknight.

Verses 11, 12. *Through faith also Sara*—Though at first she laughed at the promise through unbelief; *received strength*—*Εἰς καρδοῦν σπέρματος, for the conception of seed*; and *was delivered of a child when she was past age*—That is, beyond the due time of age for such a purpose, when she was ninety years old, and in the course of nature absolutely incapable of being a mother. "I believe," says Dr. Owen, "that this was not a mere miraculous generation, but that she received a general restoration of her nature for the production of a child, which was before decayed, as Abraham afterward, who, after his body was in a manner dead, received strength to have many children by Keturah." *Because she judged him faithful who had*

A. M. 4068. 12 Therefore sprang there even of
A. D. 64. one, and * him as good as dead, † so
many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as
the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.

13 These all died † in faith, † not having received the promises, but † having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced

* Rom. iv. 19.—† Gen. xxii. 17; Rom. iv. 18.—‡ Gr. according to faith.—§ Verse 39.—¶ Verse 27; John viii. 56.

promised—And that, as he could, so he would fulfil his promise, whatever difficulties might stand in the way of its fulfilment. Therefore—By this mighty principle of faith in her and in Abraham; sprang there even of one—Of one father; and him as good as dead—Till his strength was supernaturally restored; so many as the stars of the sky in multitude—This expression was first used by God himself, who brought Abraham forth abroad, and bade him look toward heaven, and number the stars, if he were able; and then said, So shall thy seed be. It is evident that at the first view, as they were shown to Abraham, not being reduced into constellations, there can perhaps be no greater appearance of what is innumerable, than the stars. Probably too in this comparison not only their number, but their beauty and order were intended. In the other allusion, as the sand which is by the sea-shore, they are declared to be absolutely innumerable. It is not said that they shall be as many as the sand by the sea-shore, but as innumerable, to which the event wonderfully corresponded.

Verse 13. These all—Namely, Abraham and Sarah, with their children, Isaac and Jacob; died in faith—Believing that God would fulfil his promises; but not having received the promises—That is, the things promised, for which the word promises is here put by a usual metonymy. For the promises being made to Abraham personally, and to his immediate descendants, the apostle could not say of them that they died, not having received the promises; but he might justly say, they died not having received the things promised. For they neither received the possession of Canaan before their death, nor the actual exhibition of Christ in the flesh, with the privileges granted to the church in consequence thereof, which the apostle had so fully set forth in the four preceding chapters. This was that better thing provided for us under the New Testament, that they without us should not be made perfect. But having seen them afar off—At a great distance of time; as sailors, says Chrysostom, who after a long voyage, descried at a great distance, with much joy, their intended port. This makes it further evident that the things promised, and not the promises themselves, are intended; for the promises were not afar off, but present with them. They saw the things promised in that they had the idea of them in their minds, understanding in general the mind of God in his promises. And were persuaded of them—Namely, that such things as they had an idea of

them, and † confessed that they were A. M. 4068.
strangers and pilgrims on the earth. A. D. 64.

14 For they that say such things † declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

† Gen. xxiii. 4; xlvii. 9; 1 Chron. xxix. 15; Psa. xxxix. 12; cxix. 19; 1 Pet. i. 17; ii. 11.—‡ Chap. xiii. 14.

were promised, and that the promises would be fulfilled in due time; and embraced them—With the most cordial affection and greatest ardour of mind. The original word denotes the affectionate salutations and embracings of friends after a long separation. We then embrace the promises, and promised blessings, when our hearts cleave to them with confidence, love, complacency, and delight, the never-failing fruit of faith in them. This, and not a mere naked barren assent to divine revelation, was the faith whereby the elders obtained a good report. And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth—That their interest, hopes, and enjoyments were not in this world, but in another which they expected. In other words, These heavenly-minded men, knowing well that a better country than any on earth was promised to them under the figure of Canaan, considered their abode in Canaan and on the earth as a pilgrimage at a distance from their native country; and to show what their expectations were, they always spake of themselves as strangers and pilgrims. See the passages referred to in the margin.

Verses 14–16. For they that say such things—That speak of themselves as strangers and pilgrims; declare plainly that they seek a country—Different from that in which they dwell. Or rather, that they seek their own, or their father's country, as πατρίδα, the word here used, signifies. They show that they keep in view, and long for, their eternal home. And truly if they had been mindful of that country—Ur, of the Chaldees; from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned—From the call of Abraham to the death of Jacob there were two hundred years, so that they had time enough for a return if they had had a mind to it; there was no external difficulty in their way by force or opposition; the way was not so far, but that Abraham sent his servant thither out of Canaan, and Jacob went the same journey with his staff. The fact is, all love to, and desire after their native country, was so mortified in these holy men, by faith influencing them to act in obedience to the call of God, that no remembrance of their first enjoyments, no impressions from their native air and soil, no bonds of consanguinity among the people, nor difficulties they met with in their wanderings, could kindle in them any peculiar love and attachment of their native place. Abraham in particular considered the very thought of returning into Chaldea as a renunciation of his interest in the promises of God; and therefore he made his

A. M. 4068. 16 But now they desire a better
A. D. 64. country, that is, a heavenly: where-
fore God is not ashamed * to be called their
God: for ^b he hath prepared for them a city.
17 By faith ^c Abraham, when he was tried,

offered up Isaac: and he that had ^{A. M. 4068.}
received the promises ^{A. D. 64.} offered up his
only-begotten son,

18 ^d Of whom it was said, * That in Isaac
shall thy seed be called:

^a Exod. iii. 6, 15; Matt. xxii. 32; Acts vii. 32.—^b Phil. iii. 20; Chap. xiii. 14.

^c Gen. xxii. 1, 9.—^d James ii. 21.—^e Or, To.—^f Gen. xxi. 12; Rom. ix. 7.

servant Eliezer swear, that on no pretence whatever would he carry Isaac into Chaldea, Gen. xxiv. 5-8. This absolute renunciation of Chaldea, notwithstanding God gave Abraham *none inheritance in Canaan, no, not so much as to set his foot on*, (Acts vii. 5,) is a strong proof of his knowledge of the true meaning of the promises, and of his faith in them. *But now they desire*—Or *desired*, rather; *ορεγονται*, they strongly desired, they longed after; a better country—Than Chaldea; that is, a heavenly—Which God hath promised to them. This is a full, convincing proof that the patriarchs had a revelation and promise of eternal life and felicity in heaven. *Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God*—Which, speaking after the manner of men, he would have been, if he had provided nothing better for them than what he gave them to enjoy on earth. Or if they had been content with, and attached to, earthly things. But since by faith they sought after a better inheritance, on the possession of which they entered partly at death, and shall more fully enter when their bodies are conformed to Christ's glorious body, therefore God counts it no disparagement to or reflection upon his greatness and majesty, to own himself to be a God in covenant with them, since he has provided eternal life, felicity, and glory for them. Or, as Macknight states the case, "He might have been ashamed of the name [of their God] if Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom as their God he had promised Canaan, but who had died without receiving the possession of it, are not to be raised from the dead to enjoy the country promised under the emblem of Canaan. The reason is, in the sense which the name of God bears in the covenant, he cannot be the God of the dead; he can neither bestow the possession of Canaan, nor of the country prefigured by Canaan, on persons who are dead. But he is the God of the living; he can bestow that country on living persons who, by the re-union of soul and body, are capable of enjoying it. And that he can restore to Abraham and to his seed their bodies, to enable them to enjoy the [heavenly] Canaan, is undeniable; because all who now live in the body, live merely by his will and power; *all live by him.*"

Verses 17, 18. *By faith*—Namely, by believing that God would perform his promise of giving him a numerous issue, notwithstanding that the command here referred to seemed to contradict and preclude the performance of it; *Abraham, when he was tried*—When God made that glorious trial of him, recorded Gen. xxii. 9, 10; *offered up Isaac*—"In this trial of Abraham's faith, there was the highest wisdom. For God, to whom all his creatures be-

long, and who may justly take away the life of any of them by whatever means or instruments he thinks fit, ordered Abraham with his own hands to sacrifice his only son Isaac, in whom all the promises were to be fulfilled, that the greatness of Abraham's understanding, faith, and piety, becoming conspicuous, future generations might know with what propriety God made him the pattern of the justification of mankind, and the father of all believers, for the purpose of their receiving the promises in him. The sacrifice of Isaac was commanded also for the purpose of being a type of the sacrifice of Christ." Isaac, indeed, was not sacrificed: but Abraham, in the full resolution of obeying God's command, proceeded so far as to show that if he had not been hindered by God himself, he would actually have obeyed it. For he bound Isaac, laid him on the altar, *stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son*, Gen. xxii. 10. Now, though Abraham was restrained from killing Isaac, his firm purpose to offer him was considered by God as equivalent to the actual offering of him, Gen. xxii. 16: *Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son.* But if Abraham, at God's command, was willing himself to slay his only son, how much more willing should we be to part with our beloved children and friends when God himself takes them from us by death? *And he that had received the promises*—That his seed should be as the stars, and should inherit Canaan, and that all the nations of the earth should be blessed in his seed; *offered up his only-begotten*—Isaac is so called, because Abraham had no other son by Sarah, his legitimate wife; *of whom it was expressly said*, (Gen. xxi. 12,) *In Isaac shall thy seed be called*—From him shall the blessed seed spring; and in him all the promises which I have made to thy seed shall be fulfilled. Observe here, reader, "1st, Faith must be tried; and of all graces it is most suited to trial: 2d, God proportions trials, for the most part, to the strength of faith: 3d, Great trials, in believers, are an evidence of great faith, though not understood, either by themselves or others, before such trials: 4th, Trials are the only touchstone of faith, without which men must want the best evidence of its sincerity and efficacy, and the best way of testifying it to others. Wherefore, 5th, We ought not to be afraid of trials, because of the admirable advantages of faith by them. See James i. 2, 4; 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. And 6th, Let them be jealous over themselves who have had no special instances of the trial of their faith: 7th, True faith, being tried, will in the issue be victorious."—Owen.

A. M. 4068. 19 Accounting that God ^{was} able
A. D. 64. to raise *him* up, even from the dead;
from whence also he received him in a figure.

20 By faith ^{Isaac} blessed Jacob and Esau
concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying,
^{he} blessed both the sons of Joseph; and ^{he} wor-
shipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff.

^f Rom. iv. 17, 19, 21.—^g Gen. xxvii. 27, 39.—^h Gen. xlviii.
5, 16, 20.—ⁱ Gen. xlvii. 31.

Verse 19. *Accounting*—λογισαμενος, reasoning, or concluding, after weighing all circumstances; that, notwithstanding the apparent contradiction in the divine revelations; *God was able to raise him up*—Although he should be burned to ashes; and would raise him even from the dead—Though, so far as we can learn, there never had been one single instance of a resurrection from the dead in the world. *From whence also he received him in a figure*—That is, Figuratively speaking, or in a figure or resemblance of the resurrection from the dead, as being hindered from slaying him. For Abraham having fully purposed to sacrifice him, and his intention and action being considered by God as a real offering of him up, he might with propriety be said to receive him from the dead when he was stopped from slaying him. This is a much more natural interpretation of the clause than to understand it, as many do, of his receiving him at his birth by a kind of miracle, as it were, from the dead bodies of those who, in a course of nature, had no hope of children; for this could with no propriety be termed a resurrection, or a receiving him from the dead, as he had had no prior existence. To this may be added, that the miraculous birth of Isaac was not so proper a type of a resurrection as his deliverance from death was; being rather an image of a creation than of a resurrection. It may not be improper to observe here, that the phrase εν παραβολη, which we render in a figure, and which is literally, in, or for a parable, is understood by Warburton to signify, that this whole transaction was parabolical, or typical, of the method God would take for the salvation of mankind, namely, in giving up his only-begotten Son to be a sacrifice for the expiation of human guilt. And certainly, when all the circumstances of this extraordinary fact are considered, Abraham's offering up Isaac will appear to be a most apt emblem of the sacrifice of the Son of God. "Isaac was Abraham's only-begotten. This only-begotten son he voluntarily gave unto death at the commandment of God: Isaac bare the wood on which he was to be burned as a sacrifice, and consented to be offered up; for he made no resistance when his father bound him, which shows that Abraham had made known to him the divine command. Three days having passed between God's order to sacrifice Isaac, and the revoking of that order, Isaac may be said to have been dead three days. Lastly, his deliverance, when on the point of being slain, was, as the apostle observes, equal to a resurrection. In all these respects, this

22 By faith ^{Joseph}, when he died, A. M. 4068.
^{he} made mention of the departing of A. D. 64.
the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith ^{Moses}, when he was born, was
hid three months of his parents, because they
saw *he was* a proper child; and they were
not afraid of the king's ^{commandment}.

^k Gen. l. 24, 25; Exod. xiii. 19.—^l Or, remembered.—^m Exod.
ii. 2; Acts vii. 20.—ⁿ Exod. i. 16, 22.

transaction was a fit emblem of the death of the Son of God as a sacrifice, and of his resurrection on the third day. And it is probable that after Isaac was offered, when God confirmed his promises to Abraham by an oath, he showed him that his seed, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, was to die as a sacrifice for the sin of the world; and that he had commanded him to offer up Isaac to prefigure that great event, and to raise in mankind an expectation of it. How, otherwise, can we understand our Lord's words to the Jews, *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad?* For Christ's day denotes the things done by Christ in his day, and especially his dying as a sacrifice for sin."—Macknight.

Verses 20, 21. *By faith*—By firmly believing what God had revealed unto him concerning the future state of his children; *Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau*—Prophetically foretold the particular blessings they should receive, preferring the younger before the elder. See notes on Gen. xxvii. 6-40. *By faith Jacob, when a dying*—That is, when near death, believing that God would make good his promise of giving his posterity the land of Canaan; *blessed both the sons of Joseph*—Foretelling that two tribes should spring from these two sons; and that the tribe of Ephraim, the younger, should be more powerful than the tribe of Manasseh, the elder; and *worshipped*—Acknowledged God's goodness to him, which he had so long experienced; *leaning*—Or bowing down; *on the top of his staff*—In the passage referred to, (Gen. xlvii. 31,) it is said, according to our version, *Israel bowed himself upon his bed's head*; but the apostle says here, *He worshipped upon the top of his staff*; which agrees with the Greek and Syriac translation. It seems, as Hallet observes, the word טפה, used in Genesis, signifies either a bed or a staff; and the passages may be reconciled by supposing that he was sitting on the side of the bed when he blessed these sons of Joseph, and leaned on the top of his staff for support, being very old and feeble.

Verse 22. *By faith*—In God's promise, to give Canaan to the posterity of Jacob; *Joseph, when he died*—Τελευτων, ending his life; *made mention of the departing of Israel*—Namely, out of Egypt, as an event which would certainly take place; and *gave commandment concerning his bones*—To be carried into the land of promise, thereby testifying his joint interest with them in the promises of God.

Verse 23. *By faith Moses*—As if he had said, The

A. M. 4068. 24 By faith ^a Moses, when he was
A. D. 64. come to years, refused to be called
the son of Pharaoh's daughter ;

25 ^o Choosing rather to suffer affliction
with the people of God, than to enjoy

^a Exod. ii. 10, 11.—^o Psa. lxxxiv. 10.—^p Chap. xiii. 13.

parents of Moses believing, when he was a child, that God would make use of him at a future period, for some extraordinary service to his people ; *hid him three months*—In their own house, to preserve him from falling a sacrifice to the cruelty of Pharaoh. It appears by this, that both his parents were engaged in the work of concealing him, although his mother only is mentioned, Exod. ii. 2 ; *because they saw he was a proper child*—Greek, *ειδον αεινον το παιδιον, they saw the child beautiful* ; and doubtless through a divine presage of things to come, and not merely from his beauty, believed that God had designed him for some singular usefulness. *And they were not afraid of the king's commandment*—Requiring all Israelitish parents, on pain of death, to give up their male children that they might be thrown into the river. Of Moses's beauty, see note on Acts vii. 20.

Verses 24–26. *By faith Moses*—None in the old world was more signalized by Providence in his birth, education, and actions, than Moses ; hence his renown was both then and ever after very great ; *when he was come to years*—*Μεγας γενομενος, when he became great* ; Syriac, *when he was a man*. The word may respect either state and condition, or time of life and stature. To become *great*, is in Scripture and common speech, to become so in wealth, honour, or power, and so Moses was become great in the court of Pharaoh ; and hence the greatness of his self-denial here commended. But although this is true, and is a circumstance which greatly commends his faith, yet it is not primarily intended in this expression ; for having declared the faith of his parents, and the providence of God toward him in his infancy, in the foregoing verse, the apostle here shows what his own disposition and practice was, after he was grown up to years of understanding. The expression is the same with that used by the LXX. Exod. ii. 11, where we read, *In those days when Moses was grown*. The time referred to seems to have been that mentioned by Stephen, Acts vii. 7, when he left the court of Pharaoh, and visited his brethren, being learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and full forty years old ; *refused to be called*—Any longer, as he had before been ; *the son of Pharaoh's daughter*—It is not said in the history that Moses made this refusal formally, but he did it in effect by his actions ; he boldly professed himself an Israelite, and interposed to vindicate his brethren from their oppression ; at the same time leaving Pharaoh's court, and (after killing the Egyptian who had smitten a Hebrew) fleeing into the land of Midian. And though he afterward returned to Egypt, he did not reside with Pharaoh's daughter as formerly, but went among his afflicted brethren, and never after-

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the pleasures of sin for a season ; A. M. 4068.

26 Esteeming ^p the reproach ^r of ^a Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt : for he had respect unto ^q the recompense of the reward.

^r Or, for Christ.—^q Chap. x. 35.

ward forsook them ; *choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God*—Greek, *συγκατακλιθησθαι, to be evil entreated*, or pressed with things evil and grievous. What the afflictions and sufferings of the people of God were at that time in Egypt is well known : but it does not appear that it was required of Moses to work in the kilns and furnaces with his brethren ; but considering their woful condition he sympathized with them, and was willing to suffer with them whatever they might be exposed to in the course of divine providence. To account for this exercise of faith in Moses, we must suppose that in his childhood and youth he had often conversed with his parents and with the Israelites, of whom he knew himself to be one by his circumcision ; and that they had given him the knowledge of the true God, the God of their fathers, and of the promises which God had made to their nation as his people. *Than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*—*Προσκαιρον εχειν αμαρτιας απολασιν, literally, to have the temporary fruition, or enjoyment of sin*. The enjoyment of sin is therefore said to be temporary, or for a season, because it is subject to a thousand interruptions and reverses in this life, unavoidably ends with it, and is followed, if repentance prevent not, with everlasting misery. Thus were things truly represented to the thoughts of Moses ; he did not shut his eyes on calamities to be endured on the one hand, nor suffer himself to be imposed upon by flattering appearances on the other. He omitted no circumstance that might produce a right choice. He considered the worst thing belonging to the people of God, which is their affliction, and the best of the world, which is but the vanishing pleasure of sin ; and he preferred the worst of the one above the best of the other. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ*—So he terms the infamy that he was or might be exposed to, by acknowledging himself one of the Israelites, whom Christ had been pleased to take under his special protection. Or he may mean the scoffs cast on the Israelites for expecting the Messiah to arise among them : *greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*—Though then a very opulent kingdom. It is here intimated, that if Moses had continued in the court of Egypt, as a son of Pharaoh's daughter, he might have had the free use of the king's treasures, and therewith might have procured to himself every sensual enjoyment. *For he had respect unto*—*Απεβλεπε, he looked off*, from all those perishing treasures, and beyond all those temporal hardships ; *unto the recompense of reward*—Not to an inheritance in Canaan : he had no warrant from God to look for this, nor did he ever attain it ; but what his believing ancestors looked for, a future state of happiness in heaven.

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A. M. 4068. 27 By faith [†] he forsook Egypt,
A. D. 64. not fearing the wrath of the king:
for he endured, as [†] seeing him who is invisible.

28 Through faith [†] he kept the passover, and
the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed
the firstborn should touch them.

[†] Exod. x. 28, 29; xii. 37; xiii. 17, 18.— Verse 13.

Verse 27. *By faith*—Namely, in the power of God to preserve and conduct him and them, notwithstanding Pharaoh's rage and threatening; *he forsook Egypt*—Taking all the Israelites with him; *not fearing the wrath of the king*—As he did many years before, when he fled from Egypt into Midian: see Exod. ii. 14, 15. *For he endured*—Continued resolute and immovable; *as seeing him who is invisible*—Keeping the eye of his mind continually fixed on that great invisible Being, whose presence and friendship is of such importance, that the person who fixes his regards on him, will never by any consideration be influenced knowingly to offend him, nor be much impressed with the fear of any person or thing that would tempt him to do this. This character of God is here given with peculiar propriety. Moses was now in that condition, and had those difficulties to encounter, wherein he continually stood in need of divine power and assistance: whence this should come he could not discern by his senses: his bodily eye could behold no present assistant; for God was invisible: but he saw him by faith, whom he could not see with his bodily eyes, and thus seeing him he found him a present help, no less than if he had been manifest to his senses. A double act of Moses's faith is intended herein; 1st, A clear, distinct view and apprehension of God's omnipresence, power, and faithfulness; and, 2d, A steady trust in him on account of these perfections. This he relied on, to this he trusted, that God was everywhere present with him, able to protect and assist him, and faithful to his promises. Of these things he had as certain a persuasion, as if he had seen God working with him and for him with his bodily eyes. This sense of God he continually had recourse to in all his hazards and difficulties, and thereby endured courageously to the end.

Verses 28, 29. *Through faith*—From a lively apprehension and firm persuasion of the benefits signified and sealed thereby, and especially that God would assuredly send his angel on the vindictive design predicted, and would spare the houses properly distinguished; see Exod. xii. 12, 23; *he kept the passover and the sprinkling*—Or pouring forth, rather; *of blood*—Namely, that of the paschal lamb, which he sprinkled on the lintels and the posts of the doors, as the mark of committing those who dwelt under such roofs to the divine protection; *that he who destroyed the firstborn*—That is, the angel, whom God employed in that work as the executioner of his judgments, as he did afterward in the destruction of Sennacherib's army, and of Sodom; *should not touch them*—That is, the Israelites or their cattle.

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29 By faith [†] they passed through A. M. 4068.
the Red sea as by dry land: A. D. 64.
which the Egyptians assaying to do, were
drowned.

30 By faith [†] the walls of Jericho fell down,
after they were compassed about seven days.

[†] Exod. xii. 21, &c.—Exod. xiv. 22, 29.—Josh. vi. 20.

By faith they—Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites; *passed through the Red sea*—That part of the Ethiopic ocean which lies between Egypt and Arabia. In the Hebrew it is constantly called סִיָּהּ יָם, *the sea of sedges, reeds or canes*, from the multitude growing on its shore, as to this day. The Greeks called it *ερυθρατος*, or *ερυθρα*, *red*, not from the red colour of the waters, appearing so from the sand or the sun, but because it washed the borders of *Edom*, which signifies *red: as by dry land*—As sedately as if they had marched on dry land, while its waters, by the divine command, divided and left the channel bare to them, so that they easily completed their march through it, and arrived safely on the opposite shore: *which the Egyptians, assaying to do, were destroyed*—*κατεποδησαν*, *were drowned, swallowed up*. This attempt of the Egyptians was the greatest height of folly and presumption that ever obdurate sinners arrived at in this world. They had seen all the mighty works which God had wrought in behalf of his people among them; they and their country were almost consumed with the plagues and judgments that were inflicted on them; and yet now, beholding this wonderful work of God in opening the sea to receive his people from their pursuit, they would make a venture, (as the original expression, *πειραν λαβοντες*, signifies,) to follow them into it. Vain and desperate attempt! and a high evidence of infatuation! It is one of the most signal examples of blindness of mind, confirmed by judicial hardness of heart, that is upon record in the whole book of God; nor is there any monument of equal folly and infatuation among the annals of time. Thus far the examples are cited from Genesis and Exodus; those that follow are from the former and the latter prophets.

Verse 30. *By faith*—The faith of Joshua and the Israelites in God's promise; *the walls of Jericho fell down*—Being smitten by the hand of God, without any human force; *after they were compassed about*—In solemn silence, according to the divine command; *seven days*—How absurd a spectacle soever their procession might appear to the besieged. "As the land of Canaan belonged to the Israelites by a grant from God, the possessor of heaven and earth, it was proper that the first city which resisted them should be taken in such a manner as to demonstrate the truth of their title. And therefore God did not order them to attack Jericho with engines of war, but he ordered the priests, his immediate ministers, to carry the ark, containing the *tables of his covenant*, round the city daily for seven days, Josh. vi. 13; and to sound trumpets of rams' horns, as summoning the inhabitants in the name of the God of

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A. M. 4068. 31 By faith ⁷ the harlot Rahab
A. D. 64. perished not with them ⁶ that believed
not, when ² she had received the spies with
peace.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time
would fail me to tell of ⁶ Gideon, and of ^b Ba-
rak, and of ^o Samson, and of ^d Jephthae, of
^o David also, and ^f Samuel, and of the prophets:

⁷ Josh. vi. 23; James ii. 25.—^a Or, that were disobedient.
⁶ Josh. i. 1.—^b Judges vi. 11.—^c Judges iv. 6.—^d Judges
xiii. 24.—^e Judges xi. 1; xii. 7.—^f 1 Samuel xvi. 1, 13;
xvii. 45.—^g 1 Sam. i. 20; xii. 20.—^h 2 Sam. vii. 11, &c.

Israel to surrender; the armed men going before, and the rearward following. And on the seventh day, having surrounded Jericho seven times, they raised a great shout, upon which the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city every man straight before him, verse 20. Thus were the inhabitants of Jericho and all the Canaanites made to know the supremacy and power of the God of Israel, and how vain it was to make any resistance.”—Macknight.

Verse 31. *By faith*—Expressed in her words, recorded Josh. ii. 9-11, *I know that the Lord hath given you the land, &c.; the harlot Rahab*—That is, who had once been a harlot; but after she believed in the true God, it is reasonable to think she amended her manners, as well as repented of the lie by which she deceived the king of Jericho’s messengers. For that faith in the true God, which made her hazard her life in receiving and concealing the spies, must, when she attained to more knowledge, have wrought in her a thorough reformation; *perished not with them that believed not*—With the rest of the Canaanites in that city, among whom she dwelt; *when she had received the spies*—Hospitably, and dismissed them in *peace*, when an alarm was taken by her fellow-citizens, and they searched for them to destroy them.

Verse 32. *And what shall I more say*—On this copious, this inexhaustible subject? *For the time would fail me*—If I should attempt to discourse at large; *of Gideon*—Who with a small band of men cut off so many thousands of the Midianites; and *Barak*—Who, through faith in the prophecy of Deborah, freed Israel from the oppression of Jabin, and routed Sisera his general; and *Samson*—Who, through faith in the power of God, slew so many thousands of the Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass, and performed many other astonishing achievements; and *of Jephthae*—Who, through believing God’s promise to Abraham, that his posterity should possess the land of Canaan, (see Judg. xi. 24,) and through obeying the divine impulse, which moved him to fight against the Ammonites, obtained a great victory over these enemies of God’s people. *Of David also*—Whose faith was manifested, as in his many other heroic acts, so especially in his combat with Goliath: and even of *Samuel*—Who, though a prophet and a judge, yet led on the armies of the

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33 Who through faith subdued A. M. 4068.
kingdoms, wrought righteousness, A. D. 64.
⁶ obtained promises, ^b stopped the mouths of
lions,

34 ⁱ Quenched the violence of fire, ^k escaped
the edge of the sword, ^l out of weakness were
made strong, waxed valiant in fight, ^m turned
to fight the armies of the aliens.

^a Judges xiv. 5, 6; 1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35; Dan. vi. 22.—^b Dan.
iii. 25.—^c 1 Sam. xx. 1; 1 Kings xix. 3; 2 Kings vi. 16.
^d 2 Kings xx. 7, &c.; Job xlii. 10; Psa. vi. 8.—^e Judges xv.
8, 15; 1 Sam. xiv. 13, &c.; xvii. 51, 52; 3 Sam. viii. 1, &c.

Lord on a remarkable occasion, to an illustrious victory: *and of the prophets*—After Samuel, the prophets are properly mentioned: David also was a prophet, but he was a king too. By the prophets he especially intended Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, &c., including likewise the believers who lived in their days.

Verses 33, 34. *Who through faith subdued kingdoms*—As Joshua, the Judges, David, and others; *wrought righteousness*—Lived righteous and holy lives, and administered justice impartially, 1 Sam. xii. 3-5. *Obtained promises*—Namely, of particular mercies, as Sarah, Hannah, Manoah, and the prophets in general, both for themselves, and to deliver to others; *stopped the mouths of lions*—By their faith prevailed with God to do it, as Daniel, Dan. vi. 22: *quenched the violence of fire*—As Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Dan. iii. He does not say they quenched fire, which may be done by natural means, but they took off, restrained the violence, the power of fire with respect to themselves. The fire continued still, and retained its burning power, for it slew the men that cast them into the furnace. But by faith they disarmed it of its power to hurt themselves, so that not one hair of their heads was singed. To these examples, whence the nature of faith clearly appears, those more ancient ones are subjoined, (by a transposition and in an inverted order,) which receive light from these. *Jephthae escaped the edge of the sword*; *Samson out of weakness was made strong*; *Barak became valiant in fight*; *Gideon put to flight the armies of the aliens*. Faith animates to the most heroic enterprises, both civil and military. Faith overcomes all impediments, effects the greatest things, attains to the very best, and inverts, by its miraculous power, the very course of nature. One thing, however, is necessary to be observed by the reader, namely, that these celebrated worthies are not represented by the apostle as being justified by their faith, but only as performing miracles, and heroic, valiant actions by it: nor are they all commended for their good conduct in general; for several of them failed in their duty in divers instances, through the want of an abiding principle of faith and holiness in their hearts, even as the Israelites in general, who by faith had passed through the Red sea, lost their faith, rebelled, and were doomed to die in the wilderness.

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A. M. 4068. 35 ^a Women received their dead
A. D. 64. raised to life again: and others
were °tortured, not accepting deliverance;
that they might obtain a better resurrec-
tion:

36 ^p And others had trial of *cruel mockings*
and scourgings, yea, moreover ^q of bonds and
imprisonment:

^a 1 Kings xvii. 22; 2 Kings iv. 35.—^o 2 Mac. vi. 19, 28;
vii. 7, &c.; Acts xxii. 25.—^p 2 Mac. vii. 1, 7.—^q Gen. xxxix.
20; Jer. xx. 2; xxxvii. 15.

Verses 35, 36. *Women*, naturally weak, *received their dead children raised to life again*—Compare 1 Kings xvii. 22, 23; 2 Kings iv. 36, 37; and *others*—Particularly seven children and one pious and holy mother; *were tortured*—In the most inhuman manner, to compel them to renounce their religion, and be guilty of idolatry. See the margin. Thus from those who acted great things the apostle rises higher, even to those who showed the power of faith by suffering; *not accepting deliverance*—When it was offered them on sinful terms, nor even riches and preferments added to the proposal; *that they might obtain a better resurrection*—A resurrection to a better life than that they were to lose, and a higher reward than they could have received had they not endured these afflictions; seeing the greater their sufferings, the greater would be their felicity and glory hereafter; and *others*—In the same glorious cause; *had trial of cruel mockings*—As Samson before Dagon, when the Philistines had put out his eyes; and doubtless hundreds of others, whose names and trials have not been recorded; and *scourgings*—Jeremiah was beaten by Pashur, Jer. xx. 2; and by the princes, chap. xxxvii. 15: but scourging was so frequent a punishment, both alone and before a capital execution, that it is probable it was inflicted on many pious persons; *moreover, of bonds and imprisonments*—Joseph was cast into a prison, Jeremiah was let down into a dungeon full of mire, Jer. xxxvii. 13, 16; xxxviii. 6; and Micaiah was imprisoned by Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 27.

Verses 37, 38. *They were stoned*—As Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. See also Matt. xxiii. 31; *they were sawn asunder*—As, according to the tradition of the Jews, Isaiah was by Manasseh; *were tempted*—With offers of deliverance; but remaining steadfast, were then *slain with the sword*—As also were the eighty-five priests slain by Doeg, 1 Sam. xxii. 18; and the prophets, of whose slaughter by the sword Elijah complains, 1 Kings xix. 10. Or, as *πειρασθησαν* may be rendered, *they were tried*, and that in every possible way; by threatenings, reproaches, tortures, the variety of which cannot be expressed: and again by promises and allurements. *They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins*—Their outward condition was poor, mean, and contemptible; their clothing being no better than the unwrought skins of sheep and goats. Nothing is here intimated of their choosing

37 ^r They were stoned, they were ^s sawn
A. M. 4068. asunder, were tempted, were ^t slain
A. D. 64. with the sword: ^u they wandered about
' in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute,
afflicted, tormented;

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy :)
they wandered in deserts, and *in mountains*,
and ^v *in dens and caves of the earth*.

^r 1 Kings xxi. 13; 2 Chron. xxiv. 21; Acts vii. 58; xiv. 19.
^s 2 Kings i. 8; Matt. iii. 4.—^t Zech. xiii. 4.—^u 1 Kings
xxiii. 4; xix. 9.

mean clothing, as a testimony of mortification, but they were compelled by necessity to use such as they could find or obtain. Thus have the saints of God, in sundry seasons, been reduced to the utmost extremities of poverty and want. But there is such a satisfaction in the exercise of faith and obedience, and such internal consolation attending a state of suffering for the sake of truth and godliness, as quite overbalance all the outward evils that can be undergone for the profession of them: and there is a future state of eternal rewards and punishments, which will set all things right, to the glory of divine justice, and the everlasting honour of the sufferers. *Being destitute*—That is, as Dr. Owen interprets it, of friends, and of all means of relief from them; *afflicted*—Various ways; the former word declares what was absent, what they had not as to outward supplies and comforts; this declares what was present with them, the various evils and positive sufferings inflicted on them; *tormented*—*Κακωχόμενοι*, *malè habiti*, or *malè vexati*, badly treated; that is, in their wandering condition they met with bad treatment continually, all sorts of persons taking occasion to vex and press them with various evils. *Of whom*—Of whose society, example, prayers, instructions; *the world was not worthy*—It did not deserve so great a blessing. The world thinks them not worthy of it, to live in it, or at least to enjoy any name or place among the men of it; but whatever they think, we know that this testimony of the apostle is true, and the world will one day confess it to be so. The design of the apostle is to obviate an objection, that these persons were justly cast out, as not worthy of the society of mankind, and this he does by a contrary assertion, that the world was not worthy of them; not worthy to have converse with them, or of those mercies and blessings which accompany this sort of persons, where they have a quiet habitation. *They wandered in deserts, &c.*—Being driven from cities, towns, and villages, and all inhabited places, partly by law, and partly by force, these servants of the living God were compelled to wander in such as were solitary, wild, and desert, and to take up with *dens and caves* for their shelter. And instances of the same kind have been multiplied in the pagan and antichristian persecutions of the churches of the New Testament; but that no countenance is here given to an *hermetical* life, voluntarily chosen, much less to the horrible abuse of it

A. M. 4068. 39 And these all, ^x having obtained
A. D. 64. a good report through faith, received
not the promise :

^x Verses 2, 13.—^o Or, *foreseen*.—^y Chap. vii. 22 ; viii. 6.

under the papacy, is too evident to need being here insisted on.

Verse 39. *These all, having obtained a good report*—*Μαρτυρηθέντες, being witnessed unto*, as persons who did or suffered great things by faith. The expression does not imply that all the Israelitish judges, captains, and other worthies mentioned in this chapter, as well as the ancients, were truly righteous persons, justified by their faith, and made heirs of eternal salvation; for the apostle's design in this part of his epistle being to show, by examples from the Jewish Scriptures, the influence which faith in the divine revelations and promises hath to excite men to perform those difficult and dangerous enterprises which he assigns to them in particular, the witness which was borne to some of them means only the praise which was given to them in Scripture on account of the faith which they showed in performing these particular great actions. *Received not the promise*—The great promised blessings, namely, Christ the promised seed, come in the flesh, as the accomplishment of all the types and shadows, whether of the Mosaic or the patriarchal dispensation. They received the promise that the Messiah should come, as is said of Abraham, (verse 17,) but did not receive the accomplishment of it. This the apostle positively asserts; but that the Christians in his days had received it, as is signified verse 40. "It is therefore not only untrue and unsafe," as Dr. Owen observes, "but contrary to the fundamental principles of our religion, the faith of Christians in all ages, and the design of the apostle in this whole epistle, to interpret this promise, as some do, of any thing but the coming of Christ in the flesh, of his accomplishment of the work of our redemption, with the unspeakable privileges and advantages that the church hath received thereby. That this promise was made to the elders from the beginning of the world, that it was not actually accomplished to them, being necessarily confined to one season, called the *fulness of time*, and that herein lies the great difference of the two states of the church, that under the Old Testament and that under the New, with the prerogative of the latter above the former, are such weighty sacred truths, that without an acknowledgment of them no important doctrine, either of the Old Testament or of the New, can be rightly understood. This then was the state of believers under the Old Testament; they had the promise of the exhibition of Christ, the Son of God, in the flesh, for the redemption of the church; this promise they received, saw afar off, as to its actual accomplishment, were persuaded of the truth of it, and embraced it, verse 13. The actual accomplishment of it they desired, longed for, and looked after, (Luke x. 24,) inquiring diligently into the grace of God contained therein, 1 Pet. i. 11-13. Hereby they enjoyed the benefits of it, even as we do; yet they received not its actual accomplishment in the com-

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40 God having ^o provided ^y some A. M. 4068.
better thing for us, that they with- A. D. 64.
out us should not be ^x made perfect.

^x Chap. v. 9 ; xii. 23 ; Rev. vi. 11.

ing of Christ, the reason of which the apostle gives in the next verse.

Verse 40. *God having provided some better thing for us*—Believers under the gospel, than any bestowed upon them, which *better thing* is Christ himself manifest in the flesh, with the various privileges and blessings of the gospel dispensation, far exceeding those of the two dispensations that preceded it. For, as the divine last quoted further observes, "It ought to be put out of question with all Christians, that it is the actual exhibition of the Son of God in the flesh, the coming of the promised seed, with his accomplishment of the work of redemption, and all the privileges of the church, in light, grace, liberty, spiritual worship, with the boldness of access to God that ensued thereon, which is intended. For were not these the things which they *received not* under the Old Testament? Were not these the things which were promised from the beginning; which were expected, longed for, and desired by all believers of old, who yet saw them only *afar off*, though through faith they were saved by virtue of them? And are not these the things whereby the church state of the gospel was perfected; the things alone wherein our state is better than theirs? For, as to outward appearances of things, they had more glory, costly ceremonies, and splendour in their worship, than is appointed in the Christian Church; and their worldly prosperity was, for a long season, very great, much exceeding any thing that the Christian Church enjoyed in the apostle's days. To deny, therefore, these to be the better things that God provided for us, is to overthrow the faith of the Old Testament and the New." *That they without us should not be made perfect*—The expression *without us*, is the same as without the things which are actually exhibited to us, the things provided for us, and our participation of them. They and we, that is, the believers under the old dispensations, and those under the new, though distributed by divine appointment into distinct states, yet, with respect to the first promise, and the renewal of it to Abraham, are but one church, built on the same foundation, and enlivened by the same Spirit of grace. Wherefore until we, that is, Christian believers, with our privileges and blessings, were added to the church, it could not be said to be made perfect, or to have attained that perfect state which God had designed and prepared for it in the fulness of times, and which the believers in those ages foresaw should be granted to others, but not to themselves. See 1 Pet. i. 11-13. "I cannot but marvel," says Dr. Owen, "that so many have stumbled in the exposition of these words, and involved themselves in difficulties of their own devising; for they are a plain epitome of the whole doctrinal part of the epistle; so as that no intelligent judicious person can avoid the sense which the words tender, unless he divert his mind from the whole scope and design of the apostle."

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CHAPTER XII.

To encourage the Christian Hebrews to faith and patience, under all their trials and afflictions, the apostle represents to them, (1.) That they had not only all these ancient worthies, but Christ himself as their pattern, 1-3. (2.) That all these troubles were kindly appointed by God; and would, through faith and patience, have a happy issue in their sanctification, 4-13. (3.) He recommends peace and holiness as necessary means of fellowship with God; and from the fate of Esau, cautions against profane indulgence of lust, or contempt of spiritual things, 14-17. (4.) Represents the superior excellence of the New Testament dispensation, as requiring proportionate holiness and reverence of God and Christ, 18-20.

A. M. 4068. **WHEREFORE**, seeing we also
A. D. 64.

are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, ^a let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and ^b let us run ^c with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the ¹ author and finisher

^a Col. iii. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 1.—^b 1 Cor. ix. 24; Phil. iii. 13, 14.
^c Rom. xii. 12; Ch. x. 36.—¹ Or, beginner.—^d Luke xxiv. 26;

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. By a bold but rhetorical figure, the apostle, in the beginning of this chapter, represents the patriarchs, judges, kings, prophets, and righteous men, whose faith he had celebrated in the preceding chapter, after having finished their own labours, combats, and sufferings with honour, as standing round and looking on the believing Hebrews while running the Christian race. He therefore exhorts them to exert themselves strenuously in the presence of such spectators. But, above all, to fix their attention on Jesus, whom also he represents as looking on, because his graces, virtues, and sufferings were far more remarkable, and far more worthy of imitation than those of the ancients, whose great actions he had celebrated. *Wherefore seeing we also*—Or *even we*. The apostle joins himself with these Hebrews, not only the better to insinuate the exhortation into their minds thereby, but also to intimate, that the strongest believers stand in need of the encouragement here given; *are compassed about*—Like combatants in the Grecian games; *with so great a cloud*—So great a multitude; *of witnesses*—Of the power of faith; even of all the saints of the Old Testament, who, as it were, stand looking on us in our striving, running, wrestling, and fighting; encouraging us in our duty, and ready to bear witness to our success with their applauses. *Let us lay aside every weight*—As all who run a race take care to do; let us throw off whatever weighs us down, or damps the vigour of our souls, especially all worldly affections and delights; all worldly hopes, fears, cares, and friendships; whatever would encumber us in running, would impede our progress, or draw us from our duty; *and the sin which doth so easily beset us*—Namely, the slavish fear of men, or of any loss or suffering that may befall us; or the sin of our constitution, the sin of our education, or that of our profession. The original expression is, literally, *the sin which stands conveniently around us, or the well-circumstanced sin*; which is well adapted to our circumstances and inclinations; consequently is easily committed; *let us run with patience*—And

of our faith; ^d who, for the joy that ^{A. M. 4068.}
was set before him, endured the ^{A. D. 64.}
cross, despising the shame, and ^e is set down
at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 ^f For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, ^g lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Phil. ii. 8, &c.; 1 Pet. i. 11.—^e Psa. cx. 1; Ch. i. 3, 13; viii. 1;
1 Pet. iii. 22.—^f Matt. x. 24, 25; John xv. 20.—^g Gal. vi. 9.

perseverance, as the word *προμονη* also signifies; *the race*—Of Christian experience, duty, and suffering; *that is set before us*—And is necessary to be run by us before we can obtain the prize.

Verse 2. *Looking*—*ἀφορμῶν*, literally, *looking off*, from all other things; *unto Jesus*—As the wounded Israelites looked to the brazen serpent. Our crucified Lord was prefigured by the lifting up of this; our guilt by the stings of the fiery serpents; and our faith by their looking up to the miraculous remedy; *the author and finisher of our faith*—Who called us out to this strenuous yet glorious enterprise, who animates us by his example, and supports us by his grace, till the season comes in which he shall bestow upon us the promised crown; or who begins it in us, carries it on, and perfects it. *Who for the joy that was set before him*—Namely, that of bringing many sons unto glory; or, who, in consideration of that glory and dignity his human nature should be advanced to, as a reward of his labours and sufferings, and of that satisfaction and pleasure he should take in the happiness of his members, procured for them by his incarnation, life, and death; patiently and willingly *endured the cross*—The ignominious and painful death of crucifixion, with all the torture and misery connected therewith; *despising the shame*—Not accounting the disgrace which attended his sufferings so great an evil as for fear thereof to neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious design. He did not faint because of it; he regarded it not, in comparison of the blessed and glorious effect of his sufferings, which was always in his eye. *And is set down, &c.*—Where there is fulness of joy for evermore. See on chap. i. 3; viii. 1.

Verses 3, 4. *For consider him*—Draw the comparison and think; the Lord bore all this, and shall his servants bear nothing? If he suffered, if he endured such things, why should not we do so also? If he, though so great, so excellent, so infinitely exalted above us; yet *endured such contradiction of sinners*—Such grievous things, both in words and deeds, from his enemies; *against himself*—Ought not we to do so too, if called to it? Consider this;

A. M. 4068. 4 ^b Ye have not yet resisted unto
A. D. 64. blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, ^c My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him :

6 For ^b whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 ¹ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons : for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?

^a 1 Cor. x. 13 ; Chap. x. 32-34.—^d Job v. 17 ; Prov. iii. 11. ^b Psa. xciv. 12 ; cxix. 75 ; Prov. iii. 12 ; James i. 12 ; Rev. iii. 19.—^c Deut. viii. 5 ; 2 Sam. vii. 14 ; Prov. xiii. 24 ; xix. 18 ; xxiii. 13.

lest ye be wearied—By the greatness and length of your trials and sufferings ; *and faint in your minds*—Lest your hearts should fail you, and you should draw back, partially or totally, from the profession of the gospel. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood*—Your sufferings are far short of those which Christ endured. He grants that they had met with many sufferings already, but their enemies had been so restrained that they had not proceeded to take their lives, or to inflict wounds and bruises upon their bodies. By which the apostle intimates two things : 1st, That those who are engaged in the profession of the gospel have no security that they shall not be called to the utmost and last sufferings, by laying down their lives on account of it ; and 2d, That whatever befalls us on this side martyrdom, is to be looked on as a fruit of divine tenderness and mercy. *Striving against sin*—Or against violent and injurious persons, and in opposing men's wicked practices, and your own sinful inclinations, lusts, and passions.

Verses 5-8. *And ye have forgotten, &c.*—As if he had said, If you faint it will appear you have forgotten, *the exhortation*—Wherein God speaks to you with the utmost tenderness ; *as unto his own dear children*, saying, *My son, despise not thou*—Do not slight or make light of ; *the chastening of the Lord*—Do not impute it to chance or to second causes, but see and revere the hand of God in it ; account it a great mercy, and improve it ; *nor faint*, and sink, *when thou art rebuked of him*—But endure it patiently and fruitfully, avoiding the extremes of proud insensibility and entire dejection. *For*—All such dispensations spring from love ; therefore neither despise them nor faint under them ; *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth*—Or correcteth for their faults, in order to their amendment ; and that he may try, exercise, and thereby increase their faith, hope, love, resignation, patience, meekness, and other graces ; and that he may purify them by such fires, as gold and silver are purged in the furnace from their dross. *And scourgeth*—With seeming severity ; *every son whom he receiveth*—Into his peculiar favour. See note on Prov. iii. 11, 12, &c.

b

8 But if ye be without chastisement, A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64. ^a whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence : shall we not much rather be in subjection unto ^a the Father of spirits, and live ?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us ² after their own pleasure ; but he for our profit, ^o that we might be partakers of his holiness.

^a Psa. lxxiii. 1 ; 1 Pet. v. 9.—^b Num. xvi. 22 ; xxvii. 16 ; Job xii. 10 ; Eccles. xii. 7 ; Isa. xlii. 5 ; lvii. 16 ; Zech. xii. 1. ^c Or, as seemed good, or, meet to them.—^d Lev. xi. 44 ; xix. 2 ; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

If ye endure, &c.—If God correct you, and cause you to endure *chastening*, he *dealeth with you as wise and affectionate parents deal with their beloved sons ; for what son is he whom the father*—Namely, the person who performs the duty of a father ; *chasteneth not*—More or less ? There are scarce any children who do not sometimes need correction, and no wise and good parent will always forbear it. *But if ye be without chastisement*—“ If ye pass your lives without experiencing sickness of any kind, or worldly losses, or affliction in your families, or death of children, or injuries from your neighbours, or any of the other troubles to which the children of God are exposed, certainly you are treated by your heavenly Father as *bastards, and not as sons.*” Ye are not owned by God for his children.

Verses 9-11. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh*—Natural parents, from whom we derived our bodies and mortal lives ; *which corrected us*—For our faults ; *and we gave them reverence*—Submitted patiently and quietly to their discipline, neither despising nor fainting under their correction ; and *shall we not much rather*—From the strictest principles of filial duty ; *be in subjection*—Submit with reverence and meekness ; *unto the Father of spirits*—Who has regenerated our souls ; *and live*—And thereby at length obtain eternal life, as a reward of our patience and obedience. “ Here the apostle seems to have had Deut. xxi. 18 in his eye, where the son that was disobedient to his father was ordered to be *put to death*. This is one of the many instances in which the apostle conveys the most forcible reason in a single word.” By distinguishing between the *fathers of our flesh*, and the *Father of our spirits*, the apostle seems to teach us that we derive only our flesh from our parents, but our spirits from God. See Eccles. xii. 7 ; Isa. lvii. 16 ; Zech. xii. 1. *For they verily for a few days*—During our non-age, (so our corrections shall last only during our abode in this world, and how few are even all our days here!) *chastened us after their own pleasure*—As they thought good, though frequently they erred therein, either by too much indulgence or severity ; *but he*—God, always, unques-

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A. M. 4068. 11 Now no chastening for the pre-
A. D. 64.

sent seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

James iii. 18.—Job iv. 3, 4; Isa. xxxv. 3; Eccles. xxv. 23.—Prov. iv. 26, 27.—Or, even.—Gal. vi. 1. Psal. xxxiv. 14; Rom. xii. 18; xiv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 22.

tionably; for our profit—That our corrupt inclinations might be more and more purged out, and a heavenly, divine nature more and more implanted in us; that we might be partakers of his holiness—That is, of himself, his glorious image, and heavenly divine nature. Now no chastening—Whether from God or man; for the present—That is, at the time it is inflicted; seemeth to be joyous, but grievous—Is not cause of joy, but of sorrow, to the person chastised; nevertheless afterward—Not indeed of its own nature, but being blessed and sanctified by God; it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness—That holiness and reformation which gives peace of conscience; to them who are exercised thereby—That receive the exercise as from God, and improve it according to his will. See on Isa. xxxii. 17.

Verses 12-14. Wherefore—Since afflictions are so beneficial; lift up the hands—Whether your own or your brethren's; which hang down—Unable to continue the combat; shake off discouragement, sloth, and indolence, and exert yourselves in your spiritual warfare, and in the performance of your duty; and strengthen, by faith and prayer, the feeble knees—Unable to continue the race. And make straight paths for your own feet—And for those of others; remove every hinderance, every offence out of the way; lest that which is lame—Those who are weak and feeble among you; be turned out of the way—Of truth and duty; but let it rather be healed—Let them rather be delivered from their fears and dejections, and be confirmed in their Christian course. Follow peace with all men—As much as in you lieth; do not willingly or unnecessarily give offence to any, and be not easily offended with others; bear and forbear, for the sake of peace and mutual love; and holiness—Internal and external, holiness of heart and life; the mind of Christ, and a conformity to God; without which—How ready soever men may be to flatter themselves with vain expectations; no man shall see the Lord—It being his unalterable decree to exclude those who live and die under the defilement of sin, from the sight of himself in the celestial world, for which their unholy tempers and vile affections render them altogether unfit; only the pure in heart shall or can see God, Matt. v. 8. We must be like him, if we would see him as he is, 1 John iii. 2.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: A. M. 4068. A. D. 64.

15 Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Matt. v. 8; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. v. 5.—2 Cor. vi. 1. Gal. v. 4.—Or, fall from.—Deut. xxix. 18; Chap. iii. 12. Eph. v. 3; Col. iii. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 3.—Gen. xxv. 33.

Verses 15, 16. Looking diligently—With the greatest attention, watchfulness, and care, for yourselves and each other; for Christ hath ordained that the members of the same church or society should mutually watch over one another, and the whole body over all the members, to their mutual edification; lest any man fail of the grace of God—That is, come short of it, or do not obtain it, as the same verb is rendered, Rom. iii. 23. It means also to be deficient in any thing, Matt. xix. 20; sometimes to come behind, 1 Cor. 1-7; and sometimes to be destitute, Heb. xi. 37; which different senses of the expression are nearly allied to each other, and seem all to be here included; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you—The apostle here alludes to Deut. xxix. 18, Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away from the Lord, lest there should be a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and he primarily intends, lest there be any person whose heart is inclined to apostasy from the gospel. He may mean, however, also, lest any evil disposition, such as covetousness, ambition, anger, malice, envy, revenge, should spring up in any person or number of persons, and destroy the peace and harmony of the Christian society. In general, any corruption, either in doctrine or practice, is a root of bitterness, which, springing up, would trouble others, and might defile many. See note on Deut. xxix. 18. Lest there be any fornicator—Lest any, not following after universal holiness, should be suffered to fall even into gross sin, particularly that of fornication, a sin which is most directly and particularly opposed to that holiness which the apostle has been exhorting the believing Hebrews to press after, as an attainment without which they should not see the Lord; or profane person—One who treats sacred things with contempt, or who despiseth or makes light of spiritual blessings; who neglects God's worship, speaks irreverently of him, and of his word and ordinances; and who, in the whole of his behaviour, shows that he has no just sense of God and his attributes, or of religion, and therefore is ranked among the most flagitious sinners, 1 Tim. i. 9. As Esau—"We do not read that Esau was a fornicator, nor does the apostle say that he was addicted to that vice. By putting a comma after the word fornicator, and by

A. M. 4068. 17 For ye know how that after-
A. D. 64. ward, ° when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: ^d for he found no ^s place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

° Gen. xxvii. 34, 36, 38.—^d Chap. vi. 6.—^s Or, way to change his mind.

connecting the words, or *profane person*, with what follows, Esau will be called only a *profane person*: this he showed himself to be by selling his birthright for a mess of pottage. It is true, Jacob proposed to him to sell these, not, however, as taking advantage of his necessity, but, as Macknight thinks, "because he had heard him on former occasions speak contemptuously of his birthrights. For what else could put it into Jacob's mind to make the proposition? Therefore, when, instead of going into his father's tent, where he might have got food, Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, he showed the greatest profanity; for in the family of Abraham the birthright entitled the eldest son to spiritual as well as temporal privileges; he had a right to the priesthood, Exod. xix. 22; and to a double portion, Deut. xxi. 17; and was lord over his brethren, Gen. xxvii. 29, 37; xlix. 3. Further, in that family the firstborn, as the root of the people of God, conveyed to his posterity all the blessings promised in the covenant: such as a right to possess the land of Canaan, and to be the father of him in whom all nations were to be blessed, and to explain and confirm these promises to his children in his dying blessing to them, of which we have a remarkable example in Jacob, Gen. xlix." See note on Gen. xxv. 29-34.

Verse 17. *For*—As if he had said, Beware of profaneness, because Esau was punished for it, and so will you be if you fall into it; *ye know how that afterward*—After the blessing had been bestowed on Jacob, Gen. xxvii. 30. This *afterward* was probably not less than forty or fifty years after; for he sold his birthright when he was young, and now, when he wished to recover the blessing, Isaac was about one hundred and forty years old: so long, it seems, he lived in his sin, without any proper sense of it, or repentance for it. Things went prosperously with him in the world, and he did not consider what he had done, or what would be the end of it. But falling now into a new distress, he was filled with perplexity. And so it is with all secure sinners: while things go prosperously with them they can continue without remorse, but sooner or later their iniquity will find them out. *When he would have inherited the blessing*—The patriarchal blessing, of which he esteemed himself the presumptive heir, and which he knew not that he had virtually renounced by selling his birthright. For the apostle here distinguishes between the birthright and the blessing: he sold his birthright, but would have inherited the blessing. And herein he was a type of the unbelieving Jews at that time; for they adhered to the outward things of the blessing, to the rejection of him who was the whole life, soul, and power of

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18 For ye are not come unto the A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64. ° mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the

° Exod. xix. 12, 18, 19; xx. 18; Deut. iv. 11; v. 22; Rom. vi 14; viii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 7.

it. The meaning is, when he would have obtained what had been given to his younger brother, *he was rejected*—Namely, by his father; *for he found no place of repentance*—Could by no means induce his father to alter his mind; *though he sought it*—Namely, the blessing, or the repentance of his father; (with either of which expressions the pronoun *αυτην*, *it*, with equal propriety agrees;) *carefully with tears*—For, instead of repenting, his father confirmed the blessing of Jacob, Gen. xxvii. 33. Esau had discovered a great readiness to part with his birthright and all that was annexed to it by divine institution, not considering, it seems, what it was significant of as to matters spiritual and heavenly. Hence he put so little value upon it, as to give it up for one morsel of meat. And afterward, regardless of what he had done, after the power of his present temptation was over, it is said *he did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way*, as a man utterly unconcerned about what had taken place; whereon the Holy Ghost adds that censure, *Thus Esau despised his birthright*. He did not only sell it, but despised it. But he is represented on this occasion as being under great amazement, as if he had little thought to fall into such a condition. And thus, at one time or other, it will happen to all profane persons who refuse the mercy and privileges of the gospel; they shall, sooner or later, fall into a state of dreadful surprise. Then shall they see and feel the horrible consequence of that conduct, and of those sins, which before they made nothing of.

Verses 18, 19. *For, &c.*—As if he had said, Take heed of apostatizing from Christianity to Judaism again, because of the great privileges you enjoy by the gospel above what your fathers enjoyed by the law: which privileges contain a strong reason why you should attend to these exhortations and cautions; *ye*—Who are proselyted to Christianity; *are not come unto the mount that might*—Or could; *be touched*—That is, of an earthly, material, or tangible nature; but which the people were prohibited to approach, and much more to touch. *And that burned with fire*—Unto the midst of heaven, (Deut. iv. 11,) to show that God is a consuming fire to the impenitent; *and to blackness and darkness*—An emblem of the obscurity of the Mosaic dispensation; *and to tempest*—Josephus tells us, (*Antiq.*, lib. iii. c. 5,) that at the giving of the law strong winds came down, and manifested the presence of God. "Perhaps," says Macknight, "this prefigured what happened when the new law, the gospel, was given. For, previous to the descent of the Holy Ghost, there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind: and the sound of a trumpet—Formed, without doubt, by the ministry of angels, and which at

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A. M. 4068. voice of words: which *voice* they
A. D. 64. that heard, ^f entreated that the
word should not be spoken to them any
more:

20 (For they could not endure that which was
commanded, ^g And if so much as a beast touch
the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust
through with a dart:

21 ^h And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses

^f Exod. xx. 19; Deut. v. 5, 25; xviii. 16.—^g Exod. xix. 13.
^h Exod. xix. 16.—ⁱ Gal. iv. 26; Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2, 10.
^j Phil. iii. 20.—^k Deut. xxxiii. 2; Psa. lxxviii. 17; Jude 14.

length waxed *exceeding loud*, (Exod. xix. 18, 19),
preparatory to the *voice of words*—That is, the ten
commandments, written afterward on the two tables
of stone. For (all other noises, as of thunder, the
trumpet, &c., ceasing) God caused a loud voice,
speaking those ten commandments articulately in
their own language, to be heard by the whole con-
gregation, men, women, and children, in the station
wherein they were placed at the foot of the mount;
and this voice was so great and terrible that the
people were not able to bear it: for although they
were terrified with the dreadful appearances on the
mount, yet was it this speaking of God that utterly
overwhelmed them. See Deut. v. 22. *Which they
that heard*—Namely, the whole assembly or congre-
gation, strongly impressed with the holiness and
power of their Lawgiver and Judge, and being ex-
ceedingly terrified; *entreated that the word should
not be spoken to them any more*—Or that the word
or speaking of God to them should not be continued.
The verb *παρηγγαυοντο*, here rendered *entreated*, is
twice translated to *refuse*, verse 25. The meaning
is, they deprecated the hearing of the word in that
manner any more, which they did doubtless by their
officers and elders, who both themselves being ter-
rified, and observing the dread of the whole congre-
gation, made request for themselves and the rest to
Moses; and because they did it with a good inten-
tion, out of reverence for the majesty of God, without
any design of declining obedience, it was accepted.

Verses 20, 21. *For they could not endure that
which was commanded*—That is, either, 1st, The
law itself, so strict and holy, and promulged
amidst such terrors seen and heard: or, 2d, The
sense is, they could not bear to hear the following
charge, or endure the terror which seized them
when they heard those words proclaimed, *And if
even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned,
&c. And so terrible was the sight*—That mani-
festation of the divine presence, *that even Moses*—
(Notwithstanding his office as a mediator, his great
sanctity, and his having been frequently admitted to
a very near intercourse with God, who had often
spoken to him as a man speaketh to his friend;) *said, I exceedingly fear and quake*—This circum-
stance is not recorded in the history: but seeing the
apostle mentions it here in this letter to the Hebrews
as a thing known to them, it seems probable that
they had it from tradition, or that it was recorded in

said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) A. M. 4068.
22 But ye are come ⁱ unto mount ^l A. D. 64.

Sion, ^k and unto the city of the living God, the
heavenly Jerusalem, ^l and to an innumerable
company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of
^m the firstborn, ⁿ which are ^o written in heaven,
and to God ^o the Judge of all, and to the spirits
of just men ^p made perfect,

^m Exod. iv. 22; James i. 18; Rev. xiv. 4.—ⁿ Luke x. 20;
Phil. iv. 3; Rev. xiii. 8.—^o Or, *enrolled*.—^p Gen. xviii. 25;
Psa. xciv. 2.—^q Phil. iii. 12; Chap. xi. 40.

some Jewish writing then extant. At other times
Moses acted as a mediator between God and the
people; but while the ten commandments were pro-
nounced amidst blackness, darkness, and tempest,
preceded by the sound of the trumpet waxing
louder and louder, Moses stood as one of the hearers,
Exod. xix. 25; xx. 19.

Verse 22. *But ye*—Who believe in Christ, by
your embracing Christianity; *are come unto mount
Sion*—Are admitted to the communion of the church
of Christ, with its privileges and blessings. Or, *ye
are come to a dispensation the reverse of all these
terrors, even to the mild and gentle discoveries
which God makes of himself in the new covenant.*
For what the apostle intends is evidently to describe
that state whereunto believers are called by the
gospel: and it is that alone which he opposes to the
state of the church under the Old Testament. For
to suppose that it is the heavenly future state which
he intends, is, as Dr. Owen justly observes, “utterly
to destroy the force of his argument and exhorta-
tion. For they are built solely on the pre-emi-
nence of the gospel state to that under the law,”
and not on the pre-eminence of heaven above the
state of the church on earth, whether Jewish or
Christian, which none could question. *Unto the city
of the living God*—That holy and happy society
or community, of which true believers are citi-
zens, Eph. ii. 19; Phil. iii. 20; in which God him-
self dwells, and which is governed by him; *the hea-
venly Jerusalem*—Termed, (Gal. iv. 26,) *the Jerusa-
lem above*; so called because it has its original from
heaven, and the members thereof have their conver-
sation in heaven, and tend thither, and its most per-
fect state will be there. All these glorious titles
belong to the New Testament church. *To an
innumerable company of angels*—To join with them
in the service of God, typified by the cherubs in the
temple. The Greek is, *to myriads of angels*. A
myriad is ten thousand; and when it is used in the
plural number, it signifies an innumerable company,
as we here render it. Possibly he speaks with an
allusion to the angels that attended the presence of
God in the giving of the law, whereof the psalmist
says, *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, &c.*

Verses 23, 24. *To the general assembly*—To the
Christian Church, consisting of the whole number of
true believers spread over all the world. The word
παρηγοις, here used, properly signifies a stated con-

A. M. 4068
A. D. 64. 24 And to Jesus ^{the} Mediator of the new ^{covenant}, and to ^{the} blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things ^{than that of} Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speak-

¹ Chap. viii. 6; ix. 15.—⁷ Or, *testament*.—⁸ Exod. xxiv. 8; Chap. x. 22; 1 Pet. i. 2.

vention, upon some joyful and festival occasion: particularly it is applied to the concourse at the Olympic games; in which view it presents a very elegant and lively opposition to the case of the Israelites, who were struck with a general terror when they were convened before mount Sinai. *And church of the firstborn*—The whole body of true believers, consisting of converted Jews and Gentiles. The saints are called the *firstborn*, because under the law the firstborn were peculiarly appropriated to God, and heirs of a double honour and inheritance: and the saints are in a special manner devoted to God, are made his children by a gratuitous adoption, and entitled to the heavenly inheritance. Therefore they are said (Rev. xiv. 4) to be *redeemed from among men, the first-fruits to God and the Lamb*, being the most excellent of mankind, as the *first-fruits* were judged to be the best of the harvest. *Which are written in heaven*—The firstborn of Israel were enrolled by Moses in catalogues kept on earth, but these are registered in heaven as citizens of the New Jerusalem, and entitled to all the privileges and immunities of the church of God, whether militant or triumphant. See note on Phil. iii. 20, and iv. 8. *And to God the Judge of all*—Instead of standing afar off, as your fathers did at Sinai, you are allowed to draw near to God as to a friend and father, and to have intercourse and communion with him, who, as *Judge of all*, will reward you with a crown of glory, and inflict on your persecutors condign punishment. *And to the spirits of just, or righteous, men made perfect*—Namely, the spirits of the saints in paradise, with whom the saints on earth have communion by faith, hope, and love, and make up one body with them. These are said to be *made perfect*, because, being justified before God, and fully sanctified in their natures, they are completely holy; and being freed from all the infirmities of the body, are perfected in a much higher sense than any who are still on earth. Hence it is evident, says Whitby, “that the souls of just men are not reduced by death to a state of insensibility; for, can a soul that reasons and perceives good things be made perfect by perceiving nothing at all? Can a spirit, which here enjoyed the pleasures of a good conscience, of a life of faith, of communion with God, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, be advanced to perfection by a total deprivation of all those satisfactions and enjoyments?” *And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant*—Far exceeding that established with Israel of old by the mediation of Moses, a covenant founded on better promises, and ratified with unspeakably greater solemnity. *And to the blood of sprinkling*—To all the virtue of Christ’s precious blood shed for you, whereby you

eth. For ^{if they escaped not} ^{the} ^{one} who refused him that spake on ^{the} earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

¹ Genesis iv. 10; Chapter xi. 4.—² Chapter ii. 2, 3; iii. 17; x. 28, 29.

are *sprinkled* from an evil conscience. This blood of sprinkling was the foundation of our Lord’s mediatorial office. The expression is used in allusion both to the sprinkling of the Israelites with blood, when the covenant was made at Sinai, and to the sprinkling of the blood of the sin-offerings before the veil and on the mercy-seat. For the former sprinkling typified the efficacy of Christ’s blood in procuring the new covenant, and the latter its efficacy in procuring the pardon of sin, acceptance with God, his renewing Spirit, and all the other blessings of the gospel, for all them who believe in him with their hearts unto righteousness. *That speaketh better things than the blood of Abel*—For whereas Abel’s blood called for vengeance upon him that wickedly shed it, the blood of Jesus obtained mercy and salvation for his malicious and cruel murderers. This is the general interpretation of the clause. But Dr. Whitby, and some others, by the *blood of Abel*, understand not his own blood, which called for vengeance on his murderer, (see Gen. iv. 10,) but the blood of the sacrifice which he offered in faith, of which God testified his acceptance, and by which, it is said, *he being dead yet speaketh*; understanding the sense to be, that the blood, or sacrifice, of Christ *speaks*, or procures, better things than Abel’s sacrifice, his procuring acceptance for himself alone, but Christ’s meriting it for all believers; his only declaring himself righteous, but Christ’s interceding to God for the justification of all men. But, as Doddridge observes, there is a harshness not easily to be paralleled in calling the blood of Abel’s sacrifice *his blood*. The other interpretation, therefore, seems preferable, as referring to the gentle and gracious character of Christ, and the blessings, instead of vengeance, drawn down by his blood. “There seems, throughout this whole period, to be a reference to the manifestation God made of himself upon mount Sion, as being milder than that upon mount Sinai. And the heavenly society with which Christians are incorporated is considered as resembling the former (that is, mount Sion) in those circumstances in which it was more amiable than the latter. Sion was the city of God. In the temple, which stood there, cherubim were the ornaments of the walls, both in the holy and most holy place, to signify the presence of angels. There was a *general assembly* and congregation of the priests, which were substituted instead of the *firstborn*, of whose names catalogues were kept. There was God, as the supreme Judge of controversies, giving forth his oracles. The high-priest was the mediator between God and Israel, (comp. Luke i. 8–10,) and the *blood of sprinkling* was daily used.”—Doddridge.

Verse 25. See that ye refuse not him that speak

A. M. 4068. 26 ^a Whose voice then shook the
A. D. 64. earth: but now he hath promised,
saying, ^z Yet once more I shake not the earth
only, but also heaven.

27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth
^v the removing of those things that ^o are shaken,
as of things that are made, that those things

^a Exod. xix. 18.—^z Hag. ii. 6.—^v Psa. cii. 26; Matt. xxiv.
35; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xxi. 1.—^o Or, may be shaken.

eth—(He alludes to his having just said that his blood speaketh;) namely, Christ, who speaks to you in the gospel, and by his Spirit and messengers, and whose speaking, even now, is a prelude to the final scene. In this command the apostle has respect to the double solemn charge given by God to his church to hear and obey his Son: the first, Deut. xviii. 15, 19, *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, unto him ye shall hearken, &c.* A charge intended to prepare the church for their duty in the proper season. The other charge was given immediately from heaven, Matt. xvii. 5; *This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.* This is the foundation of all gospel faith and obedience, and the formal reason of the condemnation of all unbelievers. God hath commanded all men to hear; that is, to believe and obey his Son Jesus Christ. Hence he hath given command to others to preach the gospel to all individuals. They who believe them believe in Christ; and they who believe in Christ, through him, believe in God, (1 Pet. i. 21,) so that their faith is ultimately resolved into the authority of God himself. And in like manner, they who refuse them, who hear them not, do thereby refuse Christ himself; and, by so doing, reject the authority of God, who hath given this command to hear him, and hath taken on himself to require it when it is neglected. For if they escaped not divine vengeance, who refused him that spake—Greek, χρηματιζοντα, literally, that gave forth oracles; (namely, Moses, who delivered the law by inspiration of God;) on earth—Who received his message on earth, and delivered it only from mount Sinai, and whose oracles and doctrines were but earthly and carnal, in comparison of Christ's; much more shall we not escape—Still greater vengeance; if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven—Who received his message in the bosom of the Father, came down from heaven to deliver it to us, and now addresses us not only in the solemn discourses which he uttered in the days of his flesh, sealed with his blood, and confirmed by his resurrection and ascension; but speaks to us from heaven by his Spirit in his apostles, evangelists, and other faithful ministers, and (he might have added) manifests that he does so by the mighty signs and wonders which he enables many of them to perform; and by the success he gives to the word of his grace which proceeds from their lips. See on chap. ii. 2, 3; x. 28.

Verses 26, 27. *Whose voice*—Namely, Christ's, who appeared to Moses at the bush, gave the law, and conducted Israel through the wilderness; see on Exod. iii. 2; Isa. lxiii. 9; 1 Cor. x. 9; then shook

which cannot be shaken may remain. A. M. 4068.
A. D. 64.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, ^o let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear;

29 For ^z our God is a consuming fire.

^o Or, let us hold fast.—^z Exod. xxiv. 17; Deut. iv. 24; ix. 3; Psa. l. 3; xcvi. 3; Isa. lxvi. 15; 2 Thess. i. 8; Chap. x. 27.

the earth—When, at the giving of the law, he spoke from Sinai, and the whole mount quaked greatly, Exod. xix. 18; but now—In the gospel times; he hath promised—Or declared, saying, (Hag. ii. 6,) *Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven*—Meaning, probably, the abolition of the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the Jews, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, Matt. xxiv. 29; John iv. 21, 23; and even the overthrow of the heathen idolatry, John xvi. 11, and the propagation of the gospel throughout the world: changes which, in the nature of things, could not take place without great commotions, and the shaking of governments and nations. Dreadful commotions and wars preceded the coming of Christ in the flesh, of which see on Hag. ii. 6: but the shakings here intended must be those consequent on his so coming, and productive of the events now referred to. They may, however, look forward even to Christ's second coming, and the final consummation of all things. For *this word, Yet once more*—Or once for all, not only signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken—The total subversion of the Jewish commonwealth and church, with the ordinances of Moses; as of things that are made—Namely, by human hands; or constituted or appointed only for a time; (the verb ποιειν, here used, frequently meaning to constitute or appoint, as chap. iii. 2; Mark iii. 14, in both which passages it is translated to appoint, as it is also in many other places;) that those things which cannot be shaken—A dispensation to be changed no more; may remain—Fixed on a perpetual basis; even that eternal kingdom of righteousness and peace which God hath established by his Son Jesus Christ. This inference the apostle rightly draws from the expression, yet once more. For, as it implies that God would make but one alteration more in the religious worship of the world, it certainly follows that the form to be substituted in the room of the things to be shaken or removed, shall be permanent. The gospel, therefore, will remain to the end of the world, as the only form of religion acceptable to God. And then, as the words also imply, the heaven and the earth shall themselves be removed, as things made and intended only to endure for a time; and those things which cannot be shaken, the new heaven and the new earth, shall remain, to be the inheritance of God's people for ever, Rev. xxi. 1, &c.

Verses 28, 29. *Wherefore we*—Who believe in Christ; receiving—Or having received, through the gospel; a kingdom which cannot be moved—A dis-

pensation (frequently called the kingdom of God) which shall never be changed, but shall remain to the end of time, (2 Cor. iii. 11,) and which opens before us an assured and bright prospect of a reign in eternal glory; *let us have grace*—Let us ask and receive it. “As grace is so freely offered to us, let us not be so wanting to ourselves as to fall short of it.” So Dr. Doddridge paraphrases the clause, and adds in a note, “This” (namely, that grace is freely offered) “is strongly intimated in the words of the exhortation, else there could be no room for it. And this oblique intimation, in which it is, as it were, taken for granted that we may certainly *have grace* if we take proper methods for obtaining it, appears to me peculiarly affecting.” *Εχωμεν χάριν* may be properly rendered, *let us hold fast grace*; for it is as necessary to *retain* it as it is to *obtain* it; and this we may do as well as the other; *whereby we may have* both inclination and power to *serve God acceptably*—*Ευαρεσως*, in a manner *well pleasing* to him, making his will the sole rule of our conduct, of our tempers, words, and works, and his glory the end thereof, and from a principle of love to him, endeavouring to glorify him in our body and spirit which are his;

with reverence—*Μερα αιδος*, literally, *with shame*, or *modesty*, arising from a deep sense of our unworthiness; and *godly fear*—A tender, jealous fear of offending God, arising from a sense of his gracious majesty. *For our God*—In the strictness of his justice, and the purity of his holiness; *is a consuming fire*—Though he manifests himself in the gospel with the beams of such mild majesty, he is still possessed of that tremendous power which was so awfully displayed at mount Sinai, and will break forth as a consuming fire against all those that presumptuously violate his laws and despise his gospel. See Deut. iv. 23, 24, a passage which the apostle had now in his eye, where Moses, giving the Lord this appellation, reminded the Israelites of the fire which came forth from him to destroy Korah and his company, Num. xvi. 35. Wherefore, by adopting his words, the apostle brought the same instance of vengeance to the remembrance of the Hebrews, that they might be deterred from apostasy, disobedience, and all irreverence in the worship of God: who, though he appears so full of mercy in the gospel, is as much determined to punish the rebellious as ever.

CHAPTER XIII.

Here the apostle, (1,) Exhorts the Hebrews to brotherly love, hospitality, sympathy with persons in bonds, or suffering persecution for Christ; to chastity; contentment; regard and subjection to their pastors, 1-9. (2,) Cautions them against being carried away with Jewish doctrines and ceremonies, which were fulfilled in Christ, the high-priest, altar, and sacrifice of his church, 9-14. (3,) Recommends praise and thanksgivings to God, and acts of benevolence and beneficence to the poor; and again exhorts them to obey their spiritual rulers, 15-17. (4,) Entreats their prayers for himself and his brethren; and, after offering to God a solemn prayer for them, recommends the epistle to their serious consideration, 18-22. (5,) He concludes with intimating, that he hoped to pay them a visit with Timothy, with some salutations, and a solemn benediction, 23-25.

A. M. 4068. **L**ET ^a brotherly love continue.
A. D. 64. **2** ^b Be not forgetful to entertain

strangers: for thereby ^c some have A. M. 4068.
entertained angels unawares. A. D. 64.

^a Rom. xii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 Pet. i. 22; ii. 17; iii. 8; iv. 8; 2 Pet. i. 7.

^b Matthew xxv. 35; Romans xii. 13.—^c Genesis xviii. 3; xix. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verses 1, 2. In this concluding chapter we find fresh instances of that divine wisdom wherewith the apostle was influenced in writing this epistle; improving still more the doctrines he had advanced to practical purposes; in which he gives all ministers of Christ an instructive example of the order and method proper to be pursued in teaching Christianity; first to declare the great doctrines of it, and then to improve them to promote holiness. And they will be mistaken who propose to themselves any other method, and those most of all who think one part of it is sufficient without the other.

Let brotherly love continue—Or abide constant. Love is the fountain and foundation of all moral and religious duties which Christians owe to each other and to all men, and therefore it is here placed at the head of them all. Several of the fruits of this love

are touched on in the following verses. It is justly observed by Diodati, that this exhortation was peculiarly suitable to the converted Jews, as the prejudices of many of them against their Gentile brethren were so strong that they were ready to disown them with abhorrence. *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers*—The apostle chiefly means those of their Christian brethren who were travelling from place to place at their own cost to preach the gospel. Thus St. John speaks of some who *went forth for the sake of Christ, taking nothing of the Gentiles*, to whom they preached, 3 John 7. Add to this, the church being then under great persecution in sundry places, many Christians were obliged to leave their own habitations and countries, and to flee for safety to other parts where they were strangers. Such as these the apostle recommends to the love and charity of those to whom he wrote. *For thereby*

A. M. 4068. 3 ^d Remember them that are in
A. D. 64. bonds, as bound with them; and
them which suffer adversity, as being your-
selves also in the body.

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed
undefiled: * but whoremongers and adulterers
God will judge.

5 Let your conversation be without covetous-
ness; and ^t be content with such things as ye

^d Matt. xxv. 36; Rom. xii. 15; 1 Cor. xii. 26; Col. iv. 19;
1 Pet. iii. 8.—¹ 1 Cor. vi. 9; Gal. v. 19, 21; Eph. v. 5;
Col. iii. 5, 6; Rev. xxii. 15.—^t Matt. vi. 25, 34; Phil. iv. 11,
12; 1 Tim. vi. 6, 8.

some—For instance, Abraham and Lot; *have enter-
tained angels unawares*—So may an unknown
guest, even now, be of more worth than he ap-
pears, and may have angels attending him, though
unseen.

Verse 3. Remember—In your prayers and by your
help; *them that are in bonds*—Thrown into prison
for the sake of Christ, as if you yourselves were
bound with them—Seeing ye are members one of
another; and *them which suffer adversity*—*των
κακωχουμενων, who are ill-treated, or afflicted with
evil; as being yourselves also in the body*—And
consequently liable to similar sufferings.

Verse 4. Marriage is honourable in, or for, all
sorts of persons, clergy as well as laity, though the
Romanists teach otherwise; and *the bed undefiled*
—Consistent with the highest purity. For who
can imagine that God would make any thing moral-
ly evil absolutely necessary for the support of the
human race in future generations? *But whore-
mongers and adulterers God will judge*—That is,
punish, and frequently does so in a very awful man-
ner, even in the present world; though they fre-
quently escape punishment from men. The dis-
tinction between these two characters, *whoremongers*
and *adulterers*, is well known to be this: that the
former are single persons who have unlawful con-
verse with one another, and the latter are those who
are both, or at least one of them, in a married state.
The sin of the first is *fornication*, of the other *adul-
tery*; although the word *πορνεια, fornication*, may
sometimes be used to denote any uncleanness, and
so to comprise adultery also.

Verses 5, 6. From particular duties the apostle
proceeds to one which is more general, relating to
our whole course of walking with God. *Let your
conversation*—Greek, *τροπος, your behaviour*, or man-
ner of living; *be without covetousness*—*Αφιλαργυρος,*
without the love of money; or an inordinate desire
of, and endeavour after, more of this world's goods
than you have, or than God is pleased to give you,
proceeding from an undue esteem of them, and at-
tachment to them. See on Col. iii. 5; 1 Tim. vi.
6-10. *And be content with such things as ye have*
—And which God affords you by his providence in
a lawful way. The original expression, *τοις παροσιν,*
is, with the things that are present. Endeavour to

have: for he hath said, * I will never A. M. 4068.
leave thee, nor forsake thee. A. D. 64.

6 So that we may boldly say, ^h The Lord is
my helper, and I will not fear what man shall
do unto me.

7 ⁱ Remember them which ^l have the rule
over you, who have spoken unto you the word
of God: ^k whose faith follow, considering the
end of *their* conversation:

^h Gen. xxviii. 15; Deut. xxxi. 6, 8; Josh. i. 5; 1 Chron.
xxviii. 20; Psa. xxxvii. 25.—^l Psa. xxvii. 1; lvi. 4, 11, 12;
cxviii. 6.—^k Verse 17.—¹ Or, *are the guides.*—² Chapter
vi. 12.

bring your mind down to your circumstances, be they
what they may. ⁴ The apostle did not mean by this
to preclude the Hebrews, or any person, from using
lawful means for bettering their circumstances; but
that, having used such means, they were to be content-
ed, although God did not make them successful.⁵
For he—Rather, *he himself*, namely, God, who hath
all the stores of nature at his command, and who
owns the relation of a Father to us; *hath said*—To
all believers, in saying it to Jacob, Joshua, and Solo-
mon, (see the margin,) *I will never leave thee nor
forsake thee*—The many negative particles, and
their position in the original, render this passage ex-
tremely emphatical and beautiful. Doddridge ren-
ders it, *I will not, I will not leave thee; I will never,
never, never forsake thee*; words from which all God's
people (his love to them being the same in all ages)
may take a just encouragement in all the difficulties
to which they may be exposed. *So that we may
boldly say*—*Ωςτε θαρρυντας ημας λεγειν, taking cour-
age, we may say*, with the psalmist, *The Lord is
my helper*—He is my helper, whose wisdom, power,
and goodness are boundless; *I will not fear what
man shall do unto me*—However subtle, mighty, or
malicious he may be. God's promises to Jacob,
Joshua, David, &c., and their expressions of trust in
God, being applied by the apostle to the believing
Hebrews, teach us that God's promises to individuals,
and their exercises of faith and trust built thereon,
are recorded in Scripture for the encouragement of
the people of God in every age.

Verse 7. Remember them who have the rule over
you—*των ηγουμενων υμων, or, who are, or rather, were,*
the guides of you, namely, formerly; *who have
spoken*—Or, *who spake; unto you the word of God*—
Remember who they were, and your obligations to
them; and though all your intercourse with them
is for the present cut off, do not, however, forget their
instructions and their examples. Bishop Lloyd (see
his funeral sermon for Bishop Wilkins) thinks this
may refer to James the brother of John, and to
James, commonly called the *first bishop of Jerusa-
lem*, both of whom had been put to death there be-
fore this epistle was written; *whose faith follow*—
Embrace by faith the same doctrines, precepts, and
promises of the gospel which they embraced; and
let your faith be assured, lively, and operative as

A. M. 4068. 8 Jesus Christ ¹ the same yesterday,
A. D. 64. and to-day, and for ever.

9 ² Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; ³ not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

¹ John viii. 58; Chap. i. 12; Rev. i. 4.—² Eph. iv. 14; v. 6; Col. ii. 4, 8; 1 John iv. 1.—³ Rom. xiv. 17; Col. ii. 16;

theirs was, purifying your hearts, and rendering your lives fruitful to the glory of God; *considering the end*—*Την εκβασιν, the issue, of their conversation*—The happy end they made; the blessed manner in which they quitted life; the ground of that support which they experienced in their latest moments from the truths they had taught you; the heroic resolution with which they were animated to meet even martyrdom itself in that sacred cause; and let the remembrance of these things engage you to retain their faith, and courageously to follow their steps.

Verses 8, 9. Men may die, but *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*—From everlasting to everlasting: the same in his person and offices, in his love and power, in his truth and grace; the same object of faith; and the same in all respects, to all believers, in all ages; and therefore be steadfast in the faith and hope of the gospel: and *be not carried about with divers, Ποικιλαις, various, and strange doctrines*—Doctrines inconsistent with each other, and differing from that one faith in our one unchangeable Lord, and strange to the ears and hearts of all that abide in him. *For it is a good thing*—Of great importance to our own peace of mind, to the glory of God, and the edification of others; it is honourable, pleasant, and profitable, for *the heart to be established*—In the faith and hope of the gospel; *with grace*—The influence of the Divine Spirit received through Christ; *not with meats*—With Jewish ceremonies of any kind, which indeed can never establish the heart; and *which have not profited*—To the purifying of the conscience from guilt, or increasing their holiness; *them that have been occupied therein*—How exact and scrupulous soever they have been in observing them.

Verse 10. *We have an altar*—That is, a sacrifice upon an altar, namely, Christ, who was sacrificed on the altar of the cross, who also is the only Christian altar, to which we bring all our sacrifices and services. The apostle, having set forth the only way of the establishment of the heart in faith and holiness, and the uselessness of all distinctions of meats for that purpose, here declares the foundation of all this; for whereas the ground of all distinction of meats and other ceremonies among the Jews was the altar in the tabernacle, with its nature, use, and services, he lets them know that Christians have an altar, and services quite of another kind than those which arose from the altar of old, such as he describes verses 13–16. This seems to be the direct design of the apostle in this place, and a proper

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10 ⁴ We have an altar, whereof ⁵ they have no right to eat which serve ⁶ the tabernacle.

11 For ⁷ the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

1 Tim. iv. 3.—¹ 1 Cor. ix. 13; x. 18.—² Exod. xxix. 14; Lev. iv. 11, 12, 21; vi. 30; ix. 11; xvi. 27; Num. xix. 3.

analysis of his words. *Whereof they have no right to eat*—To partake of the benefits which we receive therefrom; *who serve the tabernacle*—Who adhere to the Mosaic law, or who maintain the necessity, and continue the observance, of the Jewish ceremonies and worship. For this in effect was to deny Christ to be come in the flesh, and to have offered himself a sacrifice on the cross.

Verse 11. *For, &c.*—As if he had said, This was shown figuratively in the law; *for the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought*—On the day of atonement; *into the sanctuary*—The holy of holies; *by the high-priest, for sin*—To make expiation of it; *are burned without the camp*—See Lev. iv. 12; and therefore no part of them could be eaten by the priest or people; so they who, under the gospel, adhere to that way of worship, cannot partake of Christ, who is the truth signified by that type. In other words, according to their own law, the sin-offerings were wholly consumed, and no Jew ever ate thereof. But Christ was a sin-offering; therefore they cannot feed upon him as we do. This is explained more at large by Macknight, thus: “This law, concerning the bodies of the animals whose blood the high-priest carried into the holy places, we have Lev. xvi. 27. The same law is given concerning all the proper sin-offerings, Lev. vi. 30; from which it appears that neither the priest, who offered the sin-offerings, nor the people, for whom they offered them, were to eat of them. Wherefore, if the eating of the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings was permitted, to show that the offerers were at peace with God, as their *political Ruler*, it may fairly be presumed that the prohibition to eat any part of the bodies of animals whose blood was brought into the holy places as an atonement, was intended to make the Israelites sensible that their sins against God, as *moral Governor of the world*, were not pardoned through these atonements; not even by the sacrifices which were offered by the high-priest on the tenth of the seventh month, which, like the rest, were to be wholly burned. Unless this was the intention of the law, the apostle could not, from that prohibition, have argued with truth that they who worshipped in the tabernacles with the sin-offerings, had no right to eat of the Christian altar. Whereas if, by forbidding the priests and people to eat the sin-offerings, the law declared that their offences against God, as *moral Governor of the world*, were not pardoned thereby, it was in effect a declaration, as the apostle affirms, that they

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A. M. 4069. 12 Wherefore Jesus also, that
A. D. 64. he might sanctify the people
with his own blood, ¹suffered without the
gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him with-
out the camp, bearing ¹his reproach.

14 ²For here have we no continuing city, but
we seek one to come.

15 ³By him therefore let us offer ⁴the sacri-
fice of praise to God continually, that is, ⁵the

¹ John xix. 17, 18; Acts vii. 58.—² Chap. xi. 26; 1 Pet.
iv. 14.—³ Mic. ii. 10; Phil. iii. 20; Chap. xi. 10, 16; xii. 22.
⁴ Eph. v. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 5.—⁵ Lev. vii. 12.

had no right to eat of the Christian altar; that is, to
share in the pardon which Christ hath procured for
sinners by his death, who trusted in the Levitical
sacrifices for pardon and acceptance with God.⁹

Verses 12-14. *Wherefore Jesus also*—Who was
typified by these sin-offerings; *that he might sanc-
tify*—Might make atonement for, and consecrate to
God; *the people*—His church, the spiritual Israel of
God; *with his own blood*—Carried into the heavenly
sanctuary, and presented before the throne of God
as a sin-offering; *suffered without the gate*—Of
Jerusalem, as the bodies of the sin-offerings were
burned without the camp of Israel in the wilderness,
signifying hereby that those carnal Jews, who still
adhered to the Mosaical way of worship, had no in-
terest in, nor communion with Christ, nor partook of
the benefits of his atonement. The Israelites hav-
ing cities to live in at the time our Lord suffered, the
expression, *without the gate*, was of the same im-
port as *without the camp* in the wilderness. Where-
fore criminals, being regarded as unclean, were
always put to death without the gates of their cities.
Let us, &c.—As if he had said, And this considera-
tion, as it shows it to be our duty to leave the Jewish
sacrifices, so it should undoubtedly engage us will-
ingly to suffer all extremities in his cause; *Let us
therefore break through all attachments, and go
forth unto him without the camp*—The terrestrial
Jerusalem; the Jewish Church, with its ceremonious
services; let us cleave to him and his doctrine, and
openly profess ourselves his disciples; *bearing his
reproach*—Patiently enduring all manner of shame,
obloquy, and contempt, and whatever other suffer-
ing may await us, for his sake. And we have the
more reason to do this; *for here we have no con-
tinuing city*—No settled condition, no lasting place
of abode; all things here are but for a moment; and
the interests of this mortal life, as they are very uncer-
tain, and of short duration, so they are very trivial,
when compared with those that relate to eternity.
It is thought by some, that in this the apostle had the
destruction of Jerusalem in his eye, which happened
about seven or eight years after this epistle was
written; *but we seek one to come*—Namely, the city
of the living God; a city prepared for us, and pro-
mised to us, as the place of our everlasting abode.

Verses 15, 16. Having mentioned the altar, the

fruit of *our lips*, ²giving thanks to A. M. 4069
his name. A. D. 64.

16 ⁷But to do good, and to communicate,
forget not: for ⁸with such sacrifices God is
well pleased.

17 ⁹Obey them that ³have the rule over you,
and submit yourselves: for ^bthey watch for
your souls, as they that must give account,
that they may do it with joy, and not with
grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

⁷ Hosea xiv. 2.—⁸ Gr. *confessing to*.—⁹ Romans xii. 13.
² 2 Cor. ix. 12.—³ Phil. ii. 29.—^b Or, *guide*.—^b Ezek. iii.
17; xxxiii. 2, 7; Acts xx. 26, 28.

apostle now proceeds to speak of the sacrifice. *By
him therefore*—Our great High-Priest, though per-
secuted by our unbelieving brethren, and exposed to
many sufferings; *let us offer the sacrifice of praise
to God continually*—For surely we have continual
reason, having before us a prospect of such unuttera-
ble felicity and glory; *that is, the fruit of our lips*—
It is generally granted that this expression is taken
from Hosea, where the same duty is called *the calves*,
or sacrifices, *of our lips*; for the sense is the same,
and praise to God is intended in both places. *But
to do good, &c.*—As if he had said, But while we
present this verbal tribute, let us remember that
another yet more substantial sacrifice is required,
namely, to do good to our fellow-creatures, and that
in every way in our power, to their souls as well as
to their bodies, supplying, as we have ability, both
their spiritual and temporal wants; *for with such
sacrifices God is well pleased*—As his inspired ser-
vants have abundantly testified. Indeed they have
been always more pleasing to him than any victims
which, in the neglect of these, could be brought to
his altar.

Verse 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you*—
The expression, τοῖς ἡγεμενοῖς, implies also, *that lead
or guide you*, namely, in truth and holiness; *and
submit yourselves*—To them with a becoming re-
spect, even though their office should render it
sometimes necessary for them to reprove you for
some instances of misconduct, or to urge you to
duties which you are averse to perform. Give up to
them, not your conscience or judgment, but your
own will, in all things purely indifferent; *for they
watch for your souls*—With all zeal and diligence
they guard and caution you against all danger; *as
they that must give an account*—To the great Shep-
herd for every part of their behaviour toward you.
Chrysostom says, he never read these words of the
apostle without *trembling*, though he often preached
several times in a day. How vigilant then ought every
pastor to be, how careful of every soul committed
to his charge; *that they may do it*—May watch over
you; *with joy and not with grief*—Greek, *μη στενα-
ζομεντες*, not groaning, under discouragement and grief
on account of the little success of their ministry
among you; *for that is*—Or would be; *unprofitable
for you*—Both here and hereafter; for besides dis-

A. M. 4068. 18 ° Pray for us: for we trust we
A. D. 64. have ^d a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech *you* ° the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now ^f the God of peace, ^g that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, ^h that

° Rom. xv. 30; Eph. vi. 19.—^d Acts xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16.
• Philem. 22.—^f Rom. xv. 33; 1 Thess. v. 23.—^g Acts ii. 24, 32.—^h Isa. xl. 11.

couraging your guides, it would displease the Lord Jesus, and preclude or endanger your eternal salvation. "He is not a good shepherd, who does not either rejoice over his flock or groan for them. The groans of other creatures are heard: how much more shall these come up into the ears of God! Whoever answers this character of a Christian pastor, may undoubtedly demand this obedience."—Wesley.

Verses 18, 19. *Pray for us*—For our freedom and success in preaching the gospel, (see the margin,) and our deliverance from the enemies of the faith; *for*—Though our enemies may meanly insinuate the contrary, and though the doctrine inculcated in this epistle may not be pleasing to some of you; *we trust we have a good conscience*—Have acted, and continue to act, conscientiously before God, his people, and all men, and have executed our trust faithfully, declaring the whole counsel of God; *willing*—*Θελοντες*, *desiring*, and resolving; *in all things*—Or among all men, as *εν παντι* may signify, among the Jews as well as among the Gentiles; *to live honestly*—Or rather, *to behave ourselves well*, or *honourably*, as the original expression signifies; that is, always to act in the most fair and reputable manner, according to the obligations of our sacred profession and office, though this should be attended with the sacrifice of every thing. *I beseech you the rather to pray earnestly for me, that I may be restored to you the sooner*—From this confinement, and may have it in my power to render you those services, which have been and still are prevented by this unjust imprisonment.

Verses 20, 21. *Now, &c.*—Having desired them to pray for him, he now addresses a prayer to God for them, and therewith gives a solemn close to the whole epistle. And a glorious prayer it is, including the whole mystery of divine grace, and that both with respect to its original, and the way of its communication; and therefore including the whole of this epistle, especially as far as it is doctrinal, and applying the benefit of all that he had instructed them in to themselves. The prayer includes, 1st, A title given to God suited to the request made. 2d, The work ascribed to him suitable to that title. 3d, The blessings prayed for. 4th, A doxology, with a solemn close of the whole. The title assigned to God, or the name by which he calls upon him is, *the God of peace*—All things being brought by sin into a state of disorder, confusion, and enmity, there was no source left from whence peace could be derived, but in the nature and will of God. Hence the apostle,

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great Shepherd of the sheep, ⁱ through the blood of the everlasting ⁴ cove-

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nant, 21 ^k Make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, ⁵ working ^l in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; ^m to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

¹ Zech. ix. 11; Chap. x. 22.—⁴ Or, *testament*.—² Thess. ii. 17; 1 Pet. v. 10.—³ Or, *doing*.—¹ Phil. ii. 13.—^m Gal. i. 5; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Rev. i. 6.

when about to represent God in this character, begins by observing, *All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. v. 18. God alone is the Author of all peace to fallen man, whether the peace which we have with himself, or that in our own souls; whether peace between angels and men, or between Jews and Gentiles: it is all from him, the God of pardoning mercy and renewing grace. *That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus*—On whom the iniquities of us all, and the chastisement necessary to procure our peace, were laid; and who was raised from the dead to manifest that the atonement which he had made was accepted, and that God was now in him *reconciling us to himself*; and as a further proof of this, bringing him from the dead to be the *great Shepherd of the sheep*—To gather, defend, feed, and save them; yea, and to give unto them eternal life, John x. 28. This title, *the great Shepherd of the sheep*, is given to Christ here, because he was foretold under that character, (Ezek. xxxiv. 23,) because he took to himself the title of the *good Shepherd*, (John x. 11,) and because all who are employed in feeding the flock are but inferior shepherds under him. *Through the blood of the everlasting covenant*—Namely, the covenant of grace, in its last dispensation, termed *everlasting*, both in opposition to the covenant made at Sinai, which was but for a time, and accordingly was now removed, and because the effects of it are not temporary benefits, but *everlasting mercies* of grace and glory. It is not quite certain whether this clause should be connected with what goes before, or what follows. If it is connected with what goes before, the meaning is, either that God brought back our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, on account of his having shed his blood to procure the everlasting covenant: or that the Lord Jesus became the great Shepherd and Saviour of the sheep, by shedding his blood to procure and ratify the everlasting covenant. This latter sense seems to be supported by Acts xx. 28, where Christ is said to have *purchased the church with his own blood*. But if the clause is connected with what follows, the meaning is, *May God make you perfect in every good work*, through the assistance of his Spirit, promised in the everlasting covenant, procured and ratified by his blood.

Make you perfect—*Καταρτισαι υμας*, an expression similar to that used Eph. iv. 12: *for the perfecting of the saints*, or the rendering them complete in the various branches of true Christianity, namely, (as is

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A. M. 4068. 22 And I beseech you, brethren,
A. D. 64.

suffer the word of exhortation: for

▪ I have written a letter unto you in few words.

23 Know ye, that ° our brother Timothy ʳ is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

° 1 Pet. v. 12.—° 1 Thess. iii. 2.—ʳ 1 Tim. vi. 12.

there observed,) in the knowledge of all the doctrines, the possession of all the graces, the enjoyment of all the privileges, the performance of all the duties belonging to true Christianity. But the last particular is what is here chiefly intended, the expression being, *May he make you perfect in every good work*, implying the apostle's desire that they might omit no good work which it was in their power to perform, and that they should do every one in the most perfect manner; namely, according to God's will as their rule, from love to him as their principle, with an eye to his glory as their end. *Working in you that*—Internal holiness and conformity to the divine image; *which is well pleasing in his sight*—Which he approves of, and takes complacency in; *through the doctrine, the merits, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ. To whom be glory for ever and ever*—Here eternal glory is ascribed to Christ, as it is likewise 2 Pet. iii. 18, and Rev. v. 13, in terms exactly similar to those in which it is ascribed to God, *even the Father*, Phil. iv. 20; 1 Tim. i. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 18; a manifest proof of Christ's Deity, divine adoration and worship being due to God alone.

Verses 22–25. *I beseech you, brethren*—He sub-

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24 Salute all them ˆ that have the A. M. 4068.
rule over you, and all the saints. A. D. 64.

They of Italy salute you.

25 ˆ Grace be with you all. Amen.

¶ Written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy.

ˆ Verses 7, 17.—ˆ Tit. iii. 15.

joins this tender address to his epistle to caution them against losing, through negligence or prejudice, the benefit they might otherwise derive from it; *suffer the word of exhortation*—Or, *consolation*, (for the word *παρακλησις* signifies either,) addressed to you in this letter, which is contained in *few words*—Considering the copiousness of the subject. *Know ye*—That is, I give you the joy of knowing; *that our brother Timothy*—Whose zeal for me had for a while made him a partner in my confinement; *is set at liberty; with whom, if he return to me shortly, I will see you*—Will pay you a visit. From this it is evident that the apostle, when he wrote this, was set at liberty. *They of Italy salute you*—The salutations from the Christians of Italy show that the writer of this letter was either in Italy, or had some of the brethren of Italy with him when he wrote it; which agrees with the supposition that Paul was the author of it. For he had been two years a prisoner at Rome, but had now obtained his liberty, (verse 23,) by means, as is supposed, of the persons he had converted in the emperor's family, Phil. iv. 22. *Grace be with you all*—St. Paul's usual benediction. God apply it to our hearts!

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PREFACE

TO THE

GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES.

THIS, the two epistles of Peter, the first epistle of John, and that of Jude, have been called catholic or general epistles, because, according to Œcumenius and others, they were all written, not to any particular church or churches, or to people dwelling in one place, as all St. Paul's epistles were but to the Jewish converts, dispersed through all the countries within the Roman empire.

That the author of this epistle was an apostle appears from the testimony of Eusebius, (*Ecccl. Hist.*, lib. ii. cap. 23,) who declares concerning that James to whom the ancients ascribed this epistle, that he was the brother, or kinsman, of the Lord; and by the Syriac, Arabic, Vulgate, and Ethiopic versions, by all which he is styled, "James the apostle." It is true, some have imagined that James the elder, the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, was the author of this epistle; "but in this they are evidently mistaken; for James the elder was beheaded by Herod, A. D. 44, whereas this epistle was not written till a very considerable time afterward. So early as A. D. 44 the gospel does not seem to have been propagated far beyond the bounds of Palestine, and it cannot be supposed there was any very large number of the Jews of the dispersion who were then converted to the Christian faith; and, though the epistle seems to have been intended, in some measure, for the general benefit of the twelve tribes, yet more especially for those among them who were converts to the Christian religion. Besides, it is intimated, in the epistle itself, that the Jewish Christians were at this time sunk into very remarkable degeneracy, both in doctrine and practice, which is not likely to have been the case while they were under the first impressions of their conversion. And, indeed, in this epistle there are some plain intimations that the destruction of Jerusalem was near at hand, (chap. v. 1-8,) which event was accomplished about the year 70; and from this circumstance we may reasonably conclude the date of it to be about A. D. 60 or 61."—Doddrige. This epistle, therefore, could not have been written by James the elder, but must have been the composition of James the son of Alphaeus or Cleophas, by Mary, the sister of the blessed Virgin.

Now, it being thus shown that James the apostle was the author of this epistle, we cannot reasonably doubt the authenticity of it, especially if we consider that "it is cited by Clemens Romanus four several times, by Ignatius in his genuine epistle to the Ephesians, and by Origen in his thirteenth homily upon Genesis. Eusebius says it was known to most, and publicly read in most Christian churches; St. Jerome, that in process of time it obtained authority. Estius observes, that 'they who before doubted of it, in the fourth century embraced the opinion of them who received it, and that from thence no church or ecclesiastical writer ever doubted of it; but, on the contrary, all the catalogues of the books of the holy Scriptures, published by general or provincial councils, Roman bishops, or other well-informed writers, number it among the canonical Scriptures;' which proof must give sufficient certainty of it to any Christian."—Whitby. If any further argument were necessary to be advanced in proof of the divine authority of this epistle, it may be observed that while the second epistle of Peter, the second and third of John, the epistle of Jude, and the Revelation, are omitted in the first Syriac translation of the New Testament, which was made in the beginning of the second century for the use of the converted Jews, this epistle of James hath found a place therein; an argument this of great weight. For certainly the Jewish believers, to whom that epistle was addressed and delivered, were much better judges of its authenticity than the converted Gentiles, to whom it was not sent, and who, perhaps, had no opportunity of being acquainted with it till long after it was written.

PREFACE TO THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES.

In addition to the support which its antiquity gives to the authenticity of this epistle, may be mentioned the correspondence of the sentiments it contains with the tenor of the Christian doctrine. It is true, this was called in question by Luther, at the beginning of the Reformation; but deeper experience, a more perfect investigation, more extensive observation, and a maturer judgment, afterward induced him to change his opinion. As to the subjects treated on in this epistle, it must be observed that, as the author of it stately resided at Jerusalem, (whence he hath been styled, by some of the ancient fathers, the bishop of that city,) it was very natural for him, while he confined his personal labours, to the inhabitants of Judea, to endeavour, by his writings, to extend his services to the Jewish Christians who were dispersed abroad in more distant regions. "For this purpose," says Dr. Doddridge, "there are two points which the apostle seems to have principally aimed at, though he has not pursued them in an orderly and logical method, but in the free epistolary manner, handling them jointly or distinctly, as occasion naturally offered. And these were, to correct those errors, both in doctrine and practice, into which the Jewish Christians had fallen, which might otherwise have produced fatal consequences; and then to establish the faith, and animate the hope, of sincere believers, both under their present and their future sufferings."

It may add some weight to the important advices, cautions, and exhortations, contained in this epistle, to observe that the author of it, for the remarkable holiness of his life, was surnamed "the Just;" and that our Lord so regarded him as to appear to him when alone, after his resurrection; (1 Cor. xv. 7;) and that about three years after Paul's conversion, being resident at Jerusalem, he was considered as a pillar, or noted supporter, of the church there, Gal. ii. 9. Hence the deference paid to his advice at the apostolic council, spoken of Acts xv. About A. D. 63, when Festus was dead, and Albinus his successor had not arrived at Jerusalem, the Jews being exceedingly enraged at the success of the gospel, Ananias II., high-priest of the Jews, caused him to be condemned, and delivered him into the hands of the people and the Pharisees, who threw him down from the stairs of the temple, when a fuller dashed out his brains with a club. His life was so holy, that Josephus considers the destruction of Jerusalem as a punishment inflicted on that city for his death.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

JAMES.

CHAPTER I.

After the salutation, the apostle, (1,) Endeavours to fortify the converted Jews, to whom he writes, under those trials wherewith they were and would be exercised, by suitable representations of the benefit of them, and of the readiness of God to communicate all necessary supplies of wisdom and grace in answer to the fervent prayer of faith, 1-8. (2,) He directs them how to behave in prosperous and adverse circumstances, and exposes the vanity of all worldly enjoyments, 9-12. (3,) He warns them not to impute to God any temptation to sin, but to look on all evil as proceeding from themselves, and all good from God, 13-18. (4,) He cautions them against a rash and irascible disposition, and exhorts them to receive the word of God with meekness, and to live according to it, 19-25. (5,) He mentions some important properties of true religion, and shows that all pretences to it are vain, if the tongue be not bridled, 26, 27.

A. M. 4064. * **JAMES**,^{a b} a servant of God and of
A. D. 60. the Lord Jesus Christ,^c to the

twelve tribes^d which are scattered A. M. 4064.
abroad, greeting. A. D. 60.

* St. Philip and St. James, epistle, verse 1 to verse 13.—^a Acts xii. 17; xv. 13; Gal. i. 19; ii. 9; Jude 1.

^b Tit. i. 1.—^c Acts xxvi. 7.—^d Deut. xxxii. 26; John vii. 35; Acts ii. 5; viii. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *James, a servant of Jesus Christ*—Whose name the apostle mentions but once more in the whole epistle, namely, chap. ii. 1, and not at all in his whole discourse, Acts xv. 14, &c., or xxi. 20-25. It might have seemed, if he had mentioned him often, that he did it out of vanity, as being the brother, or near kinsman, of the Lord; to the twelve tribes—Of Israel; that is, to those of them that were converted to Christianity, and with an evident reference, in some parts of the epistle, to that part of them which was not converted; which are scattered abroad—In various countries; ten of the tribes were scattered ever since the reign of Hoshea, and a great part of the rest were now dispersed through the Roman empire, as was foretold Deut. xxviii. 25, and xxx. 4. That the twelve tribes were actually in existence when James wrote his epistle, will appear from the following facts. 1st, Notwithstanding Cyrus allowed all the Jews in his dominions to return to their own land, many of them did not return, but continued to live among the Gentiles, as appears from this, that in the days of Ahasuerus, one of the successors of Cyrus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia, over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, (Esth. iii. 8,) the Jews were dispersed among the people in all the provinces of his kingdom, and their laws were diverse from the laws of all other people; so that, by adhering to their own usages, they kept themselves distinct

b

from all the nations among whom they lived. 2d, Josephus considered the twelve tribes as being in existence when the Old Testament Scriptures were translated into Greek, (namely, in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about two hundred and fifty or two hundred and sixty years before Christ,) as he says that six persons were sent out of every tribe to assist in that work. 3d, On the day of pentecost, as mentioned Acts ii. 5, 9, there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven, Parthians, Medes, &c.: so numerous were the Jews, and so widely dispersed through all the countries of the world. 4th, When Paul travelled through Asia and Europe, he found the Jews so numerous, that in all the noted cities of the Gentiles they had synagogues, in which they were assembled for the worship of God, and were joined by multitudes of proselytes from among the heathens. 5th, The same apostle, in his speech to Agrippa, affirmed that the twelve tribes were then existing, and that they served God day and night, in expectation of the promise made to the fathers, Acts xxvi. 6. 6th, Josephus (*Antiq.*, l. xiv. c. 12) tells us, that in his time one region could not contain the Jews, but they dwelt in most of the flourishing cities of Asia and Europe, in the islands and continent, not much less in number than the heathen inhabitants. From all which it is evident that the Jews of the dispersion were more numerous than even the Jews in Judea; and that James very properly inscribed his letter to

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a. M. 4064. 2 My brethren, °count it all joy
A. D. 60. †when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 † Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith
worketh patience.

4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that
ye may be perfect and entire, wanting no-
thing.

5 † If any of you lack wisdom, †let him ask
of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and up-

• Matt. v. 12; Acts v. 41; Heb. x. 34; 1 Pet. iv. 13, 16.
† 1 Peter i. 6.—† Romans v. 3.—† 1 Kings iii. 9, 11, 12;
Prov. ii. 3.

the twelve tribes which were in the dispersion, seeing the twelve tribes really existed then, and do still exist, although not distinguished by separate habitations, as they were anciently in their own land. *Greeting*—That is, wishing you all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

Verses 2-4. *Count it all joy*—That is, matter of the greatest joy; *when ye fall into divers temptations*—Πειρασμοις, trials; for though rendered temptations, it does not signify here what is commonly meant by temptations, for these we are directed to pray against, but it denotes trials by affliction and persecution. To these God, by whose providence they come, exposes men, not to lead them into sin, but to afford them an opportunity of exercising and improving their graces and virtues. Hence our Lord declared those to be *blessed who were persecuted for righteousness' sake*, Matt. v. 10; and exhorted *such*, (verse 42,) to rejoice and be exceeding glad; sentiments which doubtless the Apostle James had in his eye when he spoke to the Jewish Christians in this manner. *Knowing that the trying, or proving, of your faith*—By persecution and affliction; *worketh patience*—Exercises and thereby increases your patience, through the divine blessing, and your resignation to God's will, from which many other virtues will flow. *But let patience have her perfect work*—Let it be duly and fully exercised, that it may rise to the highest degree of perfection: 1st, By composing your minds to a sweet and humble frame under your sufferings. 2d, By acknowledging God's hand in them, and blessing him for them. 3d, By resisting all inclinations to impatience, fretfulness, and murmuring. 4th, By quietly waiting for deliverance, in the way God hath appointed, till he shall see fit to grant it. 5th, By enduring to the end of the time of your trial; *that ye may be perfect and entire*—Adorned with every Christian grace and virtue; *wanting nothing*—No kind or degree of grace which God requires to be in you; but may be complete in all the parts of holiness.

Verses 5-7. *If any of you*—In whole or in part; *lack wisdom*—To understand whence and why temptations come, and how they are to be improved, or for any other purpose. Wisdom, in the common acceptation of the word, denotes a sound practical judgment concerning things to be done or avoided: but here the expression seems to mean wisdom to

braideth not; and †it shall be given A. M. 4064.
him. A. D. 60.

6 † But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.
For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea
driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall
receive any thing of the Lord.

8 † A double-minded man is unstable in all
his ways.

† Matt. vii. 7; xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Luke xi. 9; John xiv. 13;
xv. 7; xvi. 23.—† Jer. xxix. 12; 1 John v. 14, 15.—† Mark
xi. 24; 1 Tim. ii. 8.—† Chap. iv. 8.

know how to conduct ourselves under afflictions, or how to make a right use of them. *Patience is in every pious man already*; let him exercise this, and ask for wisdom. The sum of wisdom, how to conduct ourselves in the trial of poverty, on the one hand, and riches, on the other, is described in the 9th and 10th verses. The connection between the second and following verses of this chapter will be easily discerned by him who reads them while he is suffering wrongfully. He will then readily perceive why the apostle mentions all these various affections of the mind. *Let him ask of God*—The eternal fountain of wisdom, as well as of grace; *that giveth to all*—That ask aright; *liberally*—Freely and richly; *and upbraideth not*—Either with their past sinfulness or present unworthiness. *But let him ask in faith*—With a firm confidence in the power, love, and faithfulness of God. St. James also both begins and ends with faith, chap. v. 15; the hinderances of which he removes in the middle part of his epistle; *nothing wavering*—Or doubting, as διακρινόμενος frequently and properly signifies; or not divided in his mind, between the desires of obtaining and the fears of not obtaining the grace he asks; or not questioning God's willingness to bestow it. *For he that wavereth*—Or doubteth, and therefore is divided in his mind, as just observed, and who does not firmly confide in the goodness and faithfulness of God, can have no other solid and substantial support, but *is like a wave of the sea*—Restless and inconstant; *driven with the wind to and fro, and tossed about at its mercy*; is unsettled and irresolute. *Let not that man*—Who thus yields to diffidence and distrust; *think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord*—While he continues in such an unstable and wavering state of mind, and dares not rely on God for those supplies of grace which he professes to seek. Such unreasonable doubts and suspicions, as they wrong the divine goodness, so they may, in many instances, prevent the communication of those favours which might otherwise be obtained.

Verse 8. *A double-minded man*—Ανθρωπος διψυχος, a man who has, as it were, two souls; whose heart is divided between God and the world, and is not simply given up to him, nor entirely confides in him for the direction, aid, and support which he stands in need of; *is unstable in all his ways*—Being without

A. M. 4064. 9 Let the brother of low degree
A. D. 60. ¹rejoice in that he is exalted:

10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because ²as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

¹ Or, glory.—Job xiv. 2; Psa. xxxvii. 2; xc. 5, 6; cii. 11; ciii. 15; Isa. xl. 6; 1 Cor. vii. 31; Chap. iv. 14; 1 Pet. i. 24; 1 John ii. 17.

the true wisdom, he perpetually disagrees both with himself and others; and will be perpetually running into inconsistencies of conduct, while those imperfect impressions of religion which he feels will serve rather to perplex and torment than to guide and confirm him in the right way.

Verses 9-11. *Let the brother*—St. James does not give this appellation to the rich; of low degree—Poor and tempted, or brought low by his sufferings for Christ, and humbled in spirit thereby; rejoice that he is exalted—To be a child of God, and an heir of eternal glory; let him think of his dignity as a Christian, and entirely acquiesce in his low station in life, which will continue only for a short season, and which God has wisely appointed for his eternal good. Or, let him rejoice that he is thought worthy to be called to suffer for Christ, Acts. v. 41; Phil. i. 29. *But the rich*—Let the rich rejoice in that he is made low—Is humbled by a deep sense of his true condition, and brought to have low thoughts of all worldly excellences, and to be prepared for sufferings. The Greek is, *εν τη ταπεινωσει αυτου, in his humiliation*, as the word is rendered Acts viii. 33; where it is used to express the humiliation of Christ by his various sufferings. And as it is here opposed to *ψηφει, exaltation*, in the preceding verse, it may signify the humiliation of the rich man, by his being stripped of his riches and possessions, of his liberty, and his being made liable to lose his life on account of the gospel. Here, therefore, the apostle advises the rich to glory when they lose the uncertain riches of this life, and are exposed to other sufferings, for the sake of truth and a good conscience, with the favour and approbation of God. *For the sun, &c.*—Literally, *For the sun arose with a burning heat, and withered the grass, and the flower fell off, and the beauty of its form perished*. There is an unspeakable beauty and elegance, both in the comparison itself and the very manner of expressing it; intimating both the certainty and the suddenness of the event. *So shall the rich man fade away in his ways*—In the midst of his various pleasures and enjoyments.

Verse 12. *Blessed*—*Μακαριος, happy*, is the man that endureth temptation—Trials of various kinds, patiently and perseveringly; for when he is tried—*Δοκιμος γενομενος, being approved on trial, he shall*

12 ^oBlessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive ^pthe crown of life, ^qwhich the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with ²evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

^o Job v. 17; Prov. iii. 11, 12; Heb. xii. 5; Rev. iii. 19. ^p 1 Cor. ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Chap. ii. 5; 1 Pet. v. 4; Rev. ii. 10.—^q Matt. x. 22.—^r Or, evils.

receive the crown of eternal life, which the Lord Christ hath promised to them that love him—And express their love by such fidelity and zeal.

Verse 13. *Let no man say, when he is tempted*—To commit sin, in whatever way it may be; *I am tempted of God*—God has laid this temptation in my way; *for God cannot be tempted with evil*—It cannot appear desirable, or otherwise than detestable, in God's eyes; nor can he be inclined to it in any degree, through any external object, or any internal motion; *neither tempteth he any man*—He does not persuade or incline, much less constrain any one to sin by any means whatever. The word *πειραζειν, to tempt*, as we have seen, often signifies "to try, in order to discover the disposition of a person, or to improve his virtue, verse 12. In this sense God is said to have tempted or tried Abraham and the Israelites. Not that he was ignorant of the dispositions of either of them. In the same sense the Israelites are said to have tempted or proved God. They put his power and goodness to the trial, by entertaining doubts concerning them. Here, to tempt, signifies to solicit one to sin, and actually to seduce him into sin, which is the effect of temptation or solicitation. See verse 14. In this sense the devil tempts men. And because he is continually employed in that malicious work, he is called, by way of eminence, *Ο πειραζων, the tempter*. It is in this sense we are to understand the saying in the end of the verse, that God is incapable of being tempted, that is, seduced to sin by evil things, and that he seduces no one to sin. God having nothing either to hope or fear, no evil beings, whether man or angel, can either entice or seduce him. Further, his infinitely perfect nature admitting no evil thought or inclination, he is absolutely (*απειρατος*) incapable of being tempted."—MacKnight.

Verses 14, 15. *But every man is tempted when*—In the beginning of the temptation; *he is drawn away of his own lust*—Greek, *υπο της ιδιας επιθυμιας εξελκομενος*; literally, he is drawn out of God, his strong refuge, by his own desire; excited by some external object presenting itself; and enticed—*Δελεαζομενος, caught with a bait*. It is generally supposed that the allusion here is to the drawing of fish out of a river with a baited hook: a metaphor used by Plato, as quoted by Cicero, (*De Senect.*, cap. 13.)

A. M. 4064. 15 Then, ^r when lust hath con-
A. D. 60. ceived, it bringeth forth sin; and
sin, when it is finished, ^a bringeth forth
death.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 * Every ^t good gift and every perfect gift is

^r Job xv. 35; ^{psa} vii. 14.—^{rom} vi. 21, 23.—* Fourth
Sunday after Easter, epistle, ver. 17 to ver. 22.—^{john} iii. 27;

"Divine enim Plato, escam malorum appellat voluptatem; quod ea videlicet homines capiantur ut hamo pisces." *Plato divinely calls pleasure a bait of evil things; namely, because by it men are taken as fishes by a hook.* With regard to most temptations that draw men into sin, the case seems to be thus: 1st, An outward object presents itself, which appears to be desirable, either on account of the profit or pleasure it seems calculated to afford; 2d, Through an inordinate love of ease, honour, wealth, or pleasure, a desire of that object arises in a man's corrupt heart; 3d, That desire is yielded to, instead of being resisted, and thereby he is drawn from that line of duty in which he before walked, and from that state of union and communion with God which he enjoyed, and is entangled in the guilt and misery of sin. We are therefore to look for the causes of every sin chiefly in ourselves; in our appetites, passions, and corrupt inclinations. Even the injections of the devil cannot hurt us, till we make them our own, by entertaining and yielding to them. Then, *when lust, desire, hath conceived*—By obtaining the consent of our will, that is, when it is yielded to; *it bringeth forth actual sin*—By a speedy birth, where, perhaps, the full indulgence of the desire was not at first intended. It does not follow from this, that the desire itself is not sin. He that begets a man is himself a man; *and sin, when it is finished*—Actually committed; *bringeth forth death*—Tends, in its consequences, to the final ruin of both soul and body, as naturally as the conception of an animal does to its birth. Indeed, sin is born big with death. Thus St. James "represents men's lust as a harlot, which entices their understanding and will into its impure embraces, and from that conjunction conceives sin. And sin, being brought forth and nourished by frequent repetitions, in its turn begets death, which destroys the sinner. This is the true genealogy of sin and death. Lust is the mother of sin, and sin the mother of death; and the sinner the parent of both. Verse 18, the apostle gives the genealogy of righteousness. All the righteous deeds which men perform, and the holy designs and desires, intentions and affections, which are found in them, proceed from their renewed nature; and their nature is renewed by the power of truth and grace; and God is the prime mover in the whole."—Macknight.

Verses 16, 17. *Do not err, &c.*—By supposing that God is the author of sin, or that any thing which is sinful in the heart or conduct of man can, with truth, be ascribed to him: as well might darkness and coldness be attributed to the sun. It is indeed a grievous error to ascribe the evil, and not the good,

from above, and cometh down from A. M. 4064.
the Father of lights, ^a with whom is ^a A. D. 60.
no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 ^r Of his own will begat he us with the
word of truth, ^r that we should be a kind of
^a first-fruits of his creatures.

1 Cor. iv. 7.—^{num} xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29; Mal. iii. 6;
Rom. xi. 29.—^{john} i. 13; iii. 3.—^{eph} i. 12.—* Jer. ii. 3.

which we receive, to God. No evil, but *every good gift*—Of every kind: whatever is beautiful, excellent, and good in any creature in the universe; all the members and senses of our bodies, and all our temporal blessings; *and every perfect gift*—Every gift of truth and grace, whatever tends to holiness and happiness here or hereafter; *is from above*—From heaven, not from earth, much less from hell; *and cometh down from the Father of lights*—Whether material or spiritual, in the kingdom of grace and glory; the author of all truth, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and happiness. The appellation of *Father* is here used with peculiar propriety. It follows in the next verse, he *begat us*. *With whom is no variableness*—In his understanding; *or shadow of turning*—In his will; but he is immutably wise and good, holy and happy. He infallibly discerns all good and evil, and invariably loves the one and hates the other. There is in both the Greek words here used a metaphor taken from the heavenly bodies, particularly proper, where *the Father of lights* is mentioned; both words are applicable to any celestial body which has a daily vicissitude of day and night, and sometimes longer days, sometimes longer nights. In God is nothing of this kind. He is mere light. If there be any such vicissitude in us, it is from ourselves, not from him. "Will he give us holy desires at one time, and evil inclinations at another? No: he always gives us what is good, and nothing but good. It is blasphemous, therefore, as well as absurd, to suppose that God either tempts or constrains men to sin, on purpose that he may have a pretence for making them miserable. Some are of opinion that in the word *παραλλαγή*, translated *variableness*, there is an allusion to the parallaxes of the heavenly bodies. But as these were not known to the common people, the apostle, in a letter addressed to them, would hardly introduce a reference to such things."—Macknight.

Verse 18. *Of his own will*—Without any necessity on his part, or merit on ours; from a will most loving, most free, most pure, just opposite to our evil desire, verse 15; *begat he us*—He converted, regenerated us, who believe; *by the word of truth*—The true word, emphatically so termed, the gospel; *that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures*—The most excellent of his visible creatures, and consecrated to, and set apart for him in an especial manner. The first-fruits being the best of their kind, by calling the regenerated *the first-fruits of God's creatures*, the apostle has shown how acceptable such are to God, and how excellent in themselves through the renovation of their nature; and

A. M. 4064. 19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren,
A. D. 60. ^a let every man be swift to hear, ^b slow
to speak, ^c slow to wrath:

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the
righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore ^d lay apart all filthiness, and

^a Eccles. v. 1.—^b Prov. x. 19.—^c Prov. xiv. 17.—^d Col.
iii. 8.—^e Acts xiii. 26; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 2; Eph. i. 13;
Tit. ii. 11; Heb. ii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 9.

as the first-fruits, being offered to God, were supposed to sanctify the rest of the harvest, true Christians, who are in a peculiar manner dedicated to God, in some respects may be said to sanctify the rest. The apostle says, a *kind* of first-fruits, for Christ alone is absolutely the *first-fruits*.

Verses 19, 20. *Wherefore*—As if he had said, Since you are regenerated, and that by the word of God, therefore *let every man be swift to hear*—That word; let him be willing and desirous to receive instruction from it, and therefore diligent in embracing all opportunities of hearing it; *slow to speak*—To deliver his opinion in matters of faith, that he does not yet well understand. Persons half instructed frequently have a high opinion of their own knowledge in religious matters, are very fond of teaching others, and zealous to bring them over to their opinions. That the converted Jews were fond of being teachers, we learn from James iii. 1; 1 Tim. i. 7. *Slow to wrath*—Against those that differ from him. Intemperate religious zeal is often accompanied by a train of bad passions, and particularly with anger against those who differ from us in opinion. The Jews, even the Jewish Christians to whom this letter was chiefly written, were very faulty in this respect. The apostle, however, may be understood as cautioning his readers against easily yielding to provocation in any respect whatever, and especially when injuriously treated by their persecutors. *For the wrath of man*—Even when it appears in the garb of religious zeal, *worketh not*—But, on the contrary, greatly obstructs, *the righteousness of God*—Instead of promoting the cause of true religion in the world, it is a reproach to it, and a means of exciting the prejudices of mankind against it. Persecution, in particular, the effect of the wrath of man, if violent, may make men hypocrites, by forcing them to profess what they do not believe; but it has no influence to produce that genuine faith which God accounts to men for righteousness. Nothing but rational arguments, with the illumination of the Spirit of God, can do this.

Verse 21. *Wherefore*—Because wrath is such a hinderance to true religion, and you are regenerated; *lay apart*—As you would a dirty garment; *all filthiness*—Every kind of sin which is of a defiling nature. The word *ρυπαρία*, here used, signifies filthiness adhering to the body. When, as here, applied to the mind, it denotes those lusts and appetites, and other sins which defile the soul, particularly those which are gratified by gluttony, drunkenness, and uncleanness; vices to which many Jews, pretending

superfluity of naughtiness, and re- A. M. 4064.
ceive with meekness the ingrafted A. D. 60.

word, ^e which is able to save your souls.

22 ^f But be ye doers of the word,
and not hearers only, deceiving your own
selves.

^e Fifth Sunday after Easter, epistle, verso 22 to the end.
^f Matt. vii. 21; Luke vi. 46; xi. 28; Rom. ii. 13.

to be teachers, were addicted; and *superfluity of naughtiness*—*κακιας*, *maliciousness*, or *wickedness* of any sort; for however specious and necessary it may appear to worldly wisdom, it is vile, hateful, contemptible, and really superfluous: every reasonable end may be effectually answered without any kind or degree of it. Lay this, every known sin, aside by the grace of God, or all your hearing is vain; and *receive*—Into your ears, your heart, your life; *with meekness*—Constant evenness and serenity of mind, or with an humble, submissive frame of spirit; *the ingrafted word*—The word of the gospel, ingrafted in penitent, believing souls by regeneration, (verse 18,) and by habit, (Heb. v. 14,) through the influence of God's Spirit attending the ministry of your teachers, 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6. *Which is able to save your souls*—As a means appointed by God for that end, and when received by faith, Heb. iv. 2.

Verse 22. *But be ye doers of the word*—See on Matt. vii. 21, 24. We are then doers of the word, when, being enlightened by its doctrines, awed by its threatenings, and encouraged by its promises, we, through the aid of divine grace, love and obey its precepts, both those which enjoin repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as terms necessary to be complied with in order to our justification and regeneration, and those subsequent commands which show how those, who are already justified and born from above, ought to walk that they may please God, and save their souls; and *not hearers only*—Not contenting yourselves with mere hearing, or even with understanding and believing what you hear, without reducing it to practice; *deceiving your own selves*—As if it was sufficient to know your Master's will without doing it. Some suppose that in these words the apostle refers primarily to the Jews, whose doctrine it was, 1st, That to be Abraham's seed was sufficient to obtain for them God's favour, and secure them against his judgments; 2d, That circumcision procured them acceptance with God; 3d, That all Israelites had a portion in the world to come; and especially, 4th, That to be employed in hearing and studying the law was of itself sufficient. But it seems more likely that he gives this caution with a reference to those Gnostics and other Antinomians that were creeping fast into the church; and were *hearers only*, not even considering the word they heard, and therefore not understanding it; and especially not experiencing its power to regenerate and save them from the guilt and power of their sins, and restore them to the divine image. The words, *παρολογίζομενοι*

A. M. 4064. 23 For ^a if any be a hearer of the
A. D. 60. word, and not a doer, he is like unto

a man beholding his natural face in a glass :

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But ^b whoso looketh into the perfect ^c law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work,

^a Luke vi. 47, &c. ; Chapter ii. 14, &c. — ^b 2 Corinth. iii. 18. ^c Chap. ii. 12. — ^d John xiii. 17. — ^e Or, *doing*. — ^f Psa. xxxiv.

εαυτου, rendered, *deceiving your own selves*, properly signify, *imposing upon yourselves by sophistical reasonings*; an expression here used with great propriety, and very applicable to all those professors of Christianity who abuse the doctrines of grace to Antinomian purposes, and make void the moral law through a pretence of faith.

Verses 23, 24. *If any be a hearer of the word merely, and not a doer*—If he do not comply with its design, do not so consider and believe it as to lay it to heart, and be influenced by its doctrines, obey its precepts, embrace and rely on its promises, revere and stand in awe of its threatenings, guarding against what would expose him to them; *he is like a man beholding*—From custom or by accident; *his natural face in a glass*—Without any intention to discover, and wash or wipe off, the spots that may be on it. *For he beholdeth himself*—Without taking particular notice of what renders his visage disagreeable; *and goeth his way*—To other business; *and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was*—What renders his countenance uncomely, and requires to be removed. Here the word of God is represented as a mirror, in which, if a man will look with attention and care, he will see the face of his soul, and discover in what state he is, and what character he bears in the sight of God. It will manifest to him those principles and practices, those thoughts and imaginations, those affections, intentions, dispositions, words, and actions, which are contrary to truth and grace, to wisdom, piety, and virtue. But frequently those who discover all this through the word heard or read, go away, and so occupy themselves in secular affairs, as immediately to forget what manner of persons they were, and continue the same in their temper and conduct as before. Reader, is this thy case?

Verse 25. *But whoso looketh*—Not with a transient glance, but, as *παρακνυσας* signifies, *bending down*, as it were, with an intention to fix his eyes upon, examine with accuracy, and search all things to the bottom. The expression implies much thought and meditation, joined with self-examination: *into the perfect law*—Namely, that of the gospel, termed a law, as being a rule of faith and practice, obligatory upon all to whom it is made known, acquitting or condemning men, (for by it they will be judged at the last day,) and determining our state for ever: called a perfect law, 1st, Because it is clear, concise,

^h this man shall be blessed in his ⁱ deed. A. M. 4064. A. D. 60.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and ^j bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, ^k To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, ^l and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

13; xxxix. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 10. — ^m Isa. i. 16, 17; lviii. 6, 7; Matt. xxv. 36. — ⁿ Rom. xii. 2; Chap. iv. 4; 1 John v. 18.

full, having no deficiency, and yet containing nothing superfluous. 2d, Because of its superiority to the law of Moses, which made no man perfect, either in respect of justification or sanctification, Heb. vii. 10; whereas the gospel is calculated to make men perfect in both respects. And the apostle terms it *the law of liberty*, 1st, In opposition to the ceremonial law, which was a yoke of bondage the Jews could not bear, and from which it freed all that received it; Christ's yoke being easy, his burden light, and his commandments not grievous. 2d, Because it delivers all true believers from the guilt of past sin, from the curse of the law, and from the wrath of God. 3d, Because it rescues them from the power of sin and Satan, of the world and the flesh, and from the slavery of their lusts and passions, restoring the dominion of reason and conscience in their minds, which is true liberty. 4th, Because it saves those, on whom it has its designed influence, from all slavish fear of God, all tormenting fear of death and hell, and the whole spirit of bondage. Observe, reader, he who receives the gospel in faith, love, and new obedience, is *free*; he that does not is not free, but a slave to sin, and a criminal before God. *And continueth therein*—Perseveres in the study, consideration, and belief of it, and in obedience to it; see John viii. 31; *being not a forgetful hearer*—Like the person above described; *but a doer of the work*—Of the duty which the gospel requires; *this man*—There is a peculiar force in this repetition of the word; *shall be blessed*—*Μακαριος*, happy; *in his deed*—Not only in hearing, but especially in doing the will of God.

Verses 26, 27. *If, &c.*—Here the apostle shows more particularly who are the doers of the word; 1st, Negatively, in this verse: 2d, Positively, in the next verse. *If any man among you*—Who are professors of Christianity; *seem to be religious*—*Θρησκευος*, pious, devout, or a worshipper of God: and if his conduct in other respects be irreprehensible, and he be exact in all the outward offices of religion, yet if he *bridleth not his tongue*—From tale-bearing, backbiting, evil-speaking, slandering; or from vain, foolish, ostentatious talking and jesting; or rash, bitter, passionate, malicious, revengeful expressions: this man only *deceiveth his own heart*—If he fancy he has any true religion at all; for his *religion is vain*—Is a mere empty profession, and neither is nor will be of any service to him. *Pure religion*—

The word *θρησκεία*, here used, properly signifies *worship*, which branch of religion is put for the whole. In the epithets here given to it, *pure and undefiled*, Archbishop Tillotson thinks there is an allusion to the excellence of a precious stone, which consists much in its being *καθάρη και αμύαντος*, *clear, and without flaw, or cloud*. And surely, says Doddridge, no gem is so precious or ornamental as the lovely temper here described. Here then the apostle describes the religion which is, 1st, True and genuine, in opposition to that which is false and mistaken: 2d, Sincere and solid, in opposition to that which is feigned and pretended: 3d, Pure and holy, in opposition to that which is mixed with the inventions and superstitions of men, and defiled by erroneous principles and vicious practices. But what is this religion? In what does it consist? The apostle informs us: it consists not in speculations or notions, however just and orthodox. Not in forms or modes of worship, however Scriptural and necessary to be observed. Not in the warmth of affection, or ardour of zeal, &c., during worship. But, in consequence of repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, of justification by faith, and regeneration by the influence of the Divine Spirit, it consists in the possession and exercise of that love

to God and all mankind, which is the source of the various branches of practical religion, of mercy as well as justice toward men, and of holiness toward God. True religion before God—Before his penetrating eyes; *even the Father*—Whose intelligent and immortal offspring we all are; *is this, to visit*—With counsel, comfort, and relief; *the fatherless and widows*—Those who need it most; *in their affliction*—In their most helpless and hopeless state; *and to keep himself unspotted from the world*—From the maxims, tempers, habits, and customs of it. But this cannot be done till we have given our hearts to God, and love our neighbour as ourselves. That this is true or pure religion, or the proper effect and evidence thereof, the reader will not question, if he recollects, 1st, That religion consists principally in faith working by love to God and man, Gal. v. 6; 1 Tim i. 5; 1 Cor. xiii. 1, &c.; John iv. 8. 2d, That the most eminent and important fruit of faith, and of the love of our neighbour, is not saying, *Be thou warmed*, (James ii. 14; 1 John iv. 17,) but visiting, comforting, and relieving the needy and distressed. 3d, That the most important fruit of faith in, and love to, God, is purity of intention and affection, or the being dead to, and unspotted by, the world.

CHAPTER II.

In this chapter (1.) the apostle cautions the Jewish Christians against showing an undue respect to men's external circumstances, and resting satisfied in a partial observation of the divine precepts, especially where the royal law of charity or universal benevolence was in question, 1-13. (2.) He descants largely on the inefficacy of a mere historical faith, and evinces, by most striking instances and illustrations, the utter insufficiency of it for our justification and eternal salvation, 14-26.

A. M. 4064. MY brethren, have not the faith of
A. D. 60. our Lord Jesus Christ, ^a the Lord of glory, with ^b respect of persons.

2 For if there come unto your ¹ assembly, a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

3 And ye have respect to him that ^{A. M. 4064.} A. D. 60. weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here ² in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

^a 1 Corinthians ii. 8.—^b Leviticus xix. 15; Deuteronomy i. 17; xvi. 19; Proverbs xxiv. 23; xxviii. 21; Matthew xxii.

16; Verse 9; Jude 16.—¹ Gr. *synagogue*.—² Or, *well, or, seemly*.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1-4. *My brethren*—The equality of Christians intimated by this name is the ground of the admonition; *have*—That is, *hold*; *not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory*—Of which glory all who believe in him partake; *with respect of persons*—So as to give undue preference to any on account of their external circumstances; honour none merely for being rich, despise none merely for being poor. Remember that the relation in which the meanest of your fellow-Christians stands to Him who is the Son of God, ought to recommend them to your regard and esteem. For if there come unto

your assembly—Convened either for religious worship, or for deciding civil differences; *a man with a gold ring*—Or, *having his fingers adorned with gold rings*, as *χρυσόδακτυλιος* may be rendered. For, as the learned Albert hath observed, those who valued themselves upon the richness and luxury of their dress, were accustomed to deck their fingers with a considerable number of costly and valuable rings, frequently wearing several upon one finger. *And a poor man in vile (vnrapa, in sordid, or dirty) raiment, and ye have respect*—Ye show an undue regard to the former, and put a visible slight on the latter, without considering what may be the real

A. M. 4064. 5 Hearken, my beloved brethren,
A. D. 60. ° Hath not God chosen the poor of this world ^d rich in faith, and heirs of ³ the kingdom ° which he hath promised to them that love him?

6 But ^f ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, ^e and draw you before the judgment-seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, ^h Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

^e John vii. 49; 1 Cor. i. 26, 28.—^d Luke xii. 24; 1 Tim. vi. 18; Rev. ii. 9.—³ Or, *that*.—^c Exod. xx. 6; 1 Sam. ii. 30; Prov. viii. 17; Matt. v. 3; Luke vi. 20; xii. 32; 1 Cor. ii. 9; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Chap. i. 12.—^f 1 Cor. xi. 22.

character of the one or the other. *Are ye not partial in yourselves*—Or, as *διεκριθητε εν εαυτοις* may be rendered, *ye distinguish not in yourselves*, according to the different characters of these two men, to which of them the most respect is due, to the poor or to the rich; but only regard their outward appearance, and *are become judges of evil thoughts*—Or *evil-reasoning judges*, as the original words may be translated. You reason ill, and so judge wrong; for fine apparel is no proof of worth in him that wears it.

Verses 5-7. *Hearken*—As if he had said, Stay, consider, ye that judge thus. Does not the presumption lie rather in favour of the poor man? *Hath not God chosen the poor*—That is, are not they whom God hath chosen, generally speaking, poor in *this world*, who yet are *rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom*—Consequently the most honourable of men? And those whom God so highly honours, ought not ye to honour likewise? *But ye*—Christians, that know better; *have despised*—*ητιμασατε*, *have dishonoured, or disgraced; the poor*—By such conduct. *Do not rich men, &c.*—As if he had said, You have little reason to show so much respect to them, if you consider what their carriage toward you has been; those whom you court with so much respect and assiduity, *oppress*—*καταδυναστευουσιν*, *tyrannise over you, and draw*—Or drag; *ye before the judgment-seats*—Are not most of the rich men your persecutors, rather than your friends? *Do not they blaspheme that worthy name*—Of God and of Christ; *by which ye are called*—And which deserves to be had in the highest esteem and veneration by all intelligent beings? The apostle speaks chiefly of rich heathen: but are Christians, so called, a whit behind them in persecuting the disciples of Jesus?

Verses 8-11. *If ye fulfil the royal law*—The supreme law of the great King, which is love; and that to every man, poor as well as rich; *ye do well*—The phrase, *νομος βασιλικος*, *royal law*, here admits of three interpretations. 1st, As the Greeks called a thing *royal* which was excellent in its kind, it may mean an *excellent law*. 2d, As the same Greeks, having few or no kings among them, called the laws

9 But ⁱ if ye have respect to persons, A. M. 4064.
ye commit sin, and are convinced of A. D. 60.
the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, ^k he is guilty of all.

11 For ^l he that said, ¹ Do not commit adultery; said also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by ^m the law of liberty.

¹ Acts xiii. 50; xvii. 6; xviii. 12; Chap. v. 6.—^h Lev. xix. 18; Matt. xxii. 39; Rom. xiii. 8, 9; Gal. v. 14; vi. 2.—ⁱ Verse 1. ^k Deut. xxvii. 26; Matt. v. 19; Gal. iii. 10.—^l Or, *that law which said*.—^m Exod. xx. 13, 14.—ⁿ Chap. i. 25.

of the kings of Persia, *βασιλικοι νομοι*, royal laws, the expression here may signify, *the law made by Christ our King*. 3d, This law, enjoining us to love our neighbour, may be called the *royal law*, because it inspires us with a greatness of mind, fit for kings, whose greatest glory consists in benevolence and clemency. The law or precept here spoken of was enjoined by Moses, but Christ carried it to such perfection, as it was to be practised among his followers, and laid such stress upon it, that he called it a *new commandment*, John xiii. 34; and *his commandment*, John xv. 12. *But if ye have respect to persons*—In this partial manner, *ye commit*, *εργασασθε, ye work, sin*—That is, ye do a sinful action; and *are convinced*—Or rather *convicted, by the law*, which I have just now mentioned: for that law enjoins you to love your neighbours as yourselves, and consequently to do them justice. *For whosoever shall keep the whole law*—In every other instance; and *yet offend in one point*—Knowingly; *he is guilty of all*—He is liable to condemnation from the law-giver, as if he had offended in every point. The Jewish doctors affirmed, that by observing any one precept of the law with care, men secured to themselves the favour of God, notwithstanding they neglected all the rest. Wherefore they recommended it to their disciples to make choice of a particular precept, in the keeping of which they were to exercise themselves. Whitby says, they commonly chose either the law of the sabbath, or the law of sacrifice, or the law of tithes, because they esteemed these the great commandments in the law. This corrupt Jewish doctrine St. James here expressly condemns; *for he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill*—The apostle's meaning is, that all the commandments being equally enjoined by God, the man who despises the authority of God so far as to break any one of them habitually, would, in the like circumstances of temptation and opportunity, certainly break any other of them; consequently, in the eye of God, he is guilty of breaking the whole law: that is, he hath no real principle of piety or virtue in him.

Verses 12, 13. *So speak ye, and so do*—In all

A. M. 4064. 13 For ^a he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy; and ^omercy ^brejoiceth against judgment.

14 ^p What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 ^q If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And ^r one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding

ing ye give them not those things ^{A. M. 4064.} which are needful to the body; what ^{A. D. 60.} *doth it* profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being ^s alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith ^t without thy works, ^u and I will show thee my faith by my works.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: ^v the devils also believe, and tremble.

^a Job xxii. 6, &c.; Prov. xxi. 13; Matt. vi. 15; xviii. 35; xxv. 41, 42.—^b 1 John iv. 17, 18.—^c Or, *glorieth*.—^d Matt. vii. 26; Chap. i. 23.—^e Job xxxi. 19, 20; Luke iii. 11.

^f 1 John iii. 18.—^g Gr. *by itself*.—^h Some copies read, *by the works*.—ⁱ Chap. iii. 13.—^j Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; v. 7; Luke iv. 34; Acts xvi. 17; xix. 15.

things; *as they that shall be judged*—Without respect of persons; *by the law of liberty*—The gospel, (see on chap. i. 25,) the law of universal love, which alone is perfect freedom. For their transgression of this, both in word and deed, the wicked shall be condemned. *And according to their works*, done in obedience to this, the righteous will be rewarded. *For he shall have judgment without mercy*—In that day; *who hath showed no mercy*—To his poor brethren; *and, or rather but, mercy*—The mercy of God to believers, answering to that which they have shown, will then *rejoice, or glory, over judgment*.

Verses 14–17. *What doth it profit*—From chap. i. 22, the apostle has been enforcing Christian practice; he now applies to those who neglected this under the pretence of faith. St. Paul had taught, that *a man is justified by faith without the works of the law*. This some began already to wrest to their own destruction. Wherefore St. James, purposely repeating (verses 21–25) the same phrases, testimonies, and examples, which St. Paul had used, (Rom. iv. 3; Heb. xi. 17–31,) refutes, not the doctrine of St. Paul, but the error of those who abused it. There is, therefore, no contradiction between the apostles: they both delivered the truth of God, but in a different manner, as having to do with different kinds of men. On another occasion St. James himself pleaded the cause of faith, Acts xv. 13–21. And St. Paul himself strenuously pleads for works, particularly in his latter epistles. This verse is a summary of what follows. *What doth it profit*—Of what advantage is it to him, *though, or if, a man say he hath faith*—It is not *if he have faith, but if he say he hath it*. Here, therefore, true, living faith is meant. But in other parts of the argument the apostle speaks of a dead imaginary faith. He does not therefore teach that true faith *can*, but that it *cannot* subsist without works. Nor does he oppose *faith to works*, but an empty name or profession of faith to real faith *working by love*. Can that faith, which is without works, save him? Surely not. It can no more save him than it can profit his neighbour. *For if a brother or sister be naked, &c.*—Destitute of food and clothing; *and one of you*—Who calls himself a Christian, *say to them*, We sincerely pity your case, and feel the

tender emotions of that love which our relation to each other requires; *depart* therefore, *in peace*—Whithersoever ye are going; *be ye warmed and filled*—Be clothed and fed by some humane person: but *notwithstanding* all these kind speeches, *ye give them not*—Either food or raiment, or any money to purchase the things necessary for the body; *what doth it profit?*—What is the advantage of being addressed with such hypocritical professions of love? Will such speeches feed and clothe the poor and destitute? Will they not rather seem a cruel mockery than a real kindness? *Even so faith*—A belief of the gospel, and of the great truths contained in it, how zealously soever it may be professed, and how orthodox soever those articles are to which an assent is given; *if it have not works*—If it do not produce love to God and all mankind, and obedience to his will, yea, the various fruits of righteousness; if it do not *work by love*, it is but a *dead, empty* notion, of no more profit to him that has it than bidding the naked be clothed is to him. It can neither convey spiritual life to the soul here, (which all true faith does,) nor entitle any one to eternal life hereafter.

Verses 18–20. *Yea, a man*—Who judges better; *may say*—To such a vain talker, in order to bring matters to a short issue; *thou hast faith*—Thou sayest; *and I* make it appear by my life and conversation that *I have works*—Which naturally spring from that principle. *Show me thy faith without thy works*—If thou canst. Or, *εκ των εργαων σε, by thy works*, as the most and the best copies read it, and as it is read in the margin. *And I will show thee my faith by my works*—Let us, without contending about different explications of faith, make it manifest to each other that our profession is solid, by its substantial effects upon our tempers and lives. As if he had said, The only way in which thou canst show thy faith is by thy works; but as thou hast no works to produce, thou never canst show thy faith in this way. *Thou believest that there is one God*—I allow that thou dost: but this only proves that thou hast the same faith which the devils have. Nay, they not only *believe*, but *tremble* at the dreadful expectation of eternal torments. So far is that faith from either

A. M. 4064. 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man,
A. D. 60. that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, ^a when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 ^b Seest thou ^c how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

^a Gen. xxii. 9, 12.—^b Or, *Thou seest.*—^c Heb. xi. 17.—^d Gen.

justifying or saving them. *But wilt thou*—Art thou willing; to *know*—Indeed thou art not, thou wouldst fain be ignorant of it: *O vain*—*Keve, empty, man*—Devoid of all true religion; *that faith without works*—A persuasion of the truths of the gospel, if it produces no real fruits of holiness; *is dead*—As to any valuable purpose that can be expected from it. Indeed it cannot justly be said to be faith, as a dead carcass is not a man. By a *dead faith*, then, St. James means a faith which, because it has no influence on a man's actions, is as incapable to justify him, as a dead carcass is to perform the offices of a living man.

Verse 21. *Was not, &c.*—As if he had said, Take an instance of this in the most celebrated of all the patriarchs, *our father Abraham*. Was not he *justified by works*—Did not his works manifest the truth and liveliness of his faith; *when*—In consequence of the full persuasion he had of a divine command to do it; *he offered Isaac his son upon the altar?*—Intending, in obedience to what he apprehended to be the will of God, actually to have slain him, and to have trusted in God to accomplish the promise of a numerous seed to descend from him, by raising him from the dead: see notes on Heb. xi. 17–19. St. Paul says Abraham was justified by faith, (Rom. iv. 2, &c.,) yet St. James does not contradict him. For he does not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that which Abraham received many years before Isaac was born, Gen. xv. 6; St. James of that which he did not receive till he had *offered up Isaac on the altar*. He was justified, therefore, in St. Paul's sense; that is, *accounted righteous by faith*, antecedent to his *works*. He was justified in St. James's sense, that is, *made righteous by works*, subsequent to his *faith*: so that St. James's justification by works is the fruit of St. Paul's justification by faith.

Verse 22. *Seest thou*—Or *thou seest* then, in this instance; *how faith wrought together with his works*—And animated him to great zeal and self-denial in them. Therefore faith has one energy and operation, works another. And the energy and operation of faith are before works, and together with them. Works do not give life to faith, but faith begets works, and then is completed by them. *And by works was faith made perfect*—“The command to offer Isaac for a burnt-offering, (Gen. xxii. 2,) appearing directly contrary to the promise, (Gen. xxi. 12,) *In Isaac shall thy seed be called*, Abraham's faith was thereby put to the severest trial. Yet it was not staggered by the seeming contrariety

23 And the scripture was fulfilled, ^{A. M. 4064.} which saith, ^{A. D. 60.} ^d Abraham believed ^e God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called ^f the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

xv. 6; Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6.—^g 2 Chron. xx. 7; Isa. xli. 8.

of the divine revelation: Abraham reasoned with himself, (Heb. xi. 19,) that God was able to raise Isaac even from the dead; and firmly believing that he would actually do so, he therefore set himself to obey the divine command without the least gain-saying. James therefore had good reason to say that Abraham's faith co-operated with his works in procuring him the promises confirmed with an oath, because it was his faith in God which enabled him to perform the difficult works, requisite to the offering of Isaac as a burnt-offering. He had equally good reason to say, by works his faith was perfected, or rendered complete; because, if, when tried, he had refused to obey, his would not have been a complete faith. In this passage, therefore, 1st, James hath declared that faith and works are inseparably connected, as cause and effect, and that good works must flow from faith as their principle.” 2d, He here fixes the sense wherein he uses the word *justified*; so that no shadow of contradiction remains between his assertion and St. Paul's. Abraham returned from that sacrifice perfected in faith, and far higher in the favour of God. Faith hath not its existence from works; for it is before them; but its perfection. That vigour of faith which begets works is then excited and increased thereby: as the natural heat of the body begets motion, whereby itself is then excited and increased: see 1 John iii. 22.

Verses 23, 24. *And the scripture*—Which was afterward written, *was* hereby eminently fulfilled. *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness.* This was twice fulfilled, when Abraham first believed, and when he offered up Isaac. St. Paul speaks of the former fulfilling, and St. James of the latter. *And he was called the friend of God*—Both by his posterity, (2 Chron. xx. 7,) and by God himself, Isa. xli. 8. So pleasing to God were the works he wrought in faith! “The passage of Scripture which St. James here says was fulfilled, contains two assertions: 1st, That Abraham believed God; 2d, That his believing God was counted to him for righteousness. By the offering of Isaac that scripture was confirmed or proved to be true in both its parts. For, 1st, By offering Isaac, in the firm expectation that God would raise him from the dead, and fulfil in him the promise of the numerous seed, Abraham showed that he believed God in the firmest manner. 2d, By offering Isaac, Abraham had the promise, that God would count his faith to him for righteousness, renewed and confirmed in a solemn manner with an oath.”—Mac-knight. *Ye see then*—By this instance of the great

A. M. 4064. 25 Likewise also ^a was not Ra-
 A. D. 60. hab the harlot justified by works,
 when she had received the messengers, and

^a Josh. ii. 1; Heb. xi. 31.

father of the faithful, (for the characters of the children are to be estimated in the same manner as those of the father,) *that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only*—It is by no means sufficient, in order to our salvation, that the great principles of religion be credited, if they have not their practical influence on the heart and life.

Verses 25, 26. *Likewise also, &c.*—After Abraham, the father of the Jews, the apostle cites Rahab, a woman and a sinner of the Gentiles, to show that in every nation and sex true faith produces works, and is perfected by them; that is, by the grace of God working in the believer, while he is showing his faith by his works: see note on Heb. xi. 31. "Rahab's faith consisted in her attending to, and reasoning justly on, what she had heard concerning the dividing of the waters of the Red sea for a passage to the Israelites, and concerning the destruction of Sihon and Og. For from these things she concluded that the God of the Israelites was the true God, and sole Governor of the universe; and, firmly believing this, she renounced her former false gods, and concealed the Israelitish spies at the hazard of her life. In this she showed a disposition of the same kind with that which Abraham showed, when he left his country and kindred at God's com-

had sent *them* out another way? A. M. 4064
 26 For as the body without the ^o spi- A. D. 60.
 rit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

^o Or, *breath*.

mand. And as Abraham, for that great act of faith and obedience, was rewarded with the promise of Canaan, so Rahab, as the reward of her faith and works, was not destroyed with the unbelieving inhabitants of Jericho." *For as the body without the spirit is dead*—Has no sense or feeling, no vital heat, action, or energy, but is a mere carcass, how fair and entire soever it may appear, and will at length fall into putrefaction and dissolution; so such a *faith as is without works is dead also*—Now appears as a carcass in the sight of God, is useless, yea, loathsome and offensive. Two things, then, of great importance must be attended to on this subject. 1st, That the best outward works without faith are dead; they want their root and vital principle; for it is only by faith that any thing which we do is really good, as being done with an eye to the glory of God, and in obedience to him. 2d, That the most plausible profession of faith without works is dead, as the root is dead when it does not vegetate, when it produces no fruit. Faith is the root, good works are the fruits, and we must see to it that we have both. We must not think that either of them, without the other, will justify and save us. This is the grace of God wherein we stand, and we must take care that we stand in it.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter, (1.) The apostle cautions them against being too forward in assuming the office and character of teachers, and recommends a strict government of the tongue, as a matter, though of great difficulty, yet of the highest importance, 1-12. (2.) He shows the excellence of heavenly wisdom, which discovers itself in purity, meekness, and peace, in opposition to that which is litigious, carnal, and worldly, 13-18.

A. M. 4064. MY brethren, ^a be not many mas-
 A. D. 60. ters, ^b knowing that we shall

^a Matthew xxiii. 8, 14; Romans ii. 20, 21; 1 Peter v. 3.
^b Luke vi. 37.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. *Be not many masters*—*Διδασκαλοι, teachers*. Let none of you rashly, and without proper qualifications, undertake the office of teachers of others; an office into which many are ready to intrude themselves, without being called of God to it. "The great desire which the Jewish Christians, to whom this letter was written, had to become teachers in the church after their conversion, and to inculcate the obligation of the law of Moses, is noticed by St. Paul, 1 Tim. i. 7. *Desiring to be teachers of the law, &c.*—These teachers of the law in the Christian Church were the great corrupters of the gospel." *Knowing that*—If we err, we shall

receive the greater ¹ condemnation. A. M. 4064.
 2 For ^c in many things we offend all. A. D. 60.

¹ Or, *judgment*.—^c 1 Kings viii. 46; 2 Chron. vi. 36; Prov. xx. 9; Eccles. vii. 20; 1 John i. 8.

receive the greater condemnation—On account of our taking upon us an office for which we are not qualified, and in the exercise of which more is required of us, in many respects, than of others in a more private station of life. St. James here, as in several of the following verses, by a common figure of speech, joins himself with the persons to whom he wrote, to mitigate the harshness of his reproof: *we shall receive—we offend—we put bits—we curse*, none of which particulars, as common sense shows, are to be interpreted either of him or of the other apostles. *For in many things we offend all*—Through natural infirmity and strong temptation, we are all liable to fall. The original expression,

A. M. 4064. ^d If any man offend not in word, A. D. 60. ^e the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

3 Behold, ^f we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which, though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm,

^d Psa. xxxiv. 13; Eccles. xiv. 1; xix. 16; xxv. 8; Chap. i. 26; 1 Peter iii. 20.—^e Matthew xii. 37.—^f Psalm xxxii. 9. ^g Prov. xii. 18; xv. 2.

πρωτοιεν παντες, is literally, *we all stumble*. "It is a metaphor taken from persons who, walking on slippery or rough ground, slide or stumble without falling; as appears from Rom. xi. 11, *μη περιπαων ινα πεσωσι, have they stumbled so as to fall?* Therefore, as in Scripture, *walking* denotes the course of a man's conduct, *stumbling*, in this passage, signifies those lesser failings in duty, to which common Christians are liable." *If any man offend*—Stumble; *not in word*—Keep his tongue under constant government, so that *no corrupt discourse proceeds out of his mouth*, at any time or on any occasion, but only that which is either about necessary business as far as is necessary, or good to the use of edifying, (see note on Eph. iv. 29,) *the same is a perfect man*—Eminently good; one who has attained to a high degree of wisdom and grace, and able also to bridle the whole body—To keep all his senses, appetites, and passions under due regulation. The tongue is an index of the heart, and he who does not transgress the law of truth, or love, or purity, or humility, or meekness, or patience, or seriousness, with his tongue, will, with the same grace, so rule all his dispositions and actions, as to manifest that he has in him the mind that was in Christ, and walks as Christ walked.

Verses 3-5. *Behold, &c.*—As if the apostle had said, Think not the tongue a weak member because it is small; *we put bits in the horses' mouths that they may obey us*—May go as we direct them; and, strong, and sometimes furious as they are; *we turn about their whole body*—Influence as we please all their motions. *Behold also the ships, which though they be so great*—So large and heavy, and are driven frequently by fierce winds which seem to be irresistible, *yet are they turned about*—To the right or left; *with a very small helm*—Which, to a person unacquainted with nautical affairs, would appear to be weak and insignificant; *whithersoever the governor*—*Η ορηη τη ευθυνοντος, the force of the director, or steersman; willeth*—That is, according to the will of the person who sits at the helm; who was not necessarily either the ship-master or the pilot, but a person appointed to that office. *So the tongue is a little, and apparently insignificant member, and yet boasteth great things*—Hath great influence: also, to show by another comparison the operation of the tongue, *behold how great a matter*

whithersoever the governor listeth. A. M. 4064. A. D. 60.

5 Even so ^g the tongue is a little member, and ^h boasteth great things. Behold, how great ⁱ a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And ^j the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that ^k it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the ^l course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

^h Psa. xii. 3; lxxiii. 8, 9.—ⁱ Or, wood.—^j Prov. xvi. 27. ^k Matthew xv. 11, 18, 19, 20; Mark vii. 15, 20, 23.—^l Gr. wheel.

—How great a quantity of wood and other materials; *a little fire kindleth*—Into a terrible flame.

Verse 6. *The tongue is a fire*—Which often produces a great conflagration; *a world of iniquity*—This is a metaphor of the same kind with *a sea of troubles, a deluge of wickedness*. The meaning is, that a great collection of iniquity proceeds from the tongue. Indeed "there is no iniquity which an unbridled tongue is not capable of producing; either by itself, when it curses, rails, teaches false doctrine, and speaks evil of God and man; or by means of others, whom it entices, commands, terrifies, and persuades, to commit murders, adulteries, and every evil work." *So is the tongue*—Such is the rank and place it holds among our members, that it defileth the whole body—The whole man, all our members, senses, and faculties. In this, and in what follows, the similitude of the fire and wood is carried on. For as the fire, put among the wood, first spotteth or blackeneth it with its smoke, and then setteth it on fire, so the tongue spotteth or blackeneth, and then setteth on fire the natural frame, termed here *the course, τροχον, the wheel, of nature*—"The wonderful mechanism of the human body, and its power of affecting and of being affected by the soul, is in this passage aptly represented by the wheels of a machine which act on each other. The pernicious influence of the tongue, in first spotting, and then destroying, both the bodies and the souls of men, arises from the language which it frames, whereby it inflames men's passions to such a degree, that, being no longer under the direction of their reason, those passions push them on to such actions as are destructive both of their bodies and souls." Some writers, by the *natural wheel, or course of nature*, understand the successive generations of men, one generation going, and another coming, without intermission; according to which interpretation the apostle's meaning is, that the tongue hath set on fire our forefathers, it inflameth us, and will have the same influence on those who come after us. *And it is set on fire of hell*—Put here for the devil; as, by a like metonymy, heaven is put for God. Satan influences the heart, and its wickedness overflows by the tongue, and tends, by its fatal consequences, to produce a very hell upon earth. "The use we ought to make of the doctrine taught in this highly figurative passage is obvious. Being surrounded with such a

A. M. 4064. 7 For every ⁴ kind of beasts, and of
A. D. 60. birds, and of serpents, and of things
in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed, of
⁵ mankind :

8 But the tongue can no man tame ; *it is* an
unruly evil, ¹ full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father ;
and therewith curse we men, ² which are made
after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing
and cursing. My brethren, these things ought
not so to be.

⁴ Gr. nature.—⁵ Gr. nature of man.—¹ Psa. cxl. 3.—² Gen.
i. 26 ; v. 1 ; ix. 6.—³ Or, hole.

mass of combustible matter, we should take great
care not to send from our tongues the least spark by
which it may be kindled, lest we ourselves, with
those whom we set on fire, be consumed in the
flames which we raise."—Macknight.

Verses 7, 8. *For every kind of beasts*—Πασα φωναί
θηριων, every nature of wild beasts. The phrase
signifies the strength and fierceness of wild beasts,
the swiftness of birds, the poison of serpents, the ex-
ceeding great force of sea-monsters ; *is tamed*—
Δαμασται, is subdued, or is capable of being subdued ;
by mankind—Τη φωνη τη ανθρωπινη, by the human
nature ; every sort of these has been overcome by
the art and ingenuity of man ; so that they have been
made subservient to his use and pleasure. The apostle
cannot mean that such creatures as sharks and
whales have been tamed, according to the general
import of that term, or made harmless and familiar
with man, as some beasts, naturally savage, have
been ; but of which large fishes are in their nature
incapable. But even they have been conquered, and
brought entirely under the power of man, so that he
could use them as he would. *But the tongue can
no man tame*—Namely, the tongue of another ; no,
nor his own, without peculiar help from God. Mack-
night reads, *The tongue of men no one can subdue* ;
observing, that this transaction arises from the right
construction of the original, and that it gives a more
just sense than the common translation. Some
read the clause interrogatively, thus, *And can no
man subdue the tongue ? It is an unruly evil, full
of deadly poison*—Mischievous wickedness.

Verses 9, 10. *Therewith bless we God*—That is,
therewith mankind bless God ; for the apostle, as
appears from the next clause, did not speak of him-
self particularly, or of his fellow-apostles, or even
of true private Christians, who certainly do not curse
men. Perhaps in this last clause he glanced at the
unconverted Jews, who often cursed the Christians
bitterly in their synagogues. *Made after the simili-
tude of God*—Which we have indeed now lost, but
yet there remains from thence an indelible noble-
ness, which we ought to reverence, both in ourselves
and others. *Out of the same mouth proceedeth bless-
ing and cursing*—And the same tongue is often the

b

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the A. M. 4064.
same ⁶ place sweet water and bitter ? A. D. 60.

12 Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-
berries ? either a vine, figs ? so *can* no fountain
both yield salt water and fresh.

13 ⁷ Who is a wise man and endued with
knowledge among you ? let him show out of a
good conversation ⁸ his works ⁹ with meekness
of wisdom.

14 But if ye have ⁴ bitter envying and strife
in your hearts, ¹ glory not, and lie not against
the truth.

⁶ Gal. vi. 4.—⁷ Chap. ii. 18.—⁸ Chap. i. 21.—⁹ Rom. xiii. 13.
¹ Rom. ii. 17, 23.

instrument of expressing both ; and "too frequently," says Doddridge, "when the act of devotion is
over, the act of slander, or outrage and insult, com-
mences." *My brethren, these things ought not so to
be*—At least among those who profess Christianity ;
it is a shame that any such thing should be found in
human nature ; and it is a still greater shame that
any thing of the kind should be practised by any that
profess to be the disciples of Him who was manifest-
ed to destroy the works of the devil.

Verses 11, 12. *Doth a fountain send forth at
the same opening, alternately, and at different times,
sweet water and bitter*—As if he had said, No such
inconsistency is found in the natural world, and
nothing of the kind ought to be known in the moral
world. Estius observes, "that the apostle's design
was to confirm his doctrine by four similitudes ; the
first taken from fountains, the second and third from
fruit-trees, and the fourth from the sea, which being
in its nature salt, does not produce fresh water." He
therefore approves of the reading of the Alexan-
drian MS., which is, *So neither can salt water pro-
duce sweet*. The Syriac version reads, *Salt waters
cannot be made sweet* ; and the Vulgate, *So neither
can salt water make fresh water*. In like manner,
we ought to maintain a consistency in our words or
discourses ; and if we profess religion and devotion,
we should speak at all times as persons who are en-
deavouring to employ our tongues to the noble pur-
poses of which the use of speech was granted to man.

Verses 13–16. *Who is a wise man, &c.*—People
are naturally desirous of the reputation of possessing
an understanding superior to that of others. Now,
let us consider in what way the sense we have may
be best manifested ; let him who would be thought
wise show his wisdom, as well as his faith, by his
works ; *let him show out of a good*—That is, a holy
and useful conversation, his commendable and bene-
ficent works, with meekness of wisdom—"This beau-
tiful expression," says Macknight, "intimates, that
true wisdom is always accompanied with meekness,
or the government of the passions." *But if ye have
bitter envying*—Ζηλον, zeal, as the word properly
signifies, or zeal accompanied with a bitter spirit, or
an unkind disposition toward others. True Chris-

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A. M. 4064. 15 * This wisdom descendeth not
A. D. 60. from above, but is earthly, sensual,
devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is
confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first

* Chapter i. 17; Philippians iii. 19.—⁷ Or, natural, Jude 19.
† 1 Corinth. iii. 3; Gal. v. 20.—⁸ Gr. tumult, or, inquietness.
‡ 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7.

tian zeal is only the flame of love; but bitter, unhal-
lowed zeal is evil, even if it be only found in the
heart, and go no further. If that kind of zeal be in
you, *glory not*—Or boast not of your improvement
in Christianity; and *lie not against the truth*—By
pretending that such zeal may consist with heavenly
wisdom. *This wisdom*—That which is attended
with such zeal; *descendeth not from above*—Does
not come from God; but is earthly—Not heavenly
in its origin, or end; *sensual*—*ψυχικη*, animal; not
spiritual, not from the Spirit of God; *devilish*—Not
the gift of Christ, but such as Satan breathes into the
souls of men. *For where this bitter zeal and strife*
—Or contention; *is, there is confusion*—*ἀκαταστασία*,
tumult, or *unquietness*; and *every evil work*—Many
other mischiefs attending it. It may be proper to
observe, that about this time the Jews, from their in-
temperate zeal for the law of Moses, raised seditions
in Judea and elsewhere, which were the occasion
of many crimes and of much bloodshed. And as
the apostle expected that this epistle would fall into
the hands of some of the unconverted Jews, and in-
deed, perhaps, partly addressed them in it, he proba-
bly might refer to these tumults and disorders in
this verse.

Verse 17. *But the wisdom that is from above*
—Of celestial origin; which comes from God; *is*
first pure—From all unholy and corrupt mixtures,
whether of error or sin. It is agreeable to the tenor
of divine and evangelical truth, and conscientious in
the discharge of every duty to God and man; it is
therefore purified from all that is earthly, sensual,
and devilish; *then peaceable*—Desirous of making
and maintaining peace; and willing, in order there-
to, to sacrifice any thing, except important truth and
manifest duty; *gentle*—Soft, mild, yielding, not rig-
id; *easy to be entreated*—Persuaded and reconciled
where any matters of disgust may have arisen; not
stubborn, sour, morose; *full of mercy*—Of pity and
compassion toward persons in a state of ignorance,
guilt, and depravity; ready to relieve the miseries
and pardon the faults of others; and *good fruits*—

pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy A. M. 4064.
to be entreated, full of mercy and good A. D. 60.
fruits, without partiality, and without hypo-
crisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in
peace of them that make peace.

* Or, without wrangling.—⁷ Rom. xii. 9; 1 Pet. i. 22; ii. 1;
1 John iii. 18.—⁷ Prov. xi. 18; Hos. x. 12; Matt. v. 9; Phil.
i. 11; Heb. xii. 11.

Both in the heart and in the life; two of which are
immediately specified; *without partiality*—To those
of our own sentiments or denomination, to the inju-
ry of others; loving all without respect of persons;
embracing all good things, rejecting all evil. The
original word, *ἀδιακρίτος*, is, literally, *without making*
a difference. This character of true religion was
very properly mentioned to those whom the apostle
had rebuked for their respect of persons, chap. ii.
1-9. *Without hypocrisy*—Intending all the kindness
it expresses, and glad to extend its good offices as
universally as possible; or *without dissimulation*, as
ἀνπροκρίτος may be rendered; that is, frank and open.
Thus, "in this beautiful passage, St. James describes
the excellent nature of that temper which is recom-
mended by the Christian religion, and the happy ef-
fects which it produces. It is the highest wisdom;
it comes from God, and makes those who receive it
holy and happy. All the apostles, except Paul, were
illiterate men; but, according to their Master's pro-
mise, they had, by the inspiration of the Spirit, a
wisdom and eloquence given them, far exceeding
what they could have acquired by the deepest eru-
dition. Of the fulfilment of Christ's promise, the
epistle of James is a striking proof. Search all hea-
then antiquity, and see whether it can produce
any sentiments more noble, or more simply and
beautifully expressed, than those contained in this
chapter, and indeed throughout the whole epistle."—
Macknight.

Verse 18. *And the fruit of righteousness, &c.*—
The principle productive of this righteousness, is
sown, like good seed, in the peace of a believer's
mind, and brings forth a plentiful harvest of happi-
ness, (which is the proper fruit of righteousness,) *for*
them that make peace—That labour to promote
this pure and holy peace among all men. Or, the
meaning may be, they that endeavour to make
peace among men, (which is a fruit or work of right-
eousness,) do thereby sow to themselves in peace;
that is, they take that course which will produce to
them happiness in the end.

CHAPTER IV.

The apostle, (1.) Cautions them against corrupt passions, as the source of quarrels and wars, and hostile to prayer and piety; and against an inordinate love of the world, pride, and envy, as enmity against God, who gives grace to the humble, 1-6. (2.) He directs proud and carnal professors to submit and betake themselves to God, to resist the devil, and abandon and lament their sinful courses in order to their being exalted, 7-10. (3.) He exhorts them to speak candidly one of another, and to undertake no temporal affairs without a constant regard to the providence of God, 11-17.

A. M. 4064. FROM whence come wars and
A. D. 60. ¹ fightings among you? *come they*
not hence, *even* of your ² lusts ³ that war in
your members?

² Ye lust and have not: ye ³ kill, and desire
to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war,
yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

¹ Or, *brawlings*.—² Or, *pleasures*, Verse 3.—³ Rom. vii. 23; Gal. v. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 11.—⁴ Or, *envy*.—⁵ Job-xxvii. 9; xxxv. 12; Psa. xviii. 41; Prov. i. 28; Isa. i. 15; Jer. xi. 11;

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. The crimes condemned in this and the following chapter were so atrocious, and of so public a nature, that we can hardly suppose them to have been committed by any who bore the name of *Christians*. Wherefore, as this letter was directed to the *twelve tribes*, (chap. i. 1,) it is reasonable to think that the apostle, in writing these chapters, had the unbelieving Jews, not only in the provinces, but in Judea, chiefly in his eye. *From whence come wars and fightings among you*—Some time before the breaking out of the war with the Romans, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish commonwealth, the Jews, as Josephus informs us, on pretence of defending their religion, and of procuring to themselves that freedom from foreign dominion, and that liberty which they thought themselves entitled to as the people of God, made various insurrections in Judea against the Romans, which occasioned much bloodshed and misery to their nation. The factions, likewise, into which the more zealous Jews were now split, had violent contentions among themselves, in which they killed one another, and plundered one another's goods. In the provinces likewise the Jews were become very turbulent; particularly in Alexandria, Egypt, Syria, and many other places, where they made war against the heathen, and killed numbers of them, and were themselves massacred by them in their turn. This being the state of the Jews in Judea, and in the provinces, about the time the Apostle James wrote his epistle to the twelve tribes, it can hardly be doubted that the *wars, fightings*, and murders, of which he here speaks, were those above described. For as he composed his letters after the confusions were begun, and as the crimes committed in these confusions, although acted under the colour of zeal for God and for truth, were a scandal to any religion, it certainly became him, who was one of the chief apostles of the circumcision, to condemn such insurrections, and to rebuke, with the greatest sharpness, the Jews who were the prime movers in them. Accordingly, this is what he hath done. And both in this and in the following chapter, using the rhetorical figure called *apostrophe*, he addresses the Jews as if they were present, whereby he hath given his discourse great strength and vivacity. See Macknight. *Come they not hence, even of your lusts*—Greek, *ηδονων, pleasures*; that is, your greedy desire after the pleasures and enjoyments of the world; *that war*—Against your souls; or raise tumults, as it were, and rebel both against reason and religion; *in your*

³ ^b Ye ask, and receive not, ^c because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume
A. M. 4064. A. D. 60. *it* upon your ⁴ lusts.

⁴ ^d Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that ^e the friendship of the world is enmity with God? ^f whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Mic. iii. 4; Zech. vii. 13.—^c Psa. lxxvi. 18; 1 John iii. 22; v. 14.—^d Or, *pleasures*.—^e Psa. lxxiii. 27.—^f 1 John ii. 15. ^g John xv. 19; xvii. 14; Gal. i. 10.

members—In your wills and affections. Here is the first seat of war. Hence proceeds the war of man with man, king with king, nation with nation; the ambition of kings and nations to extend their territories; their love of grandeur and riches; their resentments of supposed injuries; all the effect of lust, or of earthly, sensual, and devilish desires, engage them in wars.

Ver. 2, 3. *Ye lust*—*Επιθυμειτε, ye covet*, or eagerly desire; *and have not*—What you desire; you are, some way or other, hindered from attaining that of which you are so greedy; *ye kill*—In your heart; *for he that hateth his brother is a murderer*. Or he speaks of the actual murders which the carnal Jews, called zealots, committed of the heathen, and even those of their own nation who opposed them. Accordingly, he says, *ye kill, και ζηλote, and are zealots*, thereby showing, evidently, that the persons to whom he spake were zealots. *Ye fight and war, yet ye have not*—What ye so eagerly desire; *because ye ask not*—And no marvel; for a man full of evil desire, of malice, envy, hatred, cannot pray. Since, as appears by this, the persons to whom the apostle is speaking failed of their purpose, because they did not pray to God, it shows, says Macknight, "that some of their purposes, at least, were laudable, and might have been accomplished with the blessing of God. Now this will not apply to the Judaizing teachers in the church, who strongly desired to subject the converted Gentiles to the law of Moses. As little will it apply to those who coveted riches. The apostle's declaration agrees only to such of the unconverted Jews as endeavoured to bring the heathen to the knowledge and worship of the true God. So far their attempt was commendable, because, by converting the Gentiles to Judaism, they prepared them for receiving the gospel; and if for this they had asked the blessing of God sincerely, they might have been successful in their purpose." *Ye ask, &c.*—But if ye do ask, *ye receive not, because ye ask amiss*—*Κακως αιτεισθε, ye ask wickedly*, from sinful motives. Some understand this of the Jews praying for the goods of this life: "But though," says Macknight, "such a prayer had been allowable, the apostle scarcely would have spoken of it here, as it had no connection with his subject. His meaning, in my opinion, is, that they prayed for success in converting the heathen, not from any regard to the glory of God and the salvation of the heathen, but from a desire to draw money from them whom they converted, to spend on their own lusts."

Verse 4. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses*—Who

A. M. 4064. 5 Do ye think that the Scripture
A. D. 60. saith in vain, ^a The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth ^b to envy ?

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, ^b God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. ⁱ Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 ^k Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. ^l Cleanse *your hands*, ye sinners, and

^a Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21; Num. xi. 29; Prov. xxi. 10.—^b Or, *enviously*.—^c Job xxii. 29; Psa. cxxxviii. 6; Prov. iii. 34; xxix. 23; Matt. xxiii. 12; Luke i. 52; xiv. 11; xviii. 14; 1 Pet. v. 5.—^d Eph. iv. 27; vi. 11; 1 Pet. v. 9.—^e 2 Chr. xv. 2.

have broken your faith with God, your rightful spouse. Thus many understand these expressions, because God himself represented his relation to the Jews as his people under the idea of a marriage, and because the prophets, in conformity to that idea, represented the idolatry of the Jews as adultery. But inasmuch as gross idolatry was a sin from which the Jews had long been entirely free, and whereas to adultery, and other sins of the flesh, they were exceedingly addicted, it seems more probable that these appellations are to be understood literally. *Know ye not that the friendship of the world*—The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life, yielded to, to gain the favour of carnal and worldly men; or a conformity to such in their sinful courses, in order to gain their friendship; *is enmity with God*—Is an evident proof thereof? see Matt. vi. 24; xii. 30. *Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world*—Makes it his business to comply with and gratify worldly men, thereby constitutes himself an *enemy of God*—And takes part with his adversaries.

Verse 5. *Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain*—Without good ground, or that it speaks falsely. St. James seems to refer to many, not to one particular passage of Scripture. *The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy*—That is, as many understand the words, our natural corruption, excited and influenced by Satan, strongly inclines us to unkind and envious dispositions toward our fellow-creatures. Some, however, suppose that the Spirit of God is intended by the apostle in this clause, and that the sense is, *The Spirit of love*, that dwelleth in all believers, *lusteth against envy*, (Gal. v. 17), is directly opposite to all those unloving tempers which necessarily flow from the friendship of the world. Nearly to the same purpose is Doddridge's paraphrase of the verse: "Do you think the Scripture speaks in vain in all the passages in which it guards us against such a temper as this, and leads the mind directly to God as the supreme good, teaching us to abandon every thing for him? Or does the Holy Spirit, that dwells in us Christians, lust to envy? Does it encourage these worldly affections, this strife and envying which we have reprov'd? Or can it be imagined that we, who appear to have so much of the Spirit, have any interested views in

^m purify *your hearts*, ye ⁿ double-
A. M. 4064. minded. A. D. 60.

9 ^o Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your joy* to heaviness.

10 ^p Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11 ^q Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his brother*, ^r and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and

¹ Isa. i. 16.—² 1 Pet. i. 22; 1 John iii. 3.—³ Chap. i. 8. ⁴ Matt. v. 4.—⁵ Job xxii. 29; Matt. xxiii. 12; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14; 1 Pet. v. 6.—⁶ Eph. iv. 31; 1 Pet. ii. 1.—⁷ Matt. vii. 1; Luke vi. 37; Rom. ii. 1; 1 Cor. iv. 5.

the cautions we give, and would persuade you from the pursuit of the world, because we should envy you the enjoyment of it? No."

Verses 6-10. *But he*—God, *giveth more grace*—To all those who, while they shun those tempers, sincerely and earnestly pray for it. *Wherefore he saith*, [see the margin,] *God, resisteth the proud*—The unhumbled; those that think highly of themselves, and put confidence in their own wisdom, power, or holiness, and who seek the praise of men rather than the praise of God; against these *God sets himself in battle array*, as it is expressed, Prov. iii. 24. He rejects them, and will not allow them access to, or communion with himself. He thwarts their undertakings, and renders their schemes abortive. *But giveth grace unto the humble*—Unto those that are humbled under a sense of their ignorance and weakness, their guilt and depravity, and therefore have no confidence in any thing they are or have. *Submit yourselves*—Or *be subject*, as υποταγη signifies, *therefore to God*—Pursue your lusts no longer, but yield an humble obedience to God in all things. *Resist*—With faith and steadfastness; *the devil*—The father of pride and envy; *and he will flee from you*—And your progress in religion will become greater, and your victory over your spiritual enemies more easy and evident day by day. *Draw nigh to God*—In faith and prayer; *and he will draw nigh unto you*—By his grace and blessing; which that nothing may hinder, *cleanse your hands*—From doing evil; *and purify your hearts*—From all spiritual idolatry, from all vile affections and corrupt inclinations, from the love of the world in all its branches; be no more *double-minded*—Vainly endeavouring to serve both God and mammon. *Be afflicted*—On account of your past sins, especially your ingratitude to God, your abuse of his blessings, and unfaithfulness to his grace; *and mourn and weep*—For the miseries to which you have exposed yourselves. *Let your laughter be turned into mourning*—Because of the heavy judgments that hang over you; *humble yourselves in the sight and presence of the Lord, and he shall lift you up*—Comfort you with a sense of his pardoning mercy.

Verses 11, 12. *Speak not evil one of another*—See on Tit. iii. 2. Evil-speaking is a grand hinderance of peace and comfort; yea, and of holiness.

A. M. 4064. judgeth the law: but if thou judge
A. D. 60. the law, thou art not a doer of the
law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver, * who is able to save,
and to destroy: ' who art thou that judgest
another?

13 ^a Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-
morrow we will go into such a city, and conti-
nue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get
gain:

^a Matt. x. 28.—^b Rom. xiv. 4, 13.—^c Prov. xxvii. 1; Luke
xii. 18, &c.—^d Or, for it is.—^e Job vii. 7; Psa. ciii. 3; Chap.
i. 10; 1 Pet. i. 24; 1 John ii. 17.

O who is sufficiently aware of the evil of that sin? *He that speaketh evil of his brother*—Of his fellow-Christian or fellow-creature; *and judgeth his brother*—For such things as the word of God allows, or does not condemn, does, in effect, *speak evil of the law*—Both of Moses and of Christ, which forbids that kind of speaking; *and judgeth the law*—Condemns it, as if it were an imperfect rule. In doing which, *thou art not a doer of the law*—Dost not yield due obedience to it; *but a judge of it*—Settest thyself above it, and showest, if thou wert able, thou wouldest abrogate it. *There is one lawgiver*—By whose judgment and final sentence thou must stand or fall hereafter; for he *is able to execute the sentence* he denounces, and *save* with a perfect and everlasting salvation, *and to destroy* with an utter and endless destruction; *who art thou*—A poor, weak, dying worm; *that judgest another*—And thereby assumest the prerogative of Christ?

Verses 13–15. *Go to now*—*Αγε νυν, come now*, an interjection, calculated to excite attention; *ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go, &c.*—As if future events were in your own power, and your health and lives were ensured to you for a certain time; *whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow*—Whether your spirits before then shall not have passed into eternity; *for what is your life? It is even a vapour*—An unsubstantial, uncertain, and fleeting vapour; *that appeareth for a little time*—In this visible world; *and then suddenly vanisheth away*—And is seen here no more. Thus Isaiah, *All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as a flower of the field*; a similitude used also by David, Psa. ciii. 15, 16, *As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.* And still more striking is the metaphor used by Asaph, Psa. lxxviii. 39, where he terms men, even a generation of them, A

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14 Whereas ye know not what *shall* A. M. 4064.
be on the morrow. For what is your A. D. 60.
life? ^e It ^a is even a vapour, that appeareth for
a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye *ought* to say, ^f If the Lord will,
we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: ^g all
such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore ^h to him that knoweth to do
good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

^a Acts xviii. 21; 1 Cor. iv. 19; xvi. 7; Heb. vi. 3.—^b 1 Cor.
v. 6.—^c Luke xii. 47; John ix. 41; xv. 22; Rom. i. 20, 21, 32;
ii. 17, 18, 23.

wind that passeth away and cometh not again. But in no author, sacred or profane, is there a finer image of the brevity and uncertainty of human life than this given by St. James, who likens it to a vapour, which, after continuing and engaging men's attention for a few moments, unexpectedly disappears while they are looking at it. *For that ye ought, &c.*—That is, whereas ye ought to say—In consideration of this your great frailty; *If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that*—Intimating, even by your manner of speaking, the sense that you have of his being able, at pleasure, to cut you short in all your schemes and appointments. The apostle does not mean that these very words should always be used by us, when we speak of our purposes respecting futurity; but that, on such occasions, the sentiment which these words express should always be present to our minds.

Verses 16, 17. *Now ye rejoice*—*Καυχασθε, ye glory, in your boastings*—Ye please yourselves in the vain thoughts which you entertain of these worldly projects and successes, and you boast of them. *All such rejoicing*—Or *glorying, is evil*—The delight you take in these expectations argues either a strange want of consideration, or gross stupidity. *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not*—That knows what is right and is his duty, and does not practise it; *to him it is sin*—His knowledge does not prevent but increase his condemnation. As if he had said, Since you cannot but know better, as you have the oracles of God, and profess to believe them, if you do not act answerably thereto, you are guilty of the greater sin. "Because this is true with respect to all who act contrary to knowledge and conscience. Beza and Estius consider it as a general conclusion, enforcing the whole of the reproofs given to the Jews for acting contrary to the divine revelation, of which they were the keepers."—Macknight.

CHAPTER V.

In this chapter, (1.) The apostle denounces terrible judgments against the rich unbelieving Jews who defrauded the poor, and lived in luxury and oppression, 1-6. (2.) He exhorts the Jewish believers to patience and meekness under their tribulations, which would soon have an end, 7-11. (3.) Warns them against rash swearing, and recommends prayer in afflicted, and praise in prosperous circumstances, 12, 13. (4.) He prescribes prayer and anointing with oil for the miraculous recovery of the sick, 14, 15. (5.) He directs private Christians to confess their faults one to another, and to pray fervently for each other, encouraging them to expect the answer of their prayers by the example of Elias, 16-18. (6.) Shows the blessedness of being instrumental in the conversion of sinners, 19, 20.

A. M. 4064. **G**O^a to now, ye rich men, weep
A. D. 60. and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and ^b your garments are moth-eaten.

^a Prov. xi. 28; Luke vi. 24; 1 Tim. vi. 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. The unbelieving Jews, being exceedingly addicted to sensual pleasure, and very covetous, were of course grievous oppressors of the poor. Wherefore, to alarm these wicked men, and, if possible, to bring them to repentance, St. James, in the first paragraph of this chapter, sets before them, in the most lively colours, the miseries which the Romans, the instruments of the divine vengeance, were about to bring on the Jewish people, both in Judea and everywhere else, now deserted of God for their crimes, and particularly for the great crime of murdering the *Just One*, Jesus of Nazareth, their long-expected Messiah. So that, being soon to lose their possessions and goods, it was not only criminal, but foolish, by injustice and oppression to amass wealth, of which they were soon to be stripped. In this part of his letter the apostle hath introduced figures and expressions which, for boldness, vivacity, and energy, might have been used by the greatest tragic poet. See Macknight. *Go to now*—Or, *come now, ye rich men*—The apostle does not speak this so much for the sake of the rich themselves, as of the poor children of God, who were then groaning under their cruel oppression. *Weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you*—Quickly and unexpectedly. The miseries of which he speaks were those which our Lord had pointed out in his prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and in which this apostle foresaw they would soon be involved; miseries arising from famine, pestilence, and the sword. These fell heaviest on the Jews in Judea. But they extended also to the Jews in the provinces. The reader who desires to see a particular account of these calamities, may read Josephus's history of the Jewish war, where he will find scenes of misery laid open not to be paralleled in the annals of any nation. And as these were an awful prelude of that wrath which was to fall upon them in the world to come, so this passage may likewise refer to the final vengeance which will then be executed on the impenitent.

Verses 2, 3. *Your riches are corrupted*—Greek, *σεσηπη*, are putrefied, or are as things putrefied by being kept too long. The riches of the ancients

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; ^a and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. ^c Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

^a Job xiii. 28; Matt. vi. 20; Chap. ii. 2.—^c Rom. ii. 5.

consisted much in large stores of corn, wine, oil, and costly apparel. These things the rich men in Judea had amassed, like the foolish rich man mentioned Luke xii. 18, little imagining that they would soon be robbed of them by the Roman soldiers, and the destructive events of the war. *Your garments*—In your wardrobes; *are moth-eaten*—The fashion of clothes not changing in the eastern countries as with us, persons of fortune used to have many garments made of different costly stuffs, which they laid up as a part of their wealth. Thus, according to Q. Curtius, (lib. v. c. 6,) when Alexander took Persepolis, he found the riches of all Asia gathered together there, which consisted not only of gold and silver, but *vestis ingens modus*, a vast quantity of garments. *Your gold and silver is cankered*—Or eaten out with rust; *and the rust of them*—Your perishing stores and moth-eaten garments; *shall be, εως μαρτυριον, for a testimony against you*—Of your covetousness and worldly mind; and of your having foolishly and wickedly buried those talents in the earth, which you ought to have employed, according to your Lord's will, in relieving the wants of your fellow-creatures. *And shall eat your flesh as it were fire*—Will occasion you as great a torment as if fire were consuming your flesh. Or, as the rust eats into the gold and silver, so shall your flesh and wealth be eaten up as if you had treasured up fire in the midst of it. This was punctually fulfilled in the destruction of that nation by their own seditions, and their wars with the Romans. For, among the *Sicarii* and the *Zealots*, the ringleaders of all their seditions, it was crime enough to be rich; and their insatiable avarice induced them continually to *search into the houses of the rich*, and, by false accusation, to slay them as deserters, for the sake of their property. Yea, both their substance and their bodies were devoured by the flames which burned up the city and the temple: and if any thing remained, it became a prey to the Roman soldiers. *Ye have heaped treasure for the last days*—The days which are now coming, when your enemies shall seize or destroy all, to your infinite vexation and distress: or, you have heaped them up when it is too late; when you have no time or opportunity to enjoy

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A. M. 4064. 4 Behold, ^d the hire of the labourers
A. D. 60.

who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and ^e the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5 ^f Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 ^g Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.

^d Lev. xix. 13; Job xxiv. 10, 11; Jer. xxii. 13; Mal. iii. 5; Eccles. xxiv. 21, 22.—^e Deut. xxiv. 15.—^f Job xxi. 13; Amos vi. 1, 4; Luke xvi. 19, 25; 1 Tim. v. 6.—^g Chap. ii. 6.
¹ Or, *Be long patient, or, Suffer with patience.*

them. This phrase, *the last days*, does not merely signify *for the time to come*, but for that period when the whole Jewish economy was to close, and when those awful judgments, threatened in the prophets to be poured out upon wicked men in the last days, were just coming.

Verse 4. *Behold, the hire of the labourers*—The apostle alludes in this verse to Lev. xix. 13: *The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night*: and to Deut. xxiv. 15, *At his day thou shall give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it, &c., lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee*. In allusion to these passages, the apostle here mentions a two-fold cry; the cry of the hire unjustly kept back; that is, the cry of the sin against the sinner for vengeance; in which sense those sins chiefly cry to God concerning which human laws are silent; such are luxury, unchastity, and various kinds of injustice. But the cry of the labourers themselves is also here mentioned, to mark more strongly the greatness of the injustice committed. And “by representing the cries of the reapers defrauded of their hire as *entering into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth*, that is, *hosts, or armies*, the apostle intimates that the great Ruler of the universe attends to the wrongs done to his creatures, and is affected by them as tender-hearted persons are affected by the cries of the miserable; and that he will, in due time, avenge them by punishing their oppressors. Let all oppressors consider this!”—Macknight.

Verses 5, 6. *Ye have lived in pleasure, and have been wanton*—*Εὐφρασατε και εσπαλασασατε*. The former word signifies, *ye have lived luxuriously*; or, as the Vulgate has it, *Epulati estis, ye have feasted*; it being intended of their luxuries and intemperance in eating and drinking: the latter word is intended of their indulging themselves in lasciviousness and carnal lusts. *Ye have nourished*—Or *cherished*; *your hearts*—Have indulged yourselves to the uttermost; *as in a day of slaughter*—That is, as beasts are fed for a day of slaughter; or, as the words may be rendered, as in a day of sacrifice, which were solemn feast-days among the Jews. The apostle’s meaning is, both that the rich Jews pampered themselves every day, as the luxurious did on high festival-days; and that, by their luxury and

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7 ¹ Be patient therefore, brethren, A. M. 4064.
unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, ²

the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive ³ the early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: ⁴ for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 ⁵ Grudge ⁶ not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the Judge ⁷ standeth before the door.

² Deut. xi. 24; Jer. v. 24; Hos. vi. 3; Joel ii. 23; Zech. x. 1.—³ Phil. iv. 5; Heb. x. 25, 37; 1 Pet. iv. 7.—⁴ Chap. iv. 11.—⁵ Or, *Groan, or, grieve not*.—⁶ Matthew xxiv. 33; 1 Cor. iv. 5.

lasciviousness, they had rendered themselves fit to be destroyed in the day of God’s wrath. *Ye have condemned and killed, τον δικαιον, the Just One*—Many just men, and in particular that *Just One*, termed, (Acts iii. 14,) *the Holy One and Just*. They had killed Stephen, also, and they afterward killed James, the writer of this epistle, surnamed *the Just*. But the expression might be intended to comprehend all the righteous persons who were murdered by the Jews from first to last. *And he*—The Just One; *doth not resist you*—With that display of power which he can easily exert to your utter destruction, and therefore you are secure. But the day will speedily come when God will avenge his own cause, and pour out upon you the judgments he has threatened.

Verses 7-9. *Be patient therefore, brethren*—He now addresses the pious, oppressed, and persecuted disciples of Christ: as if he had said, Since the Lord will soon come to punish them, and relieve you, patiently bear the injuries which rich men offer you, and quietly wait till he come. *Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit*—Which will recompense his labour and patience; *till he receive the early, or the former rain*—Immediately after sowing; *and the latter*—Before harvest. In Judea the rains usually come in a regular manner; the early rain about the beginning of November, after the seed is sown, and the latter in the middle or toward the end of April, while the ears are filling. These rains were promised to the Israelites, Deut. xi. 14, where see the note, and on Hos. vi. 3. *Be ye also patient*—Like the husbandman; *stablish*—*Στηριξασατε, strengthen, or confirm*; *your hearts*—In faith and patience, considering that your sufferings will not be long; *the coming of the Lord*—To destroy your persecutors; *draweth nigh*—And so does his coming to rescue his people from the troubles of this life by death, and to judge the world in righteousness at the last day. *Grudge, or, groan, not*—As *σεβαζετε* signifies; *one against another*—Groaning is caused by oppression; and when it is merely the natural expression of affliction, it is perfectly consistent with genuine piety, and moves God to pity the afflicted person, Judg. ii. 18: but when it is the effect of impatience, or when it implies a desire of revenge, it becomes criminal, and is the kind of

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A. M. 4064. 10^m Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, ^a we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of ^o the patience of Job, and have seen ^p the end of the Lord; that ^q the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

12 But above all things, my brethren, ^r swear

^m Matt. v. 12; Heb. xi. 35, &c.—ⁿ Psa. xciv. 12; Matt. v. 10, 11; x. 22.—^o Job i. 21, 22; ii. 10.—^p Job xlii. 10, &c.

groaning which the apostle forbids. Some read the clause, *Murmur not one against another*: that is, have patience also with each other; *lest ye be condemned*—Lest you all suffer for it, and perish in the common calamity; *behold the Judge*—Christ; *standeth before the door*—Hearing every word, marking every thought, and ready to execute those judgments.

Verses 10, 11. *Take the prophets*—Once persecuted like you, even for *speaking in the name of the Lord*—The very men that gloried in having the prophets, yet could not bear their message. Nor did either the holiness or the high commission of these messengers of God screen them from suffering; *for an example of suffering affliction*—Or persecution from the persons to whom they brought divine revelations; *and of patience*—In suffering. *Behold, we count them happy*—We commend them, and believe them to be the beloved children of God; *who endure*—Bear their sufferings with patience, meekness, and a contented mind. The apostle's mentioning this immediately after he had proposed the prophets as an example of patience in suffering, shows that he herein alludes to Christ's words, (Matt. v. 11,) *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, &c., for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you. Ye have heard of the patience of Job*—Under his peculiarly heavy sufferings; *and have seen the end of the Lord*—Ye have seen, in the history of that good man, what a happy issue the Lord gave to his sufferings; or how much to his honour and comfort his various and heavy afflictions concluded; *that the Lord is very pitiful, &c.*—And that it is with the bowels of an affectionate father that he corrects his beloved children, and not for his own gratification, but with a view to their eternal advantage.

Verse 12. *But above all things, swear not*—However provoked. The Jews were notoriously guilty of common swearing, though not so much by God himself as by some of his creatures. The apostle here forbids these oaths, as well as all swearing in common conversation. It is very observable how solemnly the apostle introduces this command; *above all things, swear not*; as if he had said, Whatever you forget, do not forget this. This abundantly demonstrates the horrible iniquity of the crime. But he does not forbid the taking of a solemn oath before a magistrate. *Neither by any other oath*—Namely, unlawful or unnecessary; *but let your yea be yea,*

not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: *but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.*

13 *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*

14 *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

^q Num. xiv. 18; Psa. ciii. 8.—^r Matt. v. 34, &c.—^s Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16.—^t Mark vi. 13; xvi. 18.

and your nay, nay—Let your discourse be confirmed with a bare affirmation or denial; and use no higher asseverations in common discourse. But let your words stand firm; and whatever ye say, take care to make it good; *lest ye fall into condemnation*—Expose yourselves to God's judgments.

Verse 13. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray*—That he may be supported under his affliction, so as to be enabled to bear it with patience and resignation to the divine will, and find it to be sanctified to him, and made the means, as of exercising, so also of increasing his grace, and of purifying him as gold and silver are purified in the furnace. *Is any merry?*—Is any in health, and in a prosperous condition, and under no peculiar trial; *let him sing psalms*—Let him give thanks to God, and express his thankfulness by singing psalms or hymns of praise. The purport of the verse is, that, as believers in Christ, we ought to employ ourselves in such private religious exercises as are suitable to our present circumstances and frame of mind. "When rendered cheerful by contemplating the manifestations which God hath made of his perfections in the works of creation, providence, and redemption, or by any blessing bestowed on ourselves, we are to express our joy, not by drinking, and singing profane, lewd songs, but by hymns of praise and thanksgivings offered to God for all his mercies, Eph. v. 18, 19. On the other hand, when afflicted, we are to pray; that being the best means of producing in ourselves patience and resignation. But as the precept concerning our singing psalms, when cheerful, does not imply that we are not to pray then; so the precept concerning prayer in affliction, does not imply that we are not to express our joy in suffering according to the will of God, by singing psalms or hymns, as Paul and Silas did in the jail at Philippi."—Macknight.

Verses 14, 15. *Is any sick? let him call for the elders of the church*—Those ministers of Christ whose office it is to oversee and feed the flock; *and let them pray over him*—For his recovery, persuaded that what two or three of the Lord's true disciples shall agree to ask, it shall be done for them; *anointing him with oil*—"This single conspicuous gift, (healing the sick by anointing them with oil,) which Christ committed to his apostles, (Mark vi. 13,) remained in the church long after the other miraculous

A. M. 4064. 15 And the prayer of faith shall save
A. D. 60. the sick, and the Lord shall raise him
up; ^a and if he have committed sins, they shall
be forgiven him.

16 Confess *your* faults one to another, and
pray one for another, that ye may be healed.
^a The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous
man availeth much.

^a Isa. xxxiii. 24; Matt. ix. 2.—^a Gen. xx. 17; Num. xi. 2;
Deut. ix. 18-20; Josh. x. 12; 1 Sam. xii. 18; 1 Kings xiii. 6;
2 Kings iv. 33; xix. 15, 20; xx. 2, 4, &c.; Psa. x. 17; xxxiv.

gifts were withdrawn. Indeed it seems to have been designed to remain always, and St. James directs the elders, who were the most, if not the only gifted men, to administer it. This was the whole process of physic in the Christian Church till it was lost through unbelief. That novel invention among the Romans, *extreme unction*, practised not for cure, but where life is despaired of, bears no manner of resemblance to this." See Bengelius and Wesley. *And the prayer offered in faith shall save, or heal, the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up*—From his sickness; *and if he have committed sins*—That is, any special sins, for which this sickness has been laid upon him; *they shall be forgiven him*—Upon his repentance the punishment shall be taken off.

Verse 16. *Confess your faults*—Whether you are sick or in health; *one to another*—He does not say to the elders; this may or may not be done, for it is nowhere commanded. We may confess them to any pious person who can pray in faith: he will then know how to pray for us, and will be more excited so to do. *And pray one for another, that ye may be healed*—Both in soul and body. Let it be observed, 1st, This passage of Scripture, only enjoining true believers to confess their sins to one another, affords no foundation for the Popish practice of auricular confession to a priest. Besides, mutual confession being here enjoined, the priest is as much bound to confess to the people as the people to the priest. 2d, This direction being addressed to women as well as to men, they are required to pray for one another, and even for the men, whether laity or clergy. 3d, There is no mention made here of absolution by a priest, or by any other person. 4th, Absolution, in the sound sense of the word, being nothing but a declaration of the promises of pardon which are made in the gospel to penitent sinners, every one who understands the gospel doctrine may declare these promises to penitent sinners as well as any bishop or priest whatever, and the one has no more authority to do it than the other: nay, every sincere penitent may expect salvation without the absolution of any person whatever: whereas the impenitent have no reason to expect that blessing, although absolved by all the priests in the world. See Dr. Benson. *The effectual fervent prayer*—Greek, *δενους ενεργημενη*, a singular expression, which Macknight renders, *the inwrought prayer*; and Doddridge, *the prayer wrought by the energy of the Spirit*; and Whitby, *the inspired*

17 Elias was a man ^a subject to like A. M. 4064.
passions as we are, and ^a he prayed A. D. 60.
^a earnestly that it might not rain: ^a and it rained
not on the earth by the space of three years and
six months.

18 And ^b he prayed again, and the heaven
gave rain, and the earth brought forth her
fruit.

15; cxlv. 18; Prov. xv. 29; xxviii. 9; John ix. 31; 1 John iii. 22.—^a Acts xiv. 15.—^a 1 Kings xvii. 1.—^a Or, in prayer.—^a Luke iv. 25.—^b 1 Kings xviii. 42, 45.

prayer, observing, "as they who were inwardly acted by an evil spirit were styled ενεργημενοι, (persons inwardly wrought upon,) so they who were acted by the Holy Spirit, and inwardly moved by his impulses, were also ενεργημενοι, inwardly wrought upon, in the good sense: and therefore it seems most proper to apply these words, not to the prayer of every righteous person, but to the prayer offered by such an extraordinary impulse." Doubtless every prayer of every righteous person is not here intended, but every truly righteous person has the *Spirit of Christ*, without which no man can belong to him; and is *led, more or less, by the Spirit of God*, otherwise he could not be a son of God, Rom. viii. 9, 14; and every such a one *walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 1: and therefore, if not always, yet sometimes, yea, generally, such a one, as Jude expresses it, (verse 20.) *prays in the Holy Ghost*; that is, in and by his influence, and therefore in a spirit of true, genuine prayer, feeling sincere and earnest desires after the blessings which he asks, and being enabled to offer those desires up unto God in faith or confidence, that he shall receive what he asks. And this *fervent, energetic* prayer is evidently the prayer here intended, and said to *avail much*, or to be of great efficacy, being frequently and remarkably answered by God's granting the petitions thus addressed to him.

Verses 17, 18. *Elias was a man subject to like passions*—To the like infirmities; *as we are*—In which sense the same word, *ομοιοπαθης*, is used, Acts xiv. 15. It literally signifies, *suffering like things with another*. Elijah, through natural infirmity, suffered as we do from diseases, from temptation, from persecution, &c. *And he prayed earnestly*—Greek, *προσευχη προσηυξατο*, in praying he prayed, *that it might not rain*—That, by being punished for their idolatry and murder of the prophets, they might be brought to true repentance for these crimes. *And it rained not on the earth*—That is, on the land of the ten tribes; for *three years and six months*—This is the period which our Lord likewise says the drought continued, Luke iv. 25. It is said, indeed, (1 Kings xviii. 1.) that *in the third year the word of the Lord came to Elijah*, namely, concerning the rain. But this *third year* was computed from the time of his going to live at Zarephath, which happened many days after the drought began; as is plain from this, that he remained at the brook Cherith till it was dried up, and then went to Zare-

A. M. 4064. 19 Brethren, ° if any of you do err
A. D. 60. from the truth, and one convert him;
20 Let him know, that he which converteth

the sinner from the error of his way, A. M. 4064.
d shall save a soul from death, and A. D. 60.
° shall hide a multitude of sins.

° Matt. xviii. 15.—^d Rom. xi. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 16.

° Prov. x. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 8.

phath in the country of Sidon, 1 Kings xvii. 7, 9. Wherefore the *three years and six months* must be computed from his denouncing the drought, at which time that judgment commenced. See note on 1 Kings xviii. 1. *And he prayed again*—When idolatry was abolished; *and the heaven gave rain*—As is recorded 1 Kings xviii., where we are told, that *he cast himself down on the earth, and put his face between his knees*, which was the posture of an humble and earnest supplicant. Thus Moses's praying is expressed by *his falling on his face*, Num. xvi. 4.

Verses 19, 20. *Brethren*—As if he had said, I have now warned you of those things to which you are most liable. And in all these respects watch, not only over yourselves, but every one over his brother also. Labour, in particular, to recover those that are fallen. For *if any of you do err from the truth*—From the right way in which he ought to walk, if he be seduced by any means from the doctrine and practice of the gospel; *and one*—Any one; *convert him*—Be a means of bringing him back into that way from which he had wandered; *let him know*—Who has been enabled to effect so good a

work; *that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way*—From the false doctrine and bad practice to which he had turned aside, shall produce a much happier effect than any miraculous cure of the body; for he *shall save a precious immortal soul from spiritual and eternal death, and shall hide a multitude of sins*—Namely, the sins of the persons thus converted, which shall no more, how many soever they are, be remembered to his condemnation. “The *covering of sin* is a phrase which often occurs in the Old Testament, and always signifies the pardoning of sin. Nor has it any other meaning here. For surely it cannot be the apostle's intention to tell us, that the turning of a sinner from the error of his way will conceal from the eye of God's justice a multitude of sins committed by the person who does this charitable office, if he continueth in them. Such a person needs himself to be turned from the error of his way, in order that his own soul may be saved from death. St. Peter has a similar expression, (1 Pet. iv. 8,) *love covereth a multitude of sins*; not, however, in the person who is possessed of love, but in the person who is the object of his love.”—Macknight.

PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER.

NO person, who has read with attention the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, can be unacquainted with the character of St. Peter, whether as a follower of Christ, or as an apostle. He and his brother Andrew were the first two that were called by the Lord Jesus to be his disciples, John i. 41; Matt. iv. 18-20. And in all the passages in which the names of the twelve apostles are recorded, Peter is mentioned first. He was one of the three whom Jesus admitted to witness the resurrection of Jairus's daughter; before whom he was transfigured, and with whom he retired to pray in the garden, the night before he suffered. And although afterward, in an hour of sore temptation, termed by Jesus "the hour and power of darkness," Peter gave a sad proof of human weakness, in denying three times, and that with oaths, that very Master with whom, a few hours before, he had declared his readiness to go to prison and to death; yet in consequence of the deep remorse he felt for his crime, Jesus, having pardoned him, ordered the women, to whom he first "showed himself alive after his passion," to carry the news of his resurrection to Peter by name; and appeared to him before he appeared to any other of his apostles. And at another appearance, (John xxi. 15-17,) he confirmed him in his apostolical office, by giving him a special commission to "feed his sheep;" and soon after judged him worthy, under the impulse and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to open the gospel dispensation in all its glory, and first to preach salvation through a crucified Redeemer to Jews (Acts ii.) and Gentiles, Acts x. When he and John were brought before the Jewish council, to be examined concerning the miracle wrought on the impotent man, Peter boldly testified that the man had been healed in the name, and by the power of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, but whom God had raised from the dead; assuring them that there was salvation in no other. It was Peter who questioned Ananias and Sapphira about the price of their lands; and for their lying in that matter punished them miraculously with death. And, what is yet more remarkable, although by the hands of all the apostles many signs and wonders were wrought, it was by Peter's shadow only, that the sick, who were laid in the streets of Jerusalem, were healed as he passed by. Soon after, when, to please the Jews, enraged at his zeal and success in preaching the gospel, Herod Agrippa, who had lately killed James, the brother of John, with the sword, had cast Peter into prison, intending to put him to death also, he was delivered by an angel. From these and many other facts, recorded in the gospel history, and well known to every Christian reader, it appears that Peter was very early distinguished as an apostle, and that his Master highly esteemed him for his courage, zeal, and various other good qualities, and conferred on him various marks of his favour, in common with James and John; who likewise distinguished themselves by their fortitude, zeal, and faithfulness in the execution of their apostolic office. But, that Peter received from Christ any authority over his brethren, or possessed any superior dignity as an apostle, as the Romanists contend he did, there is no reason for believing. All the apostles were equal in office and authority, as is plain from our Lord's declaration, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." And it appears, from Peter's epistles, that he did not think himself superior in authority to the other apostles; for if he had entertained any imagination of that sort, insinuations of his superiority, if not direct assertions thereof, might have been expected in his epistles, and especially in their inscriptions; yet there is nothing of that sort in either of his letters. On the contrary, the highest title he takes to himself, in writing to the elders of the churches, is that of their "fellow-elder," 1 Peter v. 1.

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In the history of the Acts, no mention is made of Peter after the council of Jerusalem. But, from Gal. ii. 11, it appears that after that council he was with Paul at Antioch; after which, it is generally supposed that he returned to Jerusalem. What happened to him after that is not said in the Scriptures; but, according to Eusebius, Origen, in his exposition on Genesis, wrote as follows: "Peter is supposed to have preached to the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia; and at length, coming to Rome, was crucified with his head downward, himself having desired that his crucifixion might be in that manner." Lardner thinks, that when he left Judea he went again to Antioch, the chief city of Syria, and thence into other parts of the continent, particularly those mentioned in the beginning of this epistle; and that, when he left those parts, he went to Rome; but not till after Paul had been in that city and was gone from it. If the reader wishes to see the evidences from antiquity, on which Peter's having been at Rome rests, he will find them fully set forth by Lardner, (Can., vol. iii. c. 18,) who concludes his inquiry as follows: "This is the general, uncontradicted, disinterested testimony of ancient writers, in several parts of the world—Greeks, Latins, Syrians. As our Lord's prediction, concerning the death of Peter, is recorded in one of the four gospels, it is very likely that Christians would observe the accomplishment of it; which must have been in some place. And about this place there is no difference among Christian writers of ancient times. Never any other place was named besides Rome; nor did any other city ever glory in the martyrdom of Peter. It is not for our honour, nor for our interest, either as Christians or Protestants, to deny the truth of events ascertained by early and well-attested traditions. If any make an ill use of such facts, we are not accountable for it. We are not, from a dread of such abuses, to overthrow the credit of all history, the consequence of which would be fatal."

Learned men are not agreed to whom chiefly this epistle was addressed, whether to the converted Jews of the dispersion only, or to the converted Gentiles, or to both conjointly; or (which was Lord Barrington's opinion, embraced and defended by Dr. Benson) to the converted proselytes of the gate. In this diversity of opinions, the only rule of determination, as Dr. Macknight observes, must be the inscriptions, together with the things contained in the epistle itself. Now from 2 Pet. iii. 1, it appears that both St. Peter's epistles were sent to the same people; wherefore, since the inscription of the latter epistle is, "To them who have obtained like precious faith with us," both epistles must have been addressed to believers in general. Accordingly the valediction in the first epistle is general, "Peace be with you all who are in Christ Jesus," chap. v. 14. So also is the inscription, *Εκλεκτοῖς παρεπίδημοις διασπορας Ποντου, &c.*, "To the elect sojourners of the dispersion of Pontus," &c. For the appellation of "sojourners" does not necessarily imply that this letter was written to none but Jewish believers. In Scripture all religious persons are called "sojourners and strangers," because they do not consider this earth as their home, but look for a better country: therefore, in writing to the Gentile believers, Peter might call them "sojourners," as well as the Jews, and exhort them to "pass the time of their sojourning here in fear;" and, beseech them "as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from fleshly lusts," chap. ii. 11. Further, he might term them "sojourners scattered" through those countries, although none of them were driven from their native countries, because the expression may merely signify, that they lived at a distance from each other, in the widely-extended regions mentioned in the inscription, and because they were few in number compared with the idolaters and unbelievers among whom they lived. Many other arguments might be drawn from divers passages in the epistles, to prove that they were written to the whole body of Christians residing in these countries, and that whether they were of Jewish or Gentile extraction.

Respecting the design of this epistle it may be observed, that it was intended, 1. To explain more fully the doctrines of Christianity to these newly-converted Jews and Gentiles. 2. To direct and persuade them to a holy conversation, in the faithful discharge of all personal and relative duties, in the several states, both of the civil and the Christian life, whereby they would secure their own peace, and effectually confute the slanders and reproaches of their enemies, who spoke against them as evil-doers. 3. To prepare them for, and comfort and confirm them under, the various sufferings and fiery trials which they already endured, or were likely to endure. This seems to be the apostle's principal intention, for he brings this subject forward, and enlarges less or more upon it, in every chapter; encouraging and exhorting them, by a great variety of arguments, to patience and perseverance in the faith, lest the persecutions and calamities to which they were exposed should cause them to apostatize from Christ and his gospel.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER.

“St. Peter’s style,” says Blackwall, “expresses the noble vehemence and fervour of his spirit, the full knowledge he had of Christianity, and the strong assurance he had of the truth and certainty of his doctrine; and he writes with the authority of the first man in the college of the apostles. He writes with that quickness and rapidity of style, with that noble neglect of some of the formal consequences and niceties of grammar, still preserving its true reason and natural analogy, (which are always marks of a sublime genius,) that you can scarce perceive the pauses of his discourse, and distinction of his periods. A noble majesty, and becoming freedom, is what distinguishes St. Peter: a devout and judicious person cannot read him without solemn attention and awful concern. The conflagration of this lower world, and future judgment of angels and men, in the third chapter of the second epistle, is described in such strong and terrible terms, such awful circumstances, that in the description we see the planetary heavens and this our earth wrapped up with devouring flames, hear the groans of an expiring world, and the crashes of nature tumbling into universal ruin.”

It is not very easy to assign the date of this epistle with exactness. The most commonly received opinion is, that it was written about the seventh of the emperor Nero, or A. D. 62.

Respecting the place where this epistle was written, from Peter sending the salutation of the church at Babylon to the Christians in Pontus, &c., it is generally believed that he wrote it near Babylon. But as there was a Babylon in Egypt, and a Babylon in Assyria, and a city to which the name of Babylon is given figuratively, (Rev. xvii., xviii.,) namely, Rome, the learned are not agreed which of them is the Babylon meant in the salutation. Pearson, Mill, and Le Clerc, think the apostle speaks of Babylon in Egypt: but if Peter had founded a church in the Egyptian Babylon, it probably would have been of some note; yet, if we may believe Lardner, there is no mention made of any church or bishop at that place, in any of the writers of the first four centuries; consequently it is not the Babylon in the salutation. Erasmus, Drusius, Beza, Lightfoot, Basnage, Beausobre, Cave, Wetstein, think the apostle meant Babylon in Assyria; in the remains, or vicinity, of which city, a Christian church had probably been planted, consisting principally of the descendants of the Jews, who remained in those regions after the Babylonish captivity: and in support of this opinion Dr. Benson observes, that the Assyrian Babylon being the metropolis of the eastern dispersion of the Jews, Peter, as an apostle of the circumcision, would very naturally, when he left Judea, go among the Jews at Babylon, and that it is not probable he would date his letter from a place by its figurative name. For which, indeed, no satisfactory reason could be assigned: language of that kind, however well it might be suited to the nature of such a book as St. John’s Revelation, (a book almost wholly figurative and emblematical,) being entirely unsuitable to the date of a letter.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

PETER.

CHAPTER I.

(1.) *The apostle addresses the Christians to whom he wrote, as strangers scattered through Pontus, &c., describes their character, and gives them his apostolic benediction, 1, 2. (2.) He blesses God for regenerating them to a lively hope of a heavenly inheritance, in which they had great comfort under their severe persecutions, 3-9. (3.) He shows that this great salvation by Christ was foretold by their ancient prophets, and introduced by the apostles, 10-12. (4.) Exhorts them to a holy conversation and brotherly love, answerable to their hopes of salvation, to the command and nature of God, and to their redemption by Christ's blood, and regeneration by his word, 13-25.*

A. M. 4064. **PETER**, an apostle of Jesus Christ,
A. D. 60. to the strangers ^a scattered
throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia,
and Bythynia,
2 ^b Elect ^c according to the foreknowledge

of God the Father, ^d through sanc- A. M. 4064.
tification of the Spirit, unto obe- A. D. 60.
dience and ^e sprinkling of the blood of Jesus
Christ: ^f Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

^a John vii. 35; Acts ii. 5, 9, 10; James i. 1.—^b Eph. i. 4; Chap. ii. 9.—^c Rom. viii. 29; xi. 2.

^d 2 Thess. ii. 13.—^e Heb. x. 22; xii. 24.—^f Rom. i. 7; 2 Pet. i. 2; Jude 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *Peter, &c., to the strangers*—Or *sojourners*, as *παροικητοῖς* more properly signifies; that is, to the Jewish or Gentile Christians *sojourning* on earth: see on 1 Chron. xxix. 15; Psa. xxxix. 12; Heb. xi. 13. *Scattered*—*Διασποράς*, of the dispersion, or *dispersed*, partly, probably, by the persecution mentioned Acts viii. 1; or the expression may merely signify, that they lived at a distance from each other, being scattered through the widely-extended regions here mentioned; *through Pontus, &c.*—He names these five provinces in the order wherein they occurred to him, writing from the east. All these countries lie in the Lesser Asia. The *Asia* here distinguished from other provinces, is that which was usually called the *Proconsular Asia*, being a Roman province.

Verse 2. *Elect*—Called out of the world, and from a state of ignorance and sin, guilt and depravity, weakness and wretchedness, by the word, the Spirit, and providence of God; and in consequence of obeying the call, by turning to God in true repentance, living faith, and new obedience, *chosen*—Or accepted of God. For all true believers, or genuine Christians, whose faith works by love, have continually the title of God's *elect* in the New Testament. See notes on Rom. viii. 28, 33; Eph. i. 4, 5.

"Election," says the Rev. J. Wesley, "in the Scripture sense, is God's doing any thing that our merit or power has no part in. The true predestination, or fore-appointment of God, is, 1st, He that believeth shall be saved from the guilt and power of sin. 2d, He that endureth to the end shall be saved eternally. 3d, They who receive the precious gift of faith, thereby become the sons of God; and being sons, they shall receive the Spirit of holiness, to walk as Christ also walked. Throughout every part of this appointment of God, *promise* and *duty* go hand in hand. All is free gift; and such is the gift, that the final issue depends on our future obedience to the heavenly call. But other predestination than this, either to life or death eternal, the Scripture knows not of. Moreover, it is, 1st, Cruel respect of persons; an unjust regard of one, and an unjust disregard of another. It is mere *creature partiality*, and not *infinite justice*: 2d, It is not *plain* Scripture doctrine, (if true,) but, rather, inconsistent with the express written word, that speaks of God's universal offers of grace; his invitations, promises, threatenings, being all *general*. 3d, We are bid to choose life, and reprehended for not doing it. 4th, It is inconsistent with a state of probation in those that *must* be saved or *must* be lost. 5th, It is of fatal consequence; all men being ready, on very slight

A. M. 4064. 3 * Blessed be the God and Father
A. D. 60. of our Lord Jesus Christ, which,
b according to his ¹ abundant mercy, ¹ hath be-
gotten us again unto a lively hope ^k by the resur-

* 2 Cor. i. 3; Eph. i. 3. —^b Tit. iii. 5. —¹ Gr. much. —¹ John
iii. 3, 5; James i. 18.

grounds, to fancy *themselves* of the elect number. But the doctrine of predestination is entirely changed from what it formerly was. Now it implies neither faith, peace, nor purity. It is something that will do *without* them all. Faith is no longer, according to the modern predestinarian scheme, a divine evidence of things not seen, wrought in the soul by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost; not an evidence at all, but a mere notion. Neither is faith made any longer a means of holiness; but something that will do without it. Christ is no more a Saviour from sin; but a defence, a countenancer of it. He is no more a fountain of spiritual life in the souls of believers, but leaves his elect inwardly *dry*, and outwardly *unfruitful*; and is made little more than a refuge from the image of the heavenly; even from righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. According to the foreknowledge of God—That is, speaking after the manner of men; for, strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge, any more than after-knowledge, with God; but all things are known to him as present from eternity to eternity." As none but the truly penitent and believing have in Scripture the title of God's elect, so such may be properly styled, *elect according to the foreknowledge of God*, because God knows beforehand from eternity who will turn to him in repentance and faith, and who will not; but, as Milton observes,

"Foreknowledge has no influence on their fault,
Which had noless proved certain unforeknown."

Nor is there any inconsistency between the divine prescience and human liberty; both are true, according to the Scripture; and doubtless God can reconcile them, if we cannot. Macknight explains the clause thus: "The persons to whom the apostle wrote were with propriety said to be *elect according to the foreknowledge of God*, because, agreeably to the original purpose of God, discovered in the prophetic writings, Jews and Gentiles indiscriminately were made the visible church and people of God, and entitled to all the privileges of the people of God, by their believing the gospel," namely, with a faith working by love to God and man: "God's foreknowledge of all believers to be his people," [that is, true, genuine believers, possessed of living, loving, and obedient faith; for only such are God's people,] "was revealed in the covenant with Abraham. This the apostle mentions to show the Jews that the believing Gentiles were no intruders into the church of God. He determined, from the beginning, to make them his people. See Rom. xi. 2, where God is said to have *foreknown* the whole Jewish nation; and 1 Pet. i. 20, where the sacrifice of Christ is said to be foreknown before the foundation of the world." *Through sanctification of the*

b

rection of Jesus Christ from the dead, A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60. 4 To an inheritance incorruptible,
and undefiled, ¹ and that fadeth not away, ^m reserved in heaven ² for you,

* 1 Corinthians xv. 20. —¹ Chapter v. 4. —^m Colossians i. 5.
² Or, for us.

Spirit—Through the renewing and purifying influences of the Spirit on their souls; for sanctification implies an internal change wrought in the heart, the first part of which is termed *regeneration*, John i. 13, or a *new creation*, 2 Cor. v. 17; Tit. iii. 5; producing, 1st, Power over sin, 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2; Rom. vi.; over the world, 1 John v. 4; and the flesh, Rom. viii. 2. 2d, Devotedness to God and his service in heart and life. 3d, A continually increasing conformity to the divine image. *Unto obedience*—To engage and enable them to yield themselves up to all holy obedience; namely, both *internal*, to the great law of love toward God and man, with every holy disposition connected therewith; and *external*, to all God's known commands. *And sprinkling of the blood of Jesus*—That is, through his atoning blood, which was typified by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifices under the law, in allusion to which it is termed, (Heb. xii. 24,) *the blood of sprinkling*. This is the foundation of all the rest, for by this we are, 1st, Introduced into a state of justification and peace with God, being freed from a condemning conscience, put in possession of the Holy Spirit, and rendered capable of obeying, Heb. ix. 13, 14; and hereby, 2d, Our obedience is rendered acceptable to God, which it would not be if it were not sprinkled with his blood, or recommended by his mediation. *Grace unto you*—The unmerited favour and love of God, with those influences of the Spirit, which are the effect thereof; and *peace*—All sorts of blessings; *be multiplied*—Possessed in great abundance. Verses 3, 4. *Blessed be the God and Father*, or, *God even the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ*—His only-begotten and beloved Son; *who, according to his abundant mercy*—His compassion for us in our state of ignorance and guilt, depravity and weakness; his undeserved love and goodness, the source of all our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal: *hath begotten us again*—*Regenerated us; to a lively*—*Zōōn, living, hope*—A hope which implies true spiritual life, is the consequence of repentance unto life, living faith, justification by faith, and a birth from above, by which we pass from death unto life; a hope which revives the heart, and makes the soul lively and vigorous: *by the resurrection of Christ*—Which not only proved him to be the Son of God, (Rom. i. 4,) and demonstrated the truth and importance of his doctrine, which brought life and immortality to light, but manifested the acceptableness and efficacy of the sacrifice he offered for sin, opened an intercourse between God and man, made way for our receiving the Holy Ghost, and is a pledge and earnest of our resurrection, he having risen the *first-fruits of them that sleep in him*. *To an inheritance*—For if we are children, then are we heirs; *incorruptible*—Not like earthly inheritances or posses-

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A. M. 4064. 5 ° Who are kept by the power of
A. D. 60. God through faith unto salvation,
ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 ° Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now
° for a season (if need be) ° ye are in heaviness
through manifold temptations :

° John x. 28, 29. — ° Matt. v. 12. — ° 2 Cor. iv. 17 ; Chap. v. 10.
° James i. 2. — ° James i. 3, 12 ; Chap. iv. 12.

sions, of whatever kind, which are both corruptible in themselves, tending in their own nature to dissolution and decay ; and are possessed by that which is corruptible, even through the medium of the body, with its senses and members, all tending to decay and dissolution. But the inheritance we expect is neither corruptible in itself, nor shall we that enjoy it be corruptible, either in soul or body. *Undefiled*—Every thing here is therefore *corruptible*, because it has been defiled with the sin of man, and laid under a curse, so that vanity and misery are attached to the enjoyment of every thing ; and we ourselves, having been defiled in soul and body, have all the seeds of vanity and misery sown in our frame. But the inheritance reserved for us has not been defiled by any sin, and therefore has no curse, vanity, or misery attached to it, Rev. xxii. 3. And we ourselves, when admitted into that world, shall be perfectly pure, and shall have in our frame no hindrance to the most perfect enjoyment. *And fadeth not away*—As every thing in this world does, decaying in lustre and glory, in sweetness, or the pleasure it yields in the enjoyment, and in value to us, who can only have a life estate in any thing ; whence, whatever we possess is continually decreasing in value to us, as the time approaches when we are to be dispossessed of it. But the inheritance above, on the contrary, will not decay in any of these respects: its value, its glory and sweetness, or the pleasure it yields in the enjoyment, will continue the same to all eternity ; or rather, will continually increase ; new glories opening upon us, new pleasures offering themselves to our enjoyment, and new riches not ceasing to be conferred upon us from the inexhaustible stores of divine and infinite beneficence. *Reserved in heaven*—And therefore not subject to such changes as are continually taking place here on earth ; *for you—Who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and immortality.*

Verse 5. *Who are kept*—Who, though now surrounded with many apparent dangers, are not left defenceless, but are *guarded*, kept as in a garrison, as the word *φρουρημενος* signifies ; *by the power of God*—Which worketh all in all ; or secured from all real harm, under the observation of his all-seeing eye, and the protection of his almighty hand ; *through faith*—Through the continued exercise of that faith, by which alone salvation is both received and retained. The clause is very emphatical: “It represents,” says Macknight, “believers as attacked by evil spirits and wicked men, their enemies, but defended against those attacks by the power of God, through the influence of their faith, (1 John v. 4),

7 That ° the trial of your faith, A. M. 4064.
being much more precious than of A. D. 60.
gold that perisheth, though ° it be tried with
fire, ° might be found unto praise, and hon-
our, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus
Christ :

° Job xxiii. 10 ; Psa. lxvi. 10 ; Prov. xvii. 3 ; Isa. xlvi. 10.
° Rom. ii. 7, 10 ; 1 Cor. iv. 5.

just as those who remain in an impregnable fortress are secured from the attacks of their enemies by its ramparts and walls.” *Ready*—*Ετοιμην*, *prepared, to be revealed*—In all its glory ; *in the last time*—The time of Christ’s second coming ; the grand period, in which all the mysteries of divine providence shall beautifully and gloriously terminate. Some have thought that by the salvation here spoken of, the apostle meant the preservation from the destruction brought on the Jewish nation by the Romans, which preservation the disciples of Christ “obtained, by observing the signs mentioned in their Master’s prophecy concerning that event. For, when they saw these signs take place, they fled from Jerusalem to places of safety, agreeably to their Master’s order, Matt. xxiv. 16. But what is said, verses 9–12, concerning this salvation ; that it is a salvation, not of the body, but of the soul, to be bestowed as the reward of faith ; that the prophets, who foretold this salvation, searched diligently among what people, and at what time, the means of procuring it were accomplished ; that it was revealed to the prophets that these means were to be accomplished, not among them, but among us ; and that these things were to be preached by the apostles as actually come to pass : I say, the above-mentioned particulars concerning the salvation to be revealed in the last time, do not agree to the deliverance of the Christians from the destruction of Jerusalem, but are applicable only to the salvation of believers in general from eternal death, by a resurrection to an immortal life in heaven, at the time of Christ’s coming, when this salvation is to be revealed ; and that time is called *the last time*, because it will be the concluding scene of God’s dispensations relating to our world.”—Macknight.

Verse 6. *Wherein*—In which *living hope* of such a glorious inheritance, and in being so kept to the enjoyment of it, ye, even now, *greatly rejoice*—*Αγαλλιασθε*, *ye are exceeding glad, or leap for joy, though for a season, ολιγον αρατε, now*—A little while: such is our whole life compared to eternity ! *if need be*—When God sees it needful, and the best means for your spiritual profit ; *ye are in heaviness*—*Απηθεντες*, *grieved, or in sorrow* ; but not in darkness : for they still retained both faith and hope, verses 3, 5 ; yea, and love, verse 8. From this we learn that the people of God are never afflicted except when it is either necessary for, or conducive to, their spiritual improvement. What a consolation is this to the afflicted ! *That the trial of your faith*—The trying whether it be genuine, or the proof of it upon trial ; *being much more precious*—Or much more

A. M. 4064. 8 ^a Whom having not seen, ye love ;
A. D. 60. ^a in whom, though now ye see *him*
not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeak-
able, and full of glory:

9 Receiving ^v the end of your faith, *even* the
salvation of *your* souls.

10 ^a Of which salvation the prophets have

^a 1 John iv. 20.—^v John xx. 29; 2 Corinthians v. 7;
Hebrews xi. 1, 27.—^v Romans vi. 22.—^a Genesis xlix. 10;
Daniel ii. 44; Haggai ii. 7; Zechariah vi. 12; Matthew xiii.

important, or of greater consequence, *than* the trial
of *gold*—Or that your faith, being tried, and proved
to be genuine upon trial, *which is more precious
than gold*, (for gold, though it bear the fire, will yet
perish with the world,) *may be found*, though it
doth not yet appear, *unto praise*—From God him-
self; or may be approved and commended by him;
and honour—From men and angels; *and glory*—
Assigned by the great Judge; *at the appearing of
Jesus Christ*—At the time of the restitution of all
things, when he shall appear for the perfect and final
salvation of his followers. One reason why the
Christians, in the first age, were subject to persecu-
tion and death was, as Macknight observes, “that
their faith being put to the severest trial, mankind
might have, in their tried and persevering faith, what
is infinitely more profitable to them than all the gold
and silver in the world; namely, such an irrefragable
demonstration of the truth of the facts on which
the Christian religion is built, as will bring praise,
and honour, and glory, to God, and to the martyrs
themselves, at the last day. For what can be more
honourable to God, than that the persons, whom he
appointed to bear witness to the resurrection of
Christ, and to the other miracles by which the gos-
pel was established, sealed their testimony with
their blood? Or what greater evidence of the truth
of these miracles can the world require, than that the
persons who were eye-witnesses of them, lost their
estates, endured extreme tortures, and parted with
their lives, for bearing testimony to them? Or what
greater felicity can these magnanimous heroes wish
to receive than that which shall be bestowed on
them at the revelation of Jesus Christ, when their
testimony shall be put beyond all doubt, their perse-
cutors shall be punished, and themselves rewarded
with the everlasting possession of heaven?”

Verses 8, 9. *Whom having not seen*—*Εἰδότες*,
known, that is, personally in the flesh; *ye love*—
Namely, on account of his amiable character, and
for the great things he hath done and suffered for
you, and the great benefits he hath bestowed on you.
It is very possible, as Doddridge observes, that among
these dispersed Christians, there might be some who
had visited Jerusalem while Christ was there, and
might have seen, or even conversed with him; but
as the greater part had not, St. Peter speaks, accord-
ing to the usual apostolic manner, as if they all had
not. Thus he speaks of them all as loving Christ,
though there might be some among them who were
destitute both of this divine principle and of that joy

b

inquired and searched diligently, who ^a A. M. 4064.
prophesied of the grace *that should* ^a A. D. 60.
come unto you :

11 Searching what, or what manner of time
^a the Spirit of Christ which was in them did
signify, when it testified beforehand ^b the suffer-
ings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

17; Luke x. 24; 2 Peter i. 19–21.—^a Chapter iii. 19;
2 Peter i. 21.—^b Psalm xxii. 6; Isaiah liii. 3, &c.; Daniel
ix. 26; Luke xxiv. 25.

which he here describes as *ανεκκλαητω και δεδοξαμενη*,
unutterable and glorified; that is, such joy as was
an anticipation of that of the saints in glory. *Re-
ceiving*—Even now already, with unspeakable del-
ight, as a full equivalent for all your trials; *the end
of your faith*—That which in your faith you aim at,
and which is the seal and the reward of it; *the sal-
vation of your souls*—From the guilt and power of
your sins, and all the consequences thereof, into the
favour and image of God, and a state of communion
with him; implying a qualification for, and earnest
of, complete and eternal salvation. The Jews thought
that the salvation to be accomplished by the Mes-
siah would be a salvation from the Roman and every
foreign yoke; but that would only have been a sal-
vation of their *bodies*: whereas the salvation which
believers expect from Christ is the salvation of their
souls from sin and misery, and of their bodies from
the grave.

Ver. 10, 11. *Of which salvation*—That is, concern-
ing the nature and extent of it, and the way and
means of attaining it, namely, by believing and obey-
ing the gospel, to be preached among all nations:
(see the margin :) *the prophets have inquired*—*Εφε-
ζητησαν*, *sought with accuracy*, or were earnestly in-
quisitive about; *and searched diligently*—(Like
miners searching for precious ore,) after the mean-
ing of the prophecies which they delivered; *who
prophesied*—Long ago; *of the grace of God toward
you*—Of his abundant overflowing grace to be be-
stowed on believers under the dispensation of the
Messiah: *searching what, or what time*—What par-
ticular period; *and what manner of time*—By what
marks to be distinguished; or in what age of the
world, and what events should then take place.
From this it appears that in many instances the pro-
phets did not understand the meaning of their own
prophecies, but studied them, as others did, with
great care, in order to find it out. See Dan. vii. 28;
xii. 8. This care they used more especially in ex-
amining the prophecies which they uttered concern-
ing Christ. *The Spirit of Christ which was in
them*—The Holy Spirit, as a Spirit of prophecy
communicated to them by Christ, who therefore
then existed, and that not as a creature, for no cre-
ature can give the Holy Ghost but a person properly
divine. Here then we learn that the inspiration of
the Jewish prophets was derived from Christ; it
was his Spirit (see Gal. iv. 6) which spake in them.
The same Spirit he promised to the apostles, John
xvi. 7, 13. Wherefore, the prophets and apostles be-

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A. M. 4064. 12 ° Unto whom it was revealed, A. D. 60. that ^d not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with ° the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; † which things the angels desire to look into.

° Daniel ix. 24.—^d Hebrews xi. 13, 39, 40.—° Acts ii. 4. † Exod. xxv. 20.—[†] Luke xii. 35.—^b Luke xxi. 34; Rom. xiii. 13; 1 Thess. v. 6, 8; Chap. iv. 7; v. 8.

ing inspired by one and the same Spirit, their doctrine must be, as in fact it is, the same. *When it testified beforehand*—Moved them to foretell and show; *the sufferings of Christ*, (see the margin,) *and the glory that should follow*—Τας μετὰ ταύτα δοξας, *the glories that should succeed these sufferings*; namely, the glory of his resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and the effusion of his Spirit; the glory of the last judgment, and of his eternal kingdom; and also the glories of his grace in the hearts and lives of true believers.

Verse 12. *Unto whom*—So searching; *it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us*—Not so much for their own benefit as for ours, to whose time the accomplishment of their prophecies was reserved; *they did minister the things which are now reported unto you*—Performed the office of foretelling the things, the accomplishment whereof has been declared unto you. In other words, that they did not so much by their predictions serve themselves or that generation, as they have served us, who now enjoy what they only saw afar off. *With the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven*—Confirmed by the inward powerful testimony of the Holy Ghost, as well as the mighty effusion of his miraculous gifts. *Which things the angels desire to look into*—To obtain a more perfect insight into, and knowledge of, as being matters of their admiration and delight, because in them the manifold wisdom of God is displayed, and by them the salvation of men is procured and effected, which they rejoice in. The expression, *the angels desire to look into*, is literally, *to stoop down to*. “But *stooping* being the action of one who desires to look narrowly into a thing, it properly means, *to look attentively*. The omission of the article before ἀγγελοι, *angels*, renders the meaning more grand. Not any particular species of angels, but all the different orders of them, desire to look into the things foretold by the prophets, and preached by the apostles. See Eph. iii. 10. This earnest desire of the angels to contemplate the sufferings of Christ, was emblematically signified by the cherubim placed in the inward tabernacle, with their faces turned down toward the *mercy-seat*, Exod. xxv. 20. To that emblem there is a plain allusion in the word *κατακυψαι* here, *to stoop*. The apostle’s meaning is, If our salvation, and the means by which it is accomplished, are of such importance as to merit the attention of angels, how much more do they merit our attention, who are so much interested in them!”—Mac-knight.

13 Wherefore ° gird up the loins of A. M. 4064. your mind, ^b be sober, and hope ³ to A. D. 60. the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you ⁱ at the revelation of Jesus Christ:

14 As obedient children, ^k not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts ^l in your ignorance:

³ Gr. *perfectly*.—^l Luke xvii. 30; 1 Corinthians i. 7; 2 Thessalonians i. 7.—^k Romans xii. 2; Chapter iv. 2 ^l Acts xvii. 30; 1 Thessalonians iv. 5.

Here is a beautiful gradation: prophets, righteous men, kings, desired to hear and see the things which Christ did and taught, Matt. xiii. 17; but what the Holy Ghost taught concerning Christ, the very angels long to understand.

Verses 13–16. *Wherefore*—Since your lot is fallen into these glorious times, wherein you enjoy such high privileges above what the people of God formerly enjoyed; since the blessings which are set before you are so invaluable, and are so freely offered you, and you have such great encouragement to believe you may attain them; *gird up the loins of your mind*—Prepare to pursue them with vigour, constancy, and perseverance, and to perform the various duties which they lay you under an indispensable obligation steadily to practise. The apostle alludes to the manners of the eastern countries, in which the men’s garments being long and flowing, they prepared themselves for travelling, and other active employments, by girding them up with a girdle put round their loins, to prevent their being encumbered by them. *The loins of the mind*, therefore, is a figurative expression for the faculties of the soul, the understanding, memory, will, and affections, which the apostle signifies must be gathered in and girded, as it were, about the soul by the girdle of truth, so as to be in a state fit for continual and unwearied exertion in running the Christian race, fighting the good fight of faith, and working out our salvation with fear and trembling. Our mind must not be overcharged at any time with surfeiting and drunkenness, or the cares of this life: our affections must be placed on proper objects, and in a just degree; and especially must be set on the things that are above, which are to be our portion and felicity for ever: our various passions must be under the government of reason and religion, of the truth and grace of God. *Be sober*—Or rather, *watchful*, as *νηφοντες* properly signifies, as servants that wait for their Lord; *and hope to the end*—Τελευτως ελπισατε, *hope perfectly*, namely, with the full assurance of hope; *for the grace*—The blessings flowing from the free favour of God; *to be brought unto you at the final and glorious revelation of Jesus Christ*—At the end of the world. *As obedient children*—As children of God, obedient to him in all things; *not fashioning*—Or conforming; *yourselves*—In spirit and conduct; *according to*—Or, as if you were influenced by; *your former desires in your ignorance*—When you were unacquainted with those better things which now claim the utmost vigour of your

A. M. 4064. 15 ^m But as he which hath called
A. D. 60. you is holy, so be ye holy in all man-
ner of conversation ;

16 Because it is written, ^m Be ye holy ; for I
am holy.

17 And if ye call on the Father, ^o who with-
out respect of persons judgeth according to
every man's work, ^p pass the time of your ^q so-
journing here in fear :

18 Forasmuch as ye know ^r that ye were not
redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and

^m Luke i. 74, 75 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1. — ⁿ Lev. xii. 44 ; xix. 2 ;
xx. 7. — ^o Deut. x. 17 ; Acts x. 34 ; Rom. ii. 11. — ^p 2 Cor.
vii. 1 ; Phil. ii. 12. — ^q 2 Corinth. v. 6. — ^r 1 Corinth. vi. 20 ;
vii. 23. — Ezek. xx. 18 ; Chap. iv. 3. — ^s Acts xx. 28.

affections. *But as he which hath called you*—To be
his children and his heirs ; *is holy*—A being per-
fectly pure and spiritual ; *be ye holy*—In imitation
of him, your heavenly Father ; *in all manner of
conversation*—*Ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ*, in your whole be-
haviour, in all your tempers, words, and works,
from day to day.

Verse 17. *And if ye call on the Father*—With an
expectation of being heard ; or, as you desire or ex-
pect audience and acceptance at God's hands ; *who,
without respect of persons*—Which can have no
place with God ; see note on Rom. ii. 11 ; *judgeth
according to every man's work*—According to the
tenor of his life and conversation ; *pass the time of
your sojourning*—The short season of your abode on
earth ; *in fear*—In the reverential and awful fear of
God, in an humble and loving fear of offending him,
in a watchful fear of your spiritual enemies, and in
a jealous fear of yourselves, lest a promise being left
you of entering into his rest, you should, through
lukewarmness, sloth, and indolence, or through
levity, carelessness, and negligence, after all, come
short of it. This fear is a proper companion and
guard of hope. The word *παροικία*, here rendered
sojourning, properly signifies the stay which travel-
lers make in a place while finishing some business.
The term, therefore, is applied with great propriety
to the abode of the children of God in the present
world, as it signifies that this earth is not their home,
and that they are to remain in it only a short time.
See on Heb. xi. 13.

Verses 18-21. *Forasmuch as ye know, &c.*—That
is, be holy in your whole behaviour, because ye know
what an immense price your redemption cost ; *that
you were not redeemed with corruptible things*—
Such as all visible and temporal things are ; even
silver and gold—Highly as they are prized, and
eagerly as they are sought ; *from your vain conver-
sation*—Your foolish, sinful way of life, a way
wholly unprofitable to yourselves, and dishonourable
to God ; *received by traditions from your fathers*—
Which you had been engaged in by the instruction
or example of your forefathers. The Jews derived
from their fathers that implicit regard for the tra-
ditions of the elders, by which they made the law of
God of none effect, with a variety of other corrupt

gold, from your vain conversation ^{re-} A. M. 4064
ceived by tradition from your fathers ; A. D. 60.

19 But ^t with the precious blood of Christ, ^u as
of a lamb without blemish and without spot :

20 ^v Who verily was foreordained before the
foundation of the world, but was manifest ^w in
these last times for you,

21 Who by him do believe in God, ^x that
raised him up from the dead, and ^y gave him
glory ; that your faith and hope might be in
God.

^t Exod. xii. 5. — ^u Rom. iii. 25 ; xvi. 25, 26 ; Eph. iii. 9, 11 ;
Col. i. 26 ; 2 Tim. i. 9, 10 ; Tit. i. 2, 3 ; Rev. xiii. 8. — ^v Gal.
iv. 4 ; Eph. i. 10 ; Heb. i. 2. — ^w Acts ii. 24. — ^x Matt. xxviii.
18 ; Acts ii. 33.

principles and practices. In like manner the Gen-
tiles derived their idolatry, and other abominable
vices, from the teaching and example of their fathers ;
for, in general, as Whitby justly remarks, the strong-
est arguments for false religions, as well as for errors
in the true, is that men have received them from
their fathers. *But with the precious blood of Christ*
—Blood of immense value, being the blood of the
only-begotten Son of God, who had glory with the
Father before the world was ; *as of a lamb without
blemish and without spot*—See on Lev. xxii. 21, 22.
The sacrifice of himself, which Christ offered to God
without spot, being here likened to the sacrifice of
the paschal lamb, and of the lambs daily offered as
sin-offerings for the whole nation, we are thereby
taught that the shedding of Christ's blood is a real
atonement for the sins of the world. Hence John
the Baptist called him *the Lamb of God which taketh
away the sin of the world*. And to show the extent
of the efficacy of his sacrifice, that it reaches back-
ward to the fall of man, as well as forward to the
end of time, he is said (Rev. xiii. 8) to be the *Lamb
slain from the foundation of the world*. *Who verily
was foreordained*—*Προεγνωσμεν*, foreknown, before
the foundation of the world—Before God called the
universe into being ; *but was manifested*—Namely,
in the flesh, John i. 14 ; 1 John iii. 8 ; *in these last
times*—Of the Mosaic economy, or in the times of
the gospel, the last dispensation of divine mercy ;
see note on Heb. i. 2 ; *for you*—Jews or Gentiles ;
who by him—Through the virtue of his sacrifice, and
the efficacy of his grace ; *do believe in God*—In the
one living and true God, as your Friend and Father ;
that raised him up from the dead—Thereby con-
firming his doctrine, showing the efficacy of his
atonement, procuring for you the Holy Spirit, and
assuring you of your resurrection ; see on verse 3 ;
and gave him glory—Placed him at his own right
hand, and invested him with all power in heaven
and on earth, for the salvation of his followers, and
the destruction of his and their enemies. See Heb.
x. 13. *That your faith and hope might be in God*
—That you might be encouraged to believe in God
as reconciled to you through Christ, that you might
hope on good grounds that he will glorify you as he
hath done Christ your Head ; or, *that your faith*

A. M. 4064. 22 Seeing ye^b have purified your souls
A. D. 60. in obeying the truth through the Spirit

unto unfeigned^c love of the brethren, see that
ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23^d Being born again, not of corruptible seed,
but of incorruptible, ^e by the word of God, which
liveth and abideth for ever.

^b Acts xv. 9.—^c Rom. xii. 9, 10; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 Tim. i. 5; Heb. xiii. 1.—^d John i. 13; iii. 5.—^e James i. 18; 1 John iii. 9.—^f Or, for that.

and hope might terminate in God the Father, or be ultimately fixed on him through the mediation of his Son.

Verses 22, 23. *Seeing you have purified your souls*—By applying to this fountain which God has opened for sin and for uncleanness, and by believing and obeying the truth, which God hath appointed to be the grand means of sanctification, delivering such as obey it from the power, and purifying them from the defilement of sin, John viii. 32; xvii. 17; *through the Spirit* working by the word, *unto the unfeigned love of the brethren*—For the fruit of the Spirit is love to the children of God, as well as to God their heavenly Father. See that ye love one another with a pure heart—A heart purified from all earthly and sensual affections, and corrupt passions; from all selfish, interested views, designs, and desires; and that fervently as Christ loved the church; and so as to be willing, if called to it, to lay down your lives for the brethren, 1 John iv. 16. Peter's description of Christian love here is excellent; it springs up in a heart purified by the truth of God, through the influence of his Spirit. It is sincere in its operation, it is unmingled with carnal passions, and it is fervent and increasing. *Being born again*—Born from above, born of the Spirit of God, and therefore his genuine children; a consideration which lays you under an indispensable obligation to love all your brethren and sisters in Christ, who are born of the same Spirit. See the note on John iii. 3. *Not of corruptible seed*—Not by virtue of any descent from human parents; but of incorruptible—Namely, the truth of God, rendered effectual through his grace; *which liveth*—Is full of divine virtue and vital energy; *and abideth for ever*—Produces effects which will continue for ever, or begets in us that spiritual life which will issue in life eternal.

24^f For ^g all flesh is as grass, and A. M. 4064.
all the glory of man as the flower of ^h A. D. 60.
grass. The grass withereth, and the flower
thereof falleth away:

25ⁱ But the word of the Lord endureth for
ever. ^j And this is the word which by the gos-
pel is preached unto you.

^f Psa. ciii. 15; Isa. xl. 6; li. 12; James i. 10.—^g Psa. cii. 12, 26; Isa. xl. 8; Luke xvi. 17.—^h John i. 1, 14; 1 John i. 1, 3.

Verses 24, 25. *For all flesh*—Every human creature, is transient and withering as grass—The word *χρῶς*, here rendered grass, denotes not only what we generally call grass, but all kinds of herbs; and among the rest, those which have stalks and flowers. *And all the glory of man*—His learning, wisdom, wealth, power, dignity, authority, dominion; *as the flower of grass*—Which is yet more frail than the grass itself. *The grass withereth* of itself, if not cut down by the scythe of the mower; and the body of man gradually wastes away and perishes, even if it be not cut off by some unexpected stroke; *and the flower thereof falleth away*—Drops its blooming honours, and falls dying to the ground; and thus precarious and uncertain are all the dependances which we can place on perishing creatures. *But the word of the Lord*—His revealed truth, by which you are regenerated or begotten again to a lively hope of a heavenly inheritance; *endureth for ever*—Always remains true and infallible, a foundation on which we may safely build our present confidence and future hopes. The reader will recollect that this is a quotation from Isa. xl. 6-8; “where the preaching of the gospel is foretold and recommended, from the consideration that every thing which is merely human, and among the rest the noblest races of mankind, with all their glory and grandeur, their honour, riches, beauty, strength, and eloquence; as also the arts which men have invented, and the works they have executed, all decay as the flowers of the field. But the incorruptible seed, the gospel, called by the prophet *the word of the Lord*, shall be preached while the world standeth; and the divine nature, which it is the instrument of conveying to believers, will remain in them to all eternity. James likewise hath illustrated the brevity and uncertainty of human life, with its glory, by the same figures, chap. i. 11.”

CHAPTER II.

The apostle, addressing them as persons regenerated by the word of God, (1.) Urges them, by a representation of their Christian privileges, to receive that word with meekness; to continue in the exercise of faith in Christ, as the great foundation of their eternal hopes, and to maintain such a holy conversation as might adorn his gospel among the unconverted Gentiles, 1-12. (2.) He exhorts them to the performance of various relative duties, and especially to a proper regard and subjection to their civil governors, 13-17. (3.) Directs servants to obey their masters, whether believers or unbelievers, and whether gentle in their manners or froward, assuring them that it was an acceptable thing to God, if a servant or a

slave, (as the word may signify,) from a principle of religion, suffered bad usage patiently, 18-20. (4.) He enforces his exhortation to them by the consideration of that patience with which the Lord Jesus endured his most grievous sufferings, 21-25.

A. M. 4064. **WHEREFORE**, ^a laying aside all
A. D. 60. malice, and all guile, and hy-
pocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,
2 ^b As new-born babes, desire the sincere
° milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby :

^a Eph. iv. 22, 25, 31 ; Col. iii. 8 ; Heb. xii. 1 ; James i. 21 ; v. 9 ; Chap. iv. 2. — ^b Matt. xviii. 3 ; Mark x. 15 ; Rom. vi. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1-3. *Wherefore*—Since the word of God is so excellent and durable in itself, and has had such a blessed effect upon you as to regenerate you, and bring you to the enjoyment of true Christian love; *laying aside*—As utterly inconsistent with that love; *all malice*—All ill-will, every unkind disposition; or all wickedness, as κακίαν may be properly rendered, all sinful tempers and practices whatsoever; *and all guile*—All craft, deceitful cunning, and artifice, every temper contrary to Christian simplicity; *and hypocrisies*—Every kind of dissimulation; *and envies*—Grieving at the prosperity or good, temporal or spiritual, enjoyed by others; *and all evil speakings*—All reproachful or unkind speeches concerning others; *as new-born babes*—As persons lately regenerated, and yet young in grace, mere babes as to your acquaintance with the doctrines, your experience of the graces, your enjoyment of the privileges, and your performance of the duties of Christianity; *desire*—Επιποθεσαστε, *desire earnestly*, or love affectionately, or from your inmost soul, *the sincere*—The pure, uncorrupted milk of the word—That is, that word of God which nourishes the soul as milk does the body, and which is free from all guile, so that none are deceived who cleave to it, and make it the food of their souls; *that ye may grow thereby*—In Christian knowledge and wisdom, in faith, hope, and love; in humility, resignation, patience, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, in all holiness and righteousness, unto the full measure of Christ's stature. In the former chapter the apostle had represented the word of God as the incorruptible seed, by which the believers, to whom he wrote, had been born again, and by obeying which they had purified their souls; here he represents it as the milk by which the new-born babes in Christ grow up to maturity. The word, therefore, is both the principle by which the divine life is produced in the soul, and the food by which it is nourished. Some critics, following the Vulgate version, render λογικον αδολον γαλα, *the unadulterated rational milk*. But the context evidently shows that our translators have given us the true meaning of the apostle. By adding the epithet, αδολον, *unadulterated*, or *pure*, the apostle teaches us that *the milk of the word* will not nourish the divine nature in those that use it, if it be adulterated with human mixtures. *If so be*, or rather *since*, *ye have tasted*—Have sweetly and experimentally known; *that the Lord is gracious*—

b

3 If so be ye have ^d tasted that the Lord is gracious :
A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60.

4 To whom coming *as unto* a living stone,
° disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God,
and precious,

^c 1 Cor. iii. 2. — ^d Psa. xxxiv. 8 ; Heb. vi. 5. — ^e Psa. cxviii. 22 ; Matt. xxi. 42 ; Acts iv. 11.

Is merciful, loving, and kind, in what he hath already done, and in what he is still doing for and in you. The apostle seems evidently to allude to Psa. xxxiv. 8, *O taste and see that the Lord is good*: where see the note. Not only think and believe, on his own testimony, or on the testimony of others, that he is good, but know it by your own experience; know that he is good to you in pardoning your sins, adopting and regenerating you by his grace, shedding his love abroad in your heart, and giving you to enjoy communion with himself through the eternal Spirit.

Verse 4. *To whom coming*—With desire and by faith; *as unto a living stone*—Living from eternity; alive from the dead; and alive for evermore: and a firm foundation, communicating spiritual life to those that come to him, and are built upon him, making him the ground of their confidence and hope for time and for eternity. The apostle alludes to Isa. xxviii. 16, where the formation of a Christian church, for the spiritual worship of God, is foretold under the image of a temple, which God was to build on the Messiah as the foundation-stone thereof. See the note there. There is a wonderful beauty and energy in these expressions, which describe Christ as a spiritual foundation, solid, firm, durable; and believers as a spiritual building erecting thereon, in preference to that temple which the Jews accounted their highest glory; and St. Peter, speaking of him thus, shows he did not judge himself, but Christ, to be the rock on which the church was built; *disallowed*—Αποδοκιμασμενον, *rejected indeed of*, or by, *men*—First and primarily by the Jews and their rulers, as not answering their carnal and worldly expectations, nor suiting their way of building; that is, not to be made use of for the carrying on and promoting of their worldly projects and interests. By representing Christ as being rejected of men, the apostle intimated that he was the person spoken of Psa. cxviii. 22; *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner*; a passage which our Lord himself, in his conversation with the chief priests and elders, referred to as a prophecy which they were about to fulfil by rejecting him; but whose exaltation, notwithstanding all they could do to prevent it, should assuredly take place. See on Matt. xxi. 42. But the Jews, or, added to them, the Turks, heathen, and infidels, are not the only people that have rejected, and do reject Christ; but all Christians so called, who live in known sin

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A. M. 4064. 5 'Ye also, as lively stones, ' are
A. D. 60. built up ^a a spiritual house, ^b a holy
priesthood, to offer up ¹ spiritual sacrifices, ² ac-
ceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the Scrip-
ture, ° Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone,
elect, precious: and he that believeth on him
shall not be confounded.

¹ Eph. ii. 21, 22.—² Or, *be ye built*.—^a Hebrews iii. 6.
^b Isa. lxi. 6; lvi. 21; Verse 9.—¹ Hos. xiv. 2; Mal. i. 11;
Rom. xii. 1.—² Phil. iv. 18.

on the one hand, or who expect to be saved by the
merit of their own works on the other, reject him;
as do also all hypocrites, formalists, lukewarm, in-
dolent, worldly-minded professors, and all those
backsliders who, *having begun in the Spirit end in
the flesh, and draw back unto perdition*, instead of
continuing to believe, love, and obey, to the saving
of their souls, Heb. x. 38, 39. *But chosen of God*—
From all eternity, to be the foundation of his church;
and *precious*—Of unspeakable dignity and worth
in himself, in the sight of God, and in the eyes of
all true believers.

Verse 5. *Ye also*—Believing in him with a loving
and obedient faith, *as lively*—Greek, *ζωτες*, *living*,
stones—Quickened and made alive to God by spirit-
ual life derived from him, *are built up*—Upon him,
and in union with each other; *a spiritual house*—
Spiritual yourselves; and *a habitation of God through
the Spirit*. For, according to his promise, he lives
and walks in every true believer, 2 Cor. vi. 16; and
collectively considered, as a holy society, or as-
sembly, uniting together in his worship and service,
you are the *house*, or temple, *of the living God*,
(1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Cor. iii. 16; Eph. ii. 20, 21,) in
which he manifests his presence, displays his glory,
communicates his blessings, and accepts the prayers
and praises, alms and oblations, of his people; *a
holy priesthood*—Not only God's temple, but the
priests that serve him in that temple; that is, persons
dedicated to and employed for God. Thus, Isaiah
lxi. 6, it is foretold that, in the days of the Messiah,
the people of God should be *named the priests of
the Lord, and the ministers of our God*; as also chap.
lxvi. 21. Christians are called *a priesthood*, in the
same sense that the Israelites were called *a kingdom
of priests*, Exod. xix. 6. The apostle's design, in
giving these titles to real Christians, is partly to
show that they are dedicated to God in heart and
life, and also that in the Christian church or temple
there is no need of the mediation of priests to present
our prayers to God. Every sincere worshipper has
access to the Father through Christ, as if he were
really a priest himself. The apostle says, *a holy
priesthood*, because genuine Christians are very
different characters from the generality of the Jewish
priests, who, though the posterity of Aaron, and de-
dicated externally to, and employed in, the service
of God, were remarkably unholy, yea, very vicious
characters; whereas the true disciples of Christ are
really holy in heart and life. *To offer up spiritual*

7 Unto you, therefore, which believe, A. M. 4064.
he is ² precious: but unto them which A. D. 60.

be disobedient, ^m the stone which the builders dis-
allowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8 ⁿ And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of
offence, ^o *even to them* which stumble at the
word, being disobedient: ^p whereunto also they
were appointed.

¹ Isaiah xxviii. 16.—² Or, *an honour*.—^m Psalm cxviii. 22;
Matt. xxi. 42; Acts iv. 11.—ⁿ Isa. viii. 14.—^o 1 Cor. i. 23.
^p Exod. ix. 16.

sacrifices—Not merely their prayers and praises,
but their souls and bodies, their time and talents,
with all their thoughts, words, and actions, *accep-
table to God through the mediation of Jesus Christ*—
The great High-Priest over the house of God, whose
intercession alone can recommend to the Father
such imperfect sacrifices as ours.

Verses 6-8. *Wherefore also*—To which purpose;
it is contained in the Scripture—In Isa. xxviii. 16,
the passage before referred to. *Behold, I lay in
Sion a chief corner-stone*—To support and hold to-
gether the whole building. This, as explained Eph.
ii. 21, signifies the union of Jews and Gentiles in one
faith, baptism, and hope, so as to form one church or
temple for the worship of God through the media-
tion of Christ. *And he that believeth on him*—With
a lively faith, a faith productive of love and obedi-
ence; *shall not be confounded*—In time or in eter-
nity. *To you therefore who believe*—With such a
faith; *he is precious*—Highly esteemed by you, and
of infinite advantage to you. Or, as we read in the
margin, *he is an honour*. The clause may also be
rendered, *To you who believe in this honour*; the
honour of being built on Christ, the foundation, or
chief corner-stone of the new temple of God. *But
unto them which be disobedient*—Who disbelieve and
disobey the gospel, the words of the psalmist are
accomplished; *the stone which the builders disal-
lowed*—Namely, the Jewish chief-priests, elders, and
scribes, called *builders*, because it was their office to
build up the church of God among the Jews. See
on Psa. cxviii. 22. But they rejected the stone here
spoken of, and would give it no place in the build-
ing; *the same is made the head of the corner*—And
all their opposition to it is *vain*. It is not only placed
at the foot of the corner, to support the two sides of
the building erected upon it, but at the *head* of the
corner, to fall upon and grind to powder those that
reject it; and, as the same prophet elsewhere speaks,
a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence—Namely,
to the unbelieving and disobedient. Thus Simeon,
(Luke ii. 34;) *This child is set for the fall*, as well as
the rising again of many in Israel, and for *a sign
that shall be spoken against*; a prediction awfully
fulfilled. *Even to them which stumble, being disobe-
dient: whereunto also they were appointed*—This
translation of the clause seems to imply that those
who are disobedient were appointed to be so; but
the original does not convey that sense, but is lit-
erally rendered, *Who, disobeying the word, stumble,*

A. M. 4064. 9 But ye are ^a a chosen generation, A. D. 60. ^a a royal priesthood, ^a a holy nation, ^a a ^a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the ^a praises of him who hath called you out of ^a darkness into his marvellous light:

10 ^a Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

^a Deuteron. x. 15.—^r Exodus xix. 5, 6.—^r John xvii. 19. ^b Deut. iv. 20.—^c Or, a purchased people.—^d Or, virtues. ^e Acts xxvi. 18.—^f Hosea i. 9, 10; ii. 23; Romans ix. 25. ^g Third Sunday after Easter, epistle, verse 11 to verse 18.

to which also they were appointed: that is, those who disobey the word are appointed to stumble, namely, at the stone of stumbling here spoken of, according to the prediction of Isaiah, viii. 14, 15; *He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, &c., to both the houses of Israel*; that is, to those that are unbelieving and disobedient; and many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken. This is what God has appointed, that they who reject Christ shall stumble at him, and fall into misery and ruin: or, that *he who believeth not shall be damned*: the unalterable decree of the God of heaven. Or the words may, with equal propriety, be rendered, *Unto which stumbling they were disposed*; those who disbelieve and disobey the gospel; being, through blindness of mind and perverseness of will, disposed to reject Christ, stumble at him, and fall into eternal ruin.

Verses 9, 10. *But ye—Who have been born again of incorruptible seed, and have purified your souls by obeying the truth, &c., (chap. i. 22, 23,) and have tasted that the Lord is gracious, (chap. ii. 3,) and are built up upon him as lively stones; ye, who bear this character are a chosen generation—Εκλεκτον γένος, an elect race*; all such, and such only, have that title, and other titles of a similar import, in the New Testament. See on Eph. i. 3-7; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. *A royal priesthood—Kings and priests unto God, Rev. i. 6.* As princes, you have power with God, and victory over sin and Satan, the world and the flesh: as priests, ye are consecrated to God for the purpose of offering spiritual sacrifices; *a holy nation—Under Christ, your King; a peculiar or purchased people*, as *λαος εις περιποιησιν* is rendered in the margin; that is, a people who, being purchased by the blood of Christ, and dedicated to, and accepted of, God, are taken into covenant with him, and are his in a peculiar sense. See on Tit. ii. 14; *that ye should show forth—In your spirit and conduct, in all your tempers, words, and works; the praises—Τας αρετας, the virtues*, that is, the perfections; the wisdom, power, goodness, truth, justice, mercy, the holiness, the love; *of him—Christ, or the Father, in and through Christ; who hath called you out of darkness—Out of that state of ignorance and error, sin and misery, in which you lay formerly involved; into his marvellous light—The light of knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and happiness, into which you are now brought. Which in time past were*

11 ¶ ^a Dearly beloved, I beseech you, A. M. 4064. ^a as strangers and pilgrims, ^a abstain A. D. 60. from fleshly lusts, ^a which war against the soul; 12 ^b Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, ^c whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, ^c they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God ^d in the day of visitation.

^r 1 Chron. xxix. 15; Psa. xxxix. 12; cxix. 19; Heb. xi. 13. ^s Rom. xiii. 14; Gal. v. 16.—^t James iv. 1.—^u Rom. xii. 17; 2 Cor. viii. 21; Phil. ii. 15; Tit. ii. 8; Chap. iii. 16.—^v Or, wherein.—^w Matt. v. 16.—^x Luke xix. 44.

not a people—(Much less the people of God,) but scattered individuals of many nations. This is a quotation from Hosea ii. 23, where the conversion of the Gentiles is foretold, as the Apostle Paul informs us, Rom. ix. 25. Upon which passages see the notes; *which had not, formerly, obtained mercy—Namely, the pardoning, saving mercy of God; but now—In consequence of repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; have obtained mercy—Are forgiven, accepted, and made God's children.*

Verses 11, 12. *I beseech you, as strangers—Or sojourners; and pilgrims—Who have no inheritance on this earth, but are travelling to the heavenly country. The former word, παροικοι, properly means those who are in a strange house, a house not their own: the second, παρεπιδημοι, those who are in a strange country, and among a people not their own. We sojourn in the body; we are pilgrims in this world; abstain from fleshly lusts—Or carnal desires; from inordinate desires of any thing in this country. “The settled inhabitants of a country are anxious to acquire riches, to purchase lands, and to build houses. But they who stay but a few weeks in a country, or who only travel through it, are commonly not solicitous to secure to themselves accommodations which they are so soon to leave. In the same manner, believers, being only sojourners on earth, and travellers to a better country, ought not to place their happiness in the enjoyment of those objects by which carnal desires are gratified, and which are peculiar to this earthly state, but in securing themselves possessions in the heavenly country, the proper habitation of the righteous.”—Macknight. Which carnal desires, though pleasant to the senses, war against the soul—Against the health, the strength, the liberty, the purity, the usefulness, the comfort of the soul. Having your conversation—Your whole behaviour; honest—Greek, καλην, amiable, excellent, commendable, and honourable, pious and virtuous in every respect. But our language sinks under the force, copiousness, and beauty of the original expressions; among the Gentiles—Your heathen neighbours, who narrowly watch you; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers—As seditious persons and atheists, because ye do not worship their false gods, and because you join yourselves with what they presumptuously call the impious sect of Christians; they may by your good works—Your unblameable, use-*

A. M. 4064. 13 ° Submit yourselves to every ordi-
A. D. 60. nance of man for the Lord's sake:
whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him ^f for the punishment of evil-doers, and ^g for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that ^h with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

° Matt. xxii. 21; Rom. xiii. 1; Tit. iii. 1.—^f Rom. xiii. 4. ^g Rom. xiii. 3.—^h Tit. ii. 8; Verse 12.—ⁱ Gal. v. 1, 13. ^g Gr. having.—^k 1 Cor. vii. 22.—^j Rom. xii. 10; Phil. ii. 3. ⁷ Or, Esteem.—^m Heb. xiii. 1; Chap. i. 22.

ful, and holy conduct, your obedience to the just laws of the state, your submission to magistrates, and your patience and meekness when unjustly punished; *which they shall behold*—Shall be eyewitnesses of; may not only lay aside their blasphemous reproaches and bitter enmities, but may exchange them for commendations and praises, and so may *glorify God*—By owning his grace in you, being induced to believe and obey the truth, and to imitate your example; *in the day of visitation*—During the season in which the gospel is preached among them, whereby they are visited with the offers of pardon and salvation. It is well known that the patience, fortitude, and meekness with which the first Christians bore persecution for their religion, and the forgiving disposition which they expressed toward their persecutors, made such an impression on the heathen, who were witnesses of their sufferings, that many of them glorified God by embracing the gospel.

Verses 13–15. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man*—Greek, *πασῶν ἀνθρώπων κτισίαι*, to every human constitution of government, under which you are placed by Divine Providence, and which is formed instrumentally by men, and relates to you as men, and not as Christians. Macknight translates the clause, *Be subject to every human creation of magistrates*; observing that “the abstract word *creation* is put for the concrete, *the person created*; just as *governments and powers* are put for persons exercising government and power. The phrase, *human creation of magistrates*, was formed by St. Peter with a view to condemn the principles of the zealots, who maintained that obedience was due to no magistrates but to those who were appointed by God, as the Jewish kings had been.” *Whether to the king*—That is, to the emperor; *as supreme*—For though at Rome the name of king was odious, the people in the provinces gave that name to the emperor, John xix. 15; Acts xvii. 7. When this epistle was written, Nero was emperor. *Or to subordinate governors*—Or magistrates, in the different provinces of the empire. “From this we learn that it is the duty of Christians, residing in foreign and even in infidel countries, to obey the laws of those countries in all things not sinful, without considering whether the religion of the magistrate and of the state be true or false.” *That arc sent by him*—

16 ⁱ As free, and not ^g using *your* A. M. 4064.
liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, A. D. 60.
but as ^k the servants of God.

17 ^l Honour ^m all men. ⁿ Love the brotherhood. ^o Fear God. Honour the king.

18 ° Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

19 * For this *is* ^p thank-worthy, ^q if a man for

° Prov. xxiv. 21; Matt. xxii. 21; Rom. xiii. 7.—^o Eph. vi. 5; Col. iii. 22; Tit. ii. 9.—* Second Sunday after Easter, epistle, verse 19 to the end.—^a Or, *thank*, Luke vi. 32; Verse 20. ^p Matt. v. 10; Rom. xiii. 5.

Commissioned by the emperor from Rome; *for the punishment of evil-doers*—The Roman governors had the power of life and death in such conquered provinces as those mentioned chap. i. 1. There is, therefore, the exactest propriety in the apostle's style. *And for the praise of them that do well*—For protecting and rewarding them who give due obedience to the good laws of the state. *For so is the will of God*—As I assure you by inspiration; *that by well-doing*—By your due subjection to magistrates, and the performance of all other Christian duties; *you may put to silence*—*ἡμῶν*, may *bridle in*, or *restrain* by a bridle or a muzzle, (so the word signifies,) *the ignorance*—The calumnies proceeding from the ignorance of *foolish men*—Of men destitute of the fear of God, who blame you because they do not know you, affirming that your religion makes you bad subjects.

Verses 16, 17. *As free*—In the noblest sense, in consequence of your relation to Christ, and your interest in the merit of his death; (see on John viii. 32; 1 Cor. vii. 22; Gal. v. 1, 13;) as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and therefore heirs of God; *and not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness*—*Κακίας*, of wickedness. Though you are indeed made free from the dominion of sin and Satan, the world and the flesh, yet not from subjection to magistrates; therefore use not your liberty so as, under pretence thereof, to be guilty of disobedience to governors, or any other wickedness: *but act in all things as the servants of God*—Observing all his laws, and performing all the duties he requires. *Honour all men*—As being made in the image of God, intelligent, free, and immortal beings; bought by the blood of his Son, and designed for his eternal kingdom. *Love the brotherhood*—All true Christians. *Fear*, reverence, and obey, *God*. *Honour the king*—Whom God has set over you. Pay him all that regard, both in affection and action, which the laws of God and man require. Perhaps no finer and stronger instances of the laconic style are to be found anywhere than in this passage. It is remarkable that the apostle requires Christians to honour the Roman emperor, though a great persecutor, and of a most abandoned character.

Verses 18–20. *Servants*—*Οἰκεταί*, household servants, *be subject to your masters*—Though heathen, in all things lawful; *with all fear*—Of offending

A. M. 4064. conscience toward God endure grief,
A. D. 60. suffering wrongfully.

20 For ^a what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is ^a acceptable with God.

21 For ^a even hereunto were ye called: because ^a Christ also suffered ¹⁰ for us, ^a leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

^a Chap. iii. 14; iv. 14, 15.—⁹ Or, thank.—⁷ Matt. xvi. 24; Acts xiv. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 12.—¹ Chap. iii. 18.
¹⁰ Some read, for you.—¹ John xiii. 15; Philippians ii. 5; 1 John ii. 6.

them or God; *not only to the good*—The tender, kind, and gentle—Mild, easy, forgiving; *but also to the froward*—The ill-natured and severe. “In this verse,” as Macknight justly observes, “the apostle establishes one of the noblest and most important principles of morality, namely, that our obligation to relative duties does not depend either on the character of the persons to whom they should be performed, or on their performing the duties they owe to us, but on the unalterable relations of things established by God.” *For this is thankworthy*—An acceptable thing to God. Greek, *τιπο γαρ χάρις*; literally, *this is grace*; that is, a grand proof of true grace; *if a man for conscience toward God*—From a pure desire of pleasing him; *endure grief*—Severe treatment; *suffering wrongfully*—The apostle here refers to those punishments which, according to the customs of that age, tyrannical masters were allowed to inflict on their servants, however contrary to justice and mercy such punishments might be. *For what glory*—Or praise; *is it if, when ye be buffeted*—Corrected or beaten; *for your faults*—For acts of manifest disobedience; *ye shall take it patiently*—Since the punishment being just, it ought in reason to be borne. *But if when ye do well*—Do your duty conscientiously; *and suffer for it*—As if you had neglected it; *ye take it patiently*—Receive it in a meek and quiet spirit; *this is acceptable, or this is grace, with God*—His eye, which always observes every individual of his people, and all their actions, is pleased with such a disposition and behaviour, though exhibited in the lowest ranks of human life.

Verses 21–23. *For even hereunto*—Namely, to suffer wrongfully, and to bear such treatment with patience and meekness; *are ye Christians called; because Christ*—Whose followers you profess to be, pure and spotless as he was; *suffered for us*—Not only hard speeches, buffetings, and stripes, but deep and mortal wounds, even the ignominious and painful death of crucifixion; *leaving us*—When he returned to heaven; *an example of suffering patiently for well-doing*; *that ye should follow his steps*—Of innocence and patience. *Who did no sin*—And therefore did not deserve to suffer any thing; *neither was guile*—Any insincerity, or dissimulation, or the least misspoken word, *found to drop from his mouth*—This is an allusion to the words of Isaiah, concern-

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22 ^a Who did no sin, neither was A. M. 4064.
guile found in his mouth: A. D. 60.

23 ^a Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but ⁷ committed ¹¹ himself to him that judgeth righteously:

24 ^a Who his own self bare our sins in his own body ¹² on the tree, ^a that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: ^b by whose stripes ye were healed.

^a Isa. liii. 9; Luke xxiii. 41; John viii. 46.—⁷ Isa. liii. 7; Matt. xxvii. 39; John viii. 48, 49.—⁷ Luke xxiii. 46.—¹¹ Or, committed his cause.—^a Isaiah liii. 4–6, 11.—¹² Or, to.
^a Rom. vi. 2, 11; vii. 6.—^b Isa. liii. 5.

ing the Messiah, chap. liii. 9; *neither was any deceit in his mouth. Who, when he was reviled*—As he frequently was, being called a Samaritan, a glutton, a wine-bibber, a blasphemer, a demoniac, one in league with Beelzebub, a perverter of the nation, and a deceiver of the people; *he reviled not again*—In any one instance: he did indeed once say to the Jews, *Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do*. This, however, was not a reviling speech, but a true description of their character, and a prediction that they would murder him; *and when he suffered*—All kinds of insults and tortures, till they ended in his death on the cross; *he threatened not the vengeance which he had it in his own power to have executed; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*—The only solid ground of patience in affliction. In all these instances, the example of Christ was peculiarly adapted for the instruction of servants, who easily slide into sin or guile, reviling their fellow-servants, or threatening them, the natural result of anger without power.

Verses 24, 25. *Who his own self*—In his own person, and by the sacrifice of himself, and not of another, (Heb. ix. 28), *bare our sins*—That is, the punishment due to them; *in his afflicted, torn, dying body on the tree*—The cross, whereon chiefly slaves or servants were wont to suffer. The apostle alludes to Isa. liii. 12; *He bare the sins of many*. “The phrase, *bearing sin*, is often used in the Old Testament. It signifies sometimes the making atonement for sin, Lev. x. 17; sometimes the suffering punishment for sin, Lev. xxii. 9; Ezek. xviii. 20; and sometimes the carrying away sin from the sight of God; as the scape-goat is said to do, Lev. xvi. 22. The apostle uses here the first person, *our sins*, to show that Christ bare the sins of believers, in every age and country; and to make us sensible how extensive the operation of his death is in procuring pardon for sinners.” *That we, being dead to sins*—Or, as *ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι* is more literally rendered, *freed from sins*—That is, from the guilt and power; from which, without an atonement, it was impossible we should be delivered. *By whose stripes ye were healed*—Of your spiritual disorders: evils infinitely greater than any which the cruelty of the severest masters can bring upon you. See on Isa.

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A. M. 4064. 25 For ° ye were as sheep going
A. D. 60. astray; but are now returned ^d unto

the Shepherd and Bishop of your A. M. 4064
souls. A. D. 60.

^c Isa. liii. 6.

^d Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; John x. 11, 14, 16.

liii. 5. "By changing his discourse from the first to the second person, the apostle addressed those slaves who might be beaten unmercifully by cruel masters; because, of all the considerations by which they could be animated to patience, the most powerful was, to put them in mind of the painful stripes with which Christ was beaten, when he was scourged by Pilate's order, (Matt. xxvii. 26,) and to tell them, that with these stripes the wounds in their souls, occasioned by sin, were healed; wounds far more painful and deadly than those inflicted on them by their froward masters." *For ye were as sheep going astray*—From their pastures, their shepherd, and his flock, and exposed to want and the danger of being lost in the wilderness, or destroyed by wild beasts; ye were wandering out of the way of truth and duty, of safety, holiness, and happiness, into the

by-paths of error and sin, of guilt and misery—paths leading to certain destruction. *But are now returned*—Through the influence of divine grace; *unto the Shepherd*—The great Shepherd of the sheep, brought again from the dead, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; *and Bishop*—the kind Observer, Inspector, and Overseer; *of your souls*—Who has graciously received you under his pastoral care, and will maintain that inspection over you which shall be your best security against returning to those fatal wanderings. "Though in this passage the apostle addressed his discourse immediately to servants or slaves, yet, by giving titles to Christ which marked his relation to men of all ranks and conditions, he hath intimated that his exhortation to suffer unmerited evils patiently, is intended for all who profess the gospel."

CHAPTER III.

The apostle exhorts Christian wives to submit themselves to their husbands, and to adorn their minds rather than their bodies; and likewise husbands to treat their wives in a becoming and honourable manner, from a tender sense of those infirmities to which the female sex is peculiarly liable, 1-7. (2.) He exhorts all Christians to mutual agreement in principle, affection, and kindness, and to the forgiving of injuries, 8-13. (3.) Encourages them to patience and perseverance under persecutions for righteousness' sake, in consideration of Christ's having suffered in their stead, 14-18. (4.) Represents the destruction and damnation of the old world as a warning against disobedience to Christ; and the salvation of Noah, as a figure of our redemption, and emblem of our baptism, through the resurrection and ascension of Christ, 19-22.

A. M. 4064. **L**IKewise, ^a ye wives, be in sub-
A. D. 60. jection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, ^b they also may without the word ^c be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 ^d While they behold your chaste A. M. 4064
conversation *coupled* with fear. A. D. 60.

3 ^e Whose adorning let it not be that outward
adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

^a 1 Corinth. xiv. 34; Eph. v. 22; Coloss. iii. 18; Titus ii. 5.
^b 1 Cor. vii. 16.

^c Matt. xviii. 15; 1 Cor. ix. 19-22.—^d Chap. ii. 12.—^e 1 Tim. ii. 9; Tit. ii. 3, &c.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. *Likewise*—As I have exhorted servants to be in subjection to their masters, I in like manner say, *Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands*—In all things just and lawful; *that if any* (he speaks tenderly) *obey not the word*—Disbelieve and reject the gospel; *they also may, without the word*—Though they neglect or reject that means of grace; *be won by the conversation*—The good behaviour of the wives—That is, be gained over to Christ. "Here St. Peter wisely intimates to the women, that the silent, but powerful persuasion of a becoming behaviour, would be more effectual in winning their unbelieving husbands to embrace the gospel, than many arguments, proposed perhaps with heat, for

the purpose of convincing them. For when the husbands found what a happy influence the gospel had in making their wives sweet-tempered and dutiful in every respect, they could not but entertain a good opinion of a religion which produced such excellent effects." *While*, with admiration and increasing love, *they daily behold your chaste* and spotless *conversation coupled with fear*—With a dutiful, respectful, obliging conduct, and a care not to displease.

Verses 3, 4. *Whose adorning, &c.*—See note on 1 Tim. ii. 9; Tit. ii. 3. "Three things are here expressly forbidden: *curling the hair, wearing gold*, (by way of ornament,) and *putting on costly or gay apparel*. These, therefore, ought never to be allow-

A. M. 4064. 4 But let it be ^c the hidden man
A. D. 60. of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands :

^f Psa. xlv. 13; Rom. ii. 29; vii. 23; 2 Cor. iv. 16.—^g Gen. xviii. 12.—^h Gr. children.

ed, much less defended, by Christians."—Wesley. *But let it be the hidden man of the heart*—An inward; gracious disposition, or complete inward holiness, namely, *that which is not corruptible*—Which will not wear out and decay, as the external ornaments of dress will; *even a meek and quiet spirit*—Essential to true holiness. *A meek spirit* consists in bearing provocation patiently; a *quiet spirit* in abstaining from giving provocation, especially by bitter language, and from causing unnecessary trouble to any; *in the sight of God*—Who looks at the heart. "All superfluity of dress contributes more to pride and anger than is generally supposed. The apostle seems to have an eye to this, by substituting meekness and quietness in the room of the ornaments he forbids. 'I do not regard these things,' is often said by those whose hearts are wrapped up in them. But offer to take them away, and you touch the very idol of their souls. Some, indeed, only dress elegantly that they may be looked on; that is, they squander away their Lord's talent to gain applause; thus making sin to beget sin, and then plead one in excuse of the other."—Wesley. The sentiments contained in this verse are illustrated by Blackwall (*Sacred Classics*, vol. i. p. 164.) as follows: "How must all the short-lived beauties, the shapes, features, and most elegant and rich ornaments of the mortal body, which attract the eyes and admiration of vain mortals, fade away, and lose their charms and lustre, when compared with the heavenly graces of a pious and regular temper, the incorruptible ornaments and beauties of the soul, which are ever amiable, and of high value in the eye of God, the Sovereign Judge of what is good and beautiful!" Nearly resembling this is a passage of Crates, a heathen philosopher, quoted by Plutarch: "Neither gold, nor emeralds, nor pearls grace and ornament a woman; but all those things which clearly express and set off her gravity, regularity, and modesty."

Verses 5, 6. *For after this manner*—Namely, with inward holiness and outward plainness; *in old time*—In the patriarchal ages; *the holy women who trusted in God*—And therefore did not act thus from servile fear, but from true piety, and are consequently worthy to be imitated; *adorned themselves*—Their adorning, according to St. Peter here, was, 1st, Their meek subjection to their husbands; 2d, Their quiet spirit, *not afraid or amazed*; and, 3d, Their unblameable behaviour, *doing all things well*.

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6 Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60. calling him lord: whose ¹ daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 ^h Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, ⁱ as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; ^k that your prayers be not hindered.

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 3; Eph. v. 25; Col. iii. 19.—^l 1 Cor. xii. 23; 1 Thess. iv. 4.—^k Job xlii. 8; Matt. v. 23, 24; xviii. 19.

Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham—See Gen. xii. 5; xviii. 6; *calling him lord*—In token of her subjection; for the ancients, by giving titles of respect to their superiors, acknowledged their own inferiority. Therefore, by mentioning the reverence with which Sarah spake of Abraham, the apostle intimates that she entertained the highest respect for him, and a just sense of her own subjection to him. Sarah was considered by the Jewish women as an illustrious pattern of a dutiful wife; *whose daughters*—Or children, in a spiritual, as well as natural sense; *ye are*—Or show yourselves to be, and that ye are entitled to the same inheritance; *as long as ye do well*—Discharge all your conjugal duties conscientiously. Sarah being constituted by God the mother of all believers, (Gal. iv. 26,) even as Abraham was made their father, the believing women of Pontus, by imitating Sarah's virtues, became her children, though not descended from her. *And are not afraid with any amazement*—So terrified with the apprehension of any danger or prejudice that may arise to you on account of your piety, as to be discouraged from your duty, or induced, through fear of displeasing your husbands, to do actions contrary to your religion. For, while the apostle enjoined wives to be in subjection to their husbands, he cautioned them against committing sin, especially the sin of idolatry, either from a desire to please their husbands, or from a fear of offending them.

Verse 7. *Likewise, ye husbands*—See on Eph. v. 25; Col. iii. 19; *dwell with them*—Conduct yourselves toward them, *according to knowledge*—Wisely and discreetly; suitably to that knowledge of your duty which you have obtained by the gospel: or, knowing they are weak, and therefore to be used with tenderness: yet do not despise them for this, but *give them honour*—Both in heart and in your behaviour toward them, as those who are called to be *joint-heirs* of that eternal life which ye and they hope to receive by the free grace of God. "In Scripture, *honour* is sometimes used for maintenance, because to supply any one with the necessaries and conveniences of life was considered, in ancient times, as doing him honour. Accordingly the Greeks, in reward of eminent services done to the community, decreed maintenance at the public expense to those who had performed these services. By assigning as the reason why *honour* should be given to the wife, that she is weaker than the hus-

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A. M. 4064. 8 ¶ * Finally,¹ *be ye* all of one mind,
A. D. 60. having compassion one of another ;

² love² as brethren, ³ *be* pitiful, *be* courteous :

9 ° Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing : but contrariwise, blessing ; knowing that ye are thereunto called, ⁴ that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For ⁵ he that will love life, and see good days, ⁶ let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile :

11 Let him ⁷ eschew evil, and do good :

* Fifth Sunday after Trinity, epistle, verse 8, ending in verse 15, at, And be ready.—¹ Rom. xii. 16 ; xv. 5 ; Phil. iii. 16.—² Romans xii. 10 ; Heb. xiii. 1 ; Chap. ii. 17.—³ Or, loving to the brethren.—⁴ Col. iii. 12 ; Eph. iv. 32.—⁵ Prov. xvii. 30 ; xx. 22 ; Matt. v. 39 ; Rom. xii. 14, 17 ; 1 Cor. iv. 12 ; 1 Thess. v. 15.

band, in *body* or *person*, (as the word *σκενος*, *vessel*, here seems to mean,) the apostle hath intimated, not only that he ought to afford her a competent share of the necessaries and conveniences of life, but as much relief from bodily labour as his circumstances will allow: all which is most reasonable, considering the many bodily troubles women are subject to, in the breeding, bearing, and nursing of children." *That your prayers be not hindered*—On the one part or the other. All sin hinders prayer, particularly anger. Any thing at which we are angry is never more apt to come into our minds than when we are at prayer. And those who do not forgive, will find no forgiveness from God.

Verses 8, 9. *Finally*—This section of the epistle reaches to chap. iv. 11. The apostle seems to have added the rest afterward. *Be ye all of one mind*—*ὁμοφρονες*, *unanimous*; guarding against all unnecessary occasion of contention: see on Rom. xii. 16: *have compassion, &c.*—Greek, *συμπαιεις*, *sympathizing with each other*; rejoicing and sorrowing together: *love* all believers as *brethren: be pitiful*—Toward the afflicted. The original word, *εὐλαγνοι*, is, literally, *of good bowels*. The meaning is, Be moved with compassion on beholding the weaknesses and distresses of others, and do all you can to assist and relieve them. *Be courteous*—To all men. Courtesy is such a behaviour toward equals and inferiors as shows respect mixed with love. *Not rendering evil for evil*—See on Matt. v. 39; or *railing for railing*—One reproachful speech for another; but *contrariwise, blessing*—Even to those that curse you, according to Christ's precept; wishing and praying for their welfare, and endeavouring to promote it. *Knowing that ye are thereunto called*—Namely, to be of this benevolent and beneficent forgiving temper: that ye should *inherit* a blessing, immense and eternal. Therefore their railing cannot hurt you; and by blessing them, you imitate God, who blesses you.

Verse 10-13. *He that will love life*—That would make life amiable and desirable; and *see good days*—Namely, such as are prosperous and happy; *let him refrain his tongue from evil*—From railing, back-

let him seek peace, and ensue A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60.

12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, ⁸ and his ears *are* open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* ⁹ against them that do evil.

13 * And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ?

14 † But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy *are ye*; and * be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

† Matt. xxv. 34.—¹ Psa. xxxiv. 12, &c.—James i. 26; Chap. ii. 1, 22; Rev. xiv. 5.—² Psa. xxxvii. 27; 3 John 11.—³ Rom. xii. 18; xiv. 19; Heb. xii. 14.—⁴ John ix 31; James v. 16.—⁵ Gr. upon.—⁶ Prov. xvi. 7; Tob. xii. 7; Rom. viii. 28.—⁷ Matt. v. 10-12; Chap. ii. 19; iv. 14.—⁸ Isa. viii. 12, 13; Jer. i. 8.

biting, tale-bearing, from all rash and provoking expressions; and *his lips that they speak no guile*—No deceit; nothing contrary to sincerity and simplicity. See on Psa. xxxii. 2. In this and the following verses the apostle offers three arguments, of great importance, to induce men to the practice of piety and virtue: 1st, It secures the happiness both of the present and of the future life: 2d, It ensures the favour and protection of God, verse 12: 3d, It disarms the malice of men, verse 13. *Let him eschew evil*—*Ἐκκλιωτω ἀπο κακου*, *let him turn away from evil*, of every kind, and from evil dispositions, as well as evil words and actions; and *do good*—To the utmost extent of his power. *Let him seek peace*—Endeavour, as much as in him lieth, *to live peaceably with all men: and pursue it*—When it appears to flee from him. *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous*—Are continually set upon them, to watch over and protect them; and *his ears are open to their prayers*—Especially when they are in distress. *But the face of the Lord*—His countenance, full of wrath and resentment; *is against them that do evil*—Against all that live in known sin, whether high or low, rich or poor. *And who is he that shall harm you*—That shall have the ability to do you any real harm; *if ye be followers of that which is good*—Or *imitators of the good One*, as the original expression, *τῷ αγαθῷ μιμηται*, may be rendered: that is, if you copy after the benevolence of your heavenly Father, and of his beloved Son, your great Master, whose whole life was so illustrious an example of the most diffusive generosity and goodness to his followers?

Verses 14-16. *But if you should suffer*—If any should be so wicked as to endeavour to harm you when you are doing good; if your heathen rulers, or any others, should persecute you for righteousness' sake; that is, upon the account of your religion, because you follow Christ, and believe and obey his gospel; this, properly speaking, will be no *harm* to you, but a *good*: yea, *happy are you*—In so suffering, in spite of all the malicious and outrageous efforts of your enemies; yea, your sufferings will be so far from lessening, that they will increase your

A. M. 4064. 15 But sanctify the Lord God in
A. D. 60. your hearts: and *be ready always
to give an answer to every man that asketh
you a reason of the hope that is in you, with
meekness and † fear.

16 † Having a good conscience; * that,
whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-
doers, they may be ashamed that falsely ac-

* Psa. cxix. 46; Acts iv. 8; Col. iv. 6.—† Or, reverence.
† Heb. iii. 18.—* Tit. ii. 8.

happiness, and that in many respects. *Be not afraid of their terror*—Τὸν δε φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε, the very words of the Septuagint, Isa. viii. 12, 13; *Fear ye not their fear*: the exhortation which Isaiah gave to the Jews when threatened with an invasion by the Assyrians. The words are a Hebraism; the meaning of which is, Be not affected with the fear which they endeavour to raise in you by their threatenings. Or, as some understand the expression, Let not that fear be in you which the wicked feel. *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*—Namely, by fearing him more than men, how many or powerful soever they may be; by believing all his promises; by trusting in his wisdom, power, and goodness; by acknowledging his justice in the punishments which he inflicts, and by patiently bearing all the trials he is pleased to appoint. By these dispositions, believers sanctify God in their hearts; they give him the glory of all his perfections. See on Isa. viii. 13. *And be ready always*—By a familiar acquaintance with the contents and evidences of your holy religion, and by that cheerfulness and presence of mind which arises from a consciousness of your practical regard to it; *to give an answer to every man that asketh you*—Either by virtue of his office, or for his own information; or when the defence of the truth requires it; *a reason of the hope that is in you*—Of eternal life; *with meekness*—For anger would hurt your cause, as well as your soul; *and fear*—A filial fear of offending God, and a jealous fear of yourselves, lest you should speak amiss. *Having a good conscience*—Keeping your consciences clear from guilt, that they may justify you when men accuse you; or conducting yourselves so that your consciences may not reproach you for dishonouring the gospel, by walking unsuitably to its holy precepts; *that whereas, or wherein, they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers*—And lay to your charge crimes of the most detestable nature; *they may be put to shame, who falsely*—Without any shadow of cause; *accuse your good conversation*—Your inoffensive, useful, and holy behaviour; *in Christ*—According to his doctrine and example.

Verses 17, 18. *For it is infinitely better, if the will of God be so*—That you should suffer; and his permissive will in this respect appears from his providence; *that ye suffer for well-doing, rather than for evil-doing*—The testimony of a good conscience, and the sense of the divine favour, affording the no-

cause your good conversation in Christ. A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60. 17 *For it is better, if the will of God
be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for
evil-doing.

18 For Christ also hath † once suffered for
sins, the just for the unjust, that he might
bring us to God, * being put to death † in the
flesh, but † quickened by the Spirit:

* Easter Eve, epistle, verse 17 to the end.—† Romans v. 6.
* 2 Cor. xiii. 4.—† Col. i. 21, 22.—* Rom. i. 4; viii. 11.

blest supports in the former case; whereas, in the latter, the severest torments that can be endured are those which the guilty mind inflicts upon itself; to which may be added, that while we suffer for the truth, we have the comfort of reflecting that we follow our blessed Redeemer, which is another most powerful source of consolation. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins*—Not his own, but for ours, to make an atonement for them; *the just for the unjust*—Or the holy for the unholy; for the word just here denotes a person who has fulfilled not barely social duties, but every branch of righteousness; and the word unjust signifies not only those who have wronged their neighbours, but those who have transgressed any of the commands of God; *that he might bring us to God*—Might reconcile God to us, and us to God; and might obtain for us his gracious favour here, his Holy Spirit, to renew us after his image, and might bring us to his blissful presence hereafter; by the same steps of suffering and of glory. It is justly observed by Macknight, that in the sufferings of Christ we have a clear proof that sufferings are no evidence of the wickedness of the sufferer, nor of the badness of the cause for which he suffers; and that the power of God, visible in Christ's resurrection, affords to all, who lose their lives for the gospel, a sure ground of consolation and hope that God will raise them up at the last day. *Being put to death in the flesh*—In the human nature; or in respect of that frail, mortal life he had on earth; *but quickened*—ζωοποιήσας, made alive; *by the Spirit*—The Spirit of God and of Christ. "As Christ was conceived in the womb of his mother by the Holy Spirit, (Luke i. 35,) so he was raised from the dead by the same Spirit; on which account he is said (1 Tim. iii. 16) to have been justified by the Spirit; and (Heb. ix. 14) to have offered himself without spot to God, through the eternal Spirit. It is true the resurrection of Christ is ascribed to the Father, 1 Cor. vi. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 14; Eph. i. 20; but that is not inconsistent with Peter's affirmation in this verse;" for the Father may, with the strictest propriety, be said to have done what his Spirit did, especially as it was done to show that God acknowledged Jesus to be his Son. And our Lord's words, (John ii. 19,) *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*, are to be understood in the same manner. He raised it up by that Spirit which proceeded from him as well as from the Father.

A. M. 4064. 19 By which also he went and
A. D. 60. ^b preached unto the spirits ⁱ in prison ;
20 Which sometime were disobedient, ^k when
once the long-suffering of God waited in the days
of Noah, while ^l the ark was a preparing, ^m where-
in few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.

^b Chap. i. 12 ; iv. 6. — ⁱ Isa. xlii. 7 ; xlix. 9 ; lxi. 1. — ^k Gen.
vi. 3, 5, 13. — ^l Heb. xi. 7.

Verses 19, 20. *By which also*—That is, by which Spirit ; *he went and preached*—Πορευθεὶς ἐκρηύξεν, *having gone, he preached*, namely, in and by Noah, who spake by the Spirit of Christ, (chap. i. 11,) and of the Father, who said, (Gen. vi. 3,) referring to the men of that generation, *My Spirit shall not always strive with man*. Hence Noah is called a *preacher of righteousness*, 2 Pet. ii. 5. “By attributing the preaching of the ancient prophets to Christ, the apostle hath taught us, that from the beginning the economy of man’s redemption has been under the direction of Christ. *To the spirits in prison*—That is, which were in prison when St. Peter wrote this epistle. They were men in the flesh when Christ preached to them by his Spirit speaking in Noah ; but after they were dead, their spirits were shut up in the infernal prison, detained, like the fallen angels, (Jude 6,) *unto the judgment of the great day ; which sometime*—Πότε, *once, or formerly, were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited*—For their repentance ; *in the days of Noah*—During the long space of one hundred and twenty years ; *while the ark was preparing*—During which time Noah warned them all to repent, and flee from the wrath to come. *Wherein*—In which ark ; *few, that is, eight souls*—Namely, Noah and his wife, with their three sons and their wives ; *were saved by water*—Or, *were carried safely through the water*, namely, the waters of the flood, which bare up the ark in which they were enclosed. Some suppose that the persons here spoken of are said to have been in prison in the days of Noah, by the same figure of speech, by which the persons to whom Christ preached in the days of his flesh, are called *captives in prison*, Luke iv. 18. “Christ’s preaching to the antediluvians by Noah, their destruction for their disobedience to that preaching, and the preservation of Noah and his family in the ark, are all fitly mentioned, to show that it hath been God’s way from the beginning of the world, when the wickedness of men became general, to oppose it, by raising up prophets to reprove them, and warn them of their danger ; and after waiting for their repentance to no purpose, to destroy them ; while he delivered the righteous from the evils to which they were exposed, by manifest interpositions of his power. These things teach us, that we should not think the worse of the gospel, because it hath been rejected by many ; nor of ourselves, because we are persecuted by the wicked. On the other hand, by the punishment of the antediluvians, and of the Jews who crucified our Lord ; wicked men and persecutors are taught to dread the judgments of God.”—Macknight.

21 ^a The like figure whereunto, A. M. 4064.
A. D. 60. *even baptism, doth also now save us,*
(not the putting away of ^o the filth of the
flesh, ^p but the answer of a good conscience
toward God,) ^q by the resurrection of Jesus
Christ :

^a Genesis vii. 7 ; viii. 18. — ^b Eph. iv. 26. — ^c Titus iii. 5.
^p Rom. x. 10. — ^q Chap. i. 3.

Verses 21, 22. *The like figure whereunto*—Αντι-
τυπον, *the antitype whereof*, that is, the thing which
corresponds, not with the water, but with the ark ;
even baptism doth now save us—Or is the instrument
of our safety and preservation, from the guilt, power,
and consequences of sin, which overwhelms the
world as a flood. *Not the putting away the filth of
the flesh*—As if he had said, By baptism I do not
mean merely or chiefly the sprinkling or washing
the body with water from its filthiness, which is only
the outward or visible sign of baptism, but the in-
ward renewing grace of God, producing the *answer
of a good conscience*, or a divine consciousness that
both our persons and our actions are accepted ; *by the
resurrection of Christ*—That is, the baptism which
consists in the answer of a good conscience toward
God, and which is the antitype or thing which was
signified by Noah’s preservation in the ark, now
saves us as effectually as the ark preserved Noah
from destruction by the flood. It is well known the
Jews laid a great stress upon their lustrations or
washings. The apostle, therefore, very properly
cautions his readers against such foolish dependan-
cies. A readiness to perform their whole duty, and
even to suffer persecution for the sake of truth, was
absolutely necessary in the first Christians, in order
to their maintaining that good conscience, to which,
in their baptism, they professed a great regard, and
to the exercise of which they solemnly engaged
themselves. The word ἐπερωτημα, here rendered *an-
swer*, signifies rather *interrogation*, and is said by
Archbishop Leighton to be a judicial word, and to
signify interrogations used in the law for a trial, or
executing a process, and has been thought by some
commentators to refer to certain interrogations, said
by Cyprian and other ancient writers to be put to
persons who offered themselves to baptism, concern-
ing their faith in Christ, and their renunciation of
Satan with all his works, and the vanities of the
world. But it does not appear, Macknight thinks,
that these questions and answers were used in the
apostle’s days ; and if they were not, the apostle
could not refer to them. “Allowing, however,” he
says, “that the word *question* is here put for the
word *answer*, this *answer of a good conscience*, be-
ing made to God, is an *inward answer*, and means
the baptized person’s sincere persuasion of the
things which, by submitting to baptism, he professed
to believe ; namely, that Jesus, in whose name bap-
tism is administered, arose from the dead, and that
at the last day he will raise all from the dead to eter-
nal life, who sincerely obey him. This signification
of baptism the Apostle Paul hath taught, Rom. vi. 4,

A. M. 4064. 22 Who is gone into heaven, and
A. D. 60. ' is on the right hand of God ; ' an-

' Psa. cx. 1 ; Rom. viii. 34.

5 ; and therefore he calls it, *our begin confidence*, Heb. iii. 14 ; and exhorts the Hebrews to *hold it steadfast to the end.*" *Who is gone into heaven—As our forerunner ; and is on the right hand of God—Having all power in heaven and on earth ; angels, authorities, and powers—That is, all orders, both of angels and men ; being made subject to him—In*

gels, and authorities, and powers, be- A. M. 4064.
ing made subject unto him. A. D. 60.

' Rom. viii. 38 ; 1 Cor. xv. 24 ; Eph. i. 21.

subserviency of his great design, of saving all his true followers. The apostle, in speaking here of the resurrection and glory of Christ, means not only to represent him as the object of our confidence, but to intimate, that if we imitate him in his courageous fidelity, we may hope to partake with him in his glory.

CHAPTER IV.

The apostle here, (1,) Exhorts his readers to improve Christ's sufferings and those of his followers, the remembrance of their past sinfulness, and an approaching judgment, as excitements to holiness of heart and life, 1-6. (2,) To improve the approaching dissolution of the Jewish state as a motive to sobriety, watchfulness, prayer, mutual love, hospitality, and a faithful discharge of religious trusts, 7-11. (3,) He cautions Christians against committing faults which would expose them to punishment ; but encourages them to rejoice and glory in reproaches and sufferings for Christ ; and in the view of the terrible ruin of the Jewish nation, to commit their preservation to God, 12-19.

A. M. 4064. FORASMUCH then ' as Christ
A. D. 60. hath suffered for us in the flesh,

arm yourselves likewise with the same mind : for ^b he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin ;

2 ° That he no longer ^d should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, ° but to the will of God.

^a Chap. iii. 18.—^b Rom. vi. 2, 7 ; Gal. v. 24 ; Col. iii. 3, 5. ^c Romans xiv. 7 ; Chapter ii. 1.—^d Gal. ii. 20 ; Chapter i. 14. ^e John i. 13 ; Rom. vi. 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1, 2. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered*—Even the ignominious and painful death of the cross, with all those previous and concomitant evils, which rendered his death peculiarly bitter ; *for us*—And that from a pure and disinterested principle of love ; *arm yourselves likewise with the same mind*—With a resolution such as animated him to suffer all the evils to which you may be exposed in the body ; and particularly to suffer death, if called by God to do so for your religion. For this will be armour of proof against all your enemies. *For he that hath*—In conformity to our Lord Jesus ; *suffered in the flesh*—Or, who hath so suffered as to be thereby made inwardly and truly conformable to Christ in his sufferings, *hath, of course, ceased from sin*—From knowingly committing it. " He hath been made to rest," says Macknight, " from temptation to sin, consequently from sin itself. For if a man hath overcome the fear of torture and death, no weaker temptation will prevail with him to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience." *That he no longer should live in the flesh*—Even in his mortal body ; *to the lusts*—The desires, of men—Either his own or those of others ; should no longer be

b

8 ' For the time past of *our* life may A. M. 4064.
suffice us ' to have wrought the will A. D. 60.

of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries :

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, ^b speaking evil of *you* :

^f Ezek. xlv. 6 ; xlv. 9 ; Acts xvii. 30.—^g Eph. ii. 2 ; iv. 17 ; 1 Thess. iv. 5 ; Titus iii. 3 ; Chapter i. 14.—^h Acts xiii. 45 ; xviii. 6 ; Chap. iii. 16.

governed by those irregular and inordinate affections which rule in unregenerate men ; *but to the will of God*—In a holy conformity and obedience to the divine precepts, how contrary soever they may be to his carnal and sensual inclinations, or apparently to his worldly interests.

Verses 3-5. *For the time past of our life may suffice us*—*ἄρκητος ἡμῖν, is sufficient for us ; to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*—The expression is soft, but conveys a very strong meaning, namely, that in no period of our lives ought we to have wrought the will of the Gentiles ; and that whatever time we spent in so doing was too much. *When we walked in lasciviousness*—In various kinds and degrees of it ; *lusts*—Inordinate desires ; *excess of wine*—*Οἰνοφλυγίαι*, being inflamed with wine ; *revellings*—*Κωμοίαι*, luxurious feastings ; see on Rom. xiii. 13 ; *banquetings*—*Ποτοίαι*, drunken entertainments ; and *abominable idolatries*—With all the shameful vices connected therewith. *Wherein they think it strange, &c.*—The word *ἐνίσχυνται*, thus rendered, was used by the Greeks to express that admiration and wonder with which a stranger is struck, who beholds any thing uncommon or new. The meaning here is, On account of your former

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A. M. 4064. 5 Who shall give account to him
A. D. 60. that is ready ¹ to judge the quick and
the dead.

6 For for this cause ² was the gospel preached
also to them that are dead, that they might be
judged according to men in the flesh, but live
according to God in the spirit.

7 ¶ ³ But ¹ the end of all things is at hand : ⁴ be

¹ Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 10, 12; 2 Tim. iv. 1; James
v. 9. — ² Chap. iii. 19. — ³ Sunday after Ascension, epistle,
verse 7 to verse 12. — ⁴ Matt. xxiv. 13, 14; Phil. iv. 5; James
v. 8.

manner of life, they wonder that you now shun
their company, and *run not with them to the same
excess of riot* you formerly ran into; *speaking evil
of you*—As proud, singular, silly, wicked, and the
like; *who shall give account*—Of this as well as all
their other ways; *to him that is ready*—So faith
represents him now; *to judge the quick and the
dead*—Those who are now alive, and those who
shall be found alive at his coming to judgment.

Verse 6. *For for this cause*—Or to this end; *was
the gospel preached*—Ever since it was intimated to
Adam, in the promise made to him after the fall,
*that the seed of the woman should bruise the ser-
pent's head; to them that are dead*—Who have died
in their several generations, and especially to our
forefathers, the descendants of Abraham, and the
other patriarchs, by Moses and the prophets; *that
they might be judged according to men in the flesh*—
Or, that though they were judged *in the flesh accord-
ing to the manner of men*, with rash, unrighteous judg-
ment, were condemned as evil-doers, and some of
them put to death, they might *live according to God*
—Agreeably to his word and will; *in the spirit*—In
their soul, renewed after the divine image, as his
devoted servants and witnesses in the midst of their
persecutors, and so be prepared to live with him in
a future world.

Verse 7. *The end of all things is at hand*—Of
our mortal lives, and of all the joys and sorrows,
goods and evils connected therewith, and so of all
your wrongs and sufferings. Many commentators
indeed understand St. Peter as speaking only of the
end of the Jewish commonwealth, city, temple, and
worship. Thus Whitby understands him: "This
phrase, and the advice upon it, so exactly parallel to
what our Lord had spoken, will not suffer us to
doubt that the apostle is here speaking, not of the
end of the world, or of all things in general, which
was not then, and seems not yet to be at hand, but
only of the end of the Jewish state." Thus also
Macknight: "This epistle being written about a
year after the war with the Romans began, which
ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and the
Jewish state, Peter, who had heard his Master's pro-
phesy concerning these events, and the signs of their
approach, had good reason to say that they had ap-
proached." But, as Dr. Doddridge justly observes,
this was an event in which most of those, to whom
the apostle wrote, were comparatively but little con-
cerned. It is probable, therefore, that the apostle

ye therefore sober, and watch unto A. M. 4064.
prayer. A. D. 60.

8 ⁵ And above all things have fervent charity
among yourselves: for ⁶ charity ¹ shall cover
the multitude of sins.

9 ² Use hospitality one to another ³ without
grudging.

10 ⁴ As every man hath received the gift, *even*

⁵ Matt. xxvi. 41; Luke xxi. 34; Col. iv. 2. — ⁶ Heb. xiii. 1;
Col. iii. 14. — ¹ Prov. x. 12; 1 Corinth. xiii. 7; James v. 20.
² Or, will. — ³ Rom. xii. 13; Heb. xiii. 2. — ⁴ 2 Cor. ix. 7;
Phil. ii. 14. — ⁵ Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. iv. 7.

either referred to death, which may be considered
as the end of the whole world to every particular
person; or *the consummation of all things*, which
may be said to be at hand in the sense in which our
Lord, long after the destruction of Jerusalem, says
to the church, (Rev. xxii. 7, 20,) *Behold I come
quickly*. To the same purpose is Mr. Scott's inter-
pretation: "All Christians must expect tribulations
in the world, but these would soon terminate; *for
the end of all things was at hand*, and death was
about to close their course of trials or services;
nay, judgment would not be so long delayed, as that
the intervening space should, in the estimation of
faith, be at all compared with eternity." *Be ye
therefore sober*—Temperate in all things, and mode-
rate in all earthly cares and pursuits; remembering
their end approaches, and the fashion of this world
passeth away. Or, *be prudent and considerate*, as
σφρονησασθε also signifies. Look before you, and
provide for eternity. *And watch unto prayer*—To
which temperance, moderation in worldly desires
and cares, prudence, and consideration, are great
helps, tending to produce a wakeful state of mind,
and guarding against all temptations to sin and folly.
And this watchfulness is so connected with prayer
that the one cannot exist without the other. See on
1 Thess. v. 6-9.

Verses 8, 9. *Above all things*—See that you re-
member the distinguishing badge of your religion,
and *have, maintain, fervent charity*, love, *among
yourselves*—One toward another: *for love shall cover
a multitude of sins*—It will cause us to excuse them
in others, and will entitle us, through divine mercy
to the expectation of forgiveness for our own
numberless failings. See on James v. 20. *Love
covereth all things*, 1 Cor. xiii. 7. He that loves
another covereth his faults, how many soever they
be. He turns away his own eyes from them, and,
as far as it is possible, hides them from others. And
he continually prays that all the sinner's iniquities
may be forgiven, and his sins covered. Meantime
the God of love measures to him *with the same
measure into his bosom*. *Use hospitality one to
another*—Ye that are of different towns or countries;
without grudging—The expense which may attend
the exercise of a virtue, which in present circum-
stances is important and necessary. Practise it with
all cheerfulness.

Verses 10, 11. *As every man hath received the
gift*—Or, a gift, spiritual or temporal, ordinary or

A. M. 4064. so minister the same one to another, A. D. 60. *as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 ^a If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; ² if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that ³ God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; ⁴ to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 Beloved, think it not strange, concerning ^a the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

^a Matt. xxiv. 45; xxv. 14, 21; Luke xii. 42; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; Titus i. 7.—¹ 1 Cor. xii. 4; Eph. iv. 11.—² Jer. xxiii. 22. ³ Rom. xii. 6-8; 1 Cor. iii. 10.—⁴ Eph. v. 20; Chap. ii. 5. ⁵ 1 Tim. vi. 16; Chap. v. 11; Rev. i. 6.

extraordinary, (although the latter seems primarily intended,) *so minister the same one to another*—Employ that gift for the common good; *as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*—Of the talents wherewith his free love has intrusted you. *If any man speak*—In public assemblies, or in the social meetings of his Christian brethren; *let him speak as the oracles of God*—Let all his words be according to that pattern, both as to matter and manner, and more especially when he speaks in public. By this mark we may always know who are, so far, the true or false prophets. The oracles of God teach that men should *repent, believe, and obey*; he that treats of faith, and leaves out repentance, and fruits worthy of repentance; or treats of repentance and its fruits, but omits inculcating faith; or who does not enjoin practical holiness to believers, does not speak as the oracles of God; he does not preach Christ, let him think as highly of himself as he will. *If any man minister*—Serve his brother in love, whether in temporal or spiritual things; *let him do it as of the ability which God giveth*—That is, humbly and diligently, ascribing all his power to God, and using it with his might; *that God in all things*—Whether of nature or of grace; *may be glorified through Jesus Christ*—The wise dispenser of these gifts; *to whom*—As our great Redeemer and Saviour; *be praise and dominion*—Greek, *η δοξα και το κρατος*, the glory of them, and the power of dispensing them; or the glory of his wisdom, which teaches us to speak, and the might which enables us to act.

Verses 12, 13. *Think it not strange, &c.*—Wonder not at the fiery trial—The dreadful series of furious and bitter persecutions. The original expression, *εν υμιν πυρωσει*, is literally, *the burning which is among you*; denoting the grievous persecution which the Christians in Pontus, &c., were suffering for their faith; including both martyrdom itself, which frequently was by fire, and all the other sufferings joined with or previous to it. The metaphor is bold, but noble: it expresses in a lively manner the painful and dangerous nature of their trials. *Which is to try you*—Is permitted by the wisdom

b

13 ^b But rejoice, inasmuch as ^c ye A. M. 4064 are partakers of Christ's suffer- A. D. 60. ings; ^d that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 ^e If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. ^f On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But ^g let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as a thief, or as an evil-doer*, ^h or as a busy-body in other men's matters.

^a 1 Cor. iii. 13; Chapter i. 7.—^b Acts v. 41; James i. 2. ^c Rom. viii. 17; Phil. iii. 10.—^d Chap. i. 5, 6.—^e Matt. v. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 10.—^f Chap. ii. 12; iii. 16.—^g Chap. ii. 20 ^h 1 Thess. iv. 11.

of God for the trial of your faith in Christ, and in the truths and promises of his gospel; of your hope of eternal life, your love to God, his people, and his ways, of your resignation to his will, your patience and meekness; *as though some strange thing happened unto you*—Different from, or beyond, all which you were taught to expect. *But rejoice* in these trials, *inasmuch as ye are therein partakers of Christ's sufferings*—Sufferings endured for his sake, in defence of his truth, and in proof of your faith in him; *that when his glory shall be revealed*—At the great and glorious day of his second appearance; *ye*—In the participation of it; *maybe glad with exceeding joy*—*Χαρητε αγαλλιωμενοι*, may rejoice transported with gladness.

Verses 14-16. *If ye be reproached for Christ*—Reproaches and cruel mockings were always one part of their sufferings, and to an ingenuous mind reproach is often worse than the spoiling of goods, or even than bodily pain; *happy are ye*—The apostle alludes to Christ's words, Matt. v. 11, *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, &c.* For the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you—Conquering all reproach, and spreading a lustre around you, while he supports and comforts you in a glorious manner under all your trials. The apostle alludes to Isa. xi. 2. "The Spirit of glory, which rested on the persecuted disciples of Christ in the first age, was a Spirit of fortitude, enabling them to suffer the greatest evils without shrinking, a virtue which the heathen greatly admired. For which reason, when they put the first Christians to death for refusing to worship idols, they were so struck with the constancy, patience, meekness, and benevolence wherewith they suffered, that it led many of them to think well, both of a religion which inspired its votaries with such admirable virtues, and of those votaries themselves. And as this constancy in suffering, from which the Christians derived so much glory, proceeded from the aid of the Spirit of God, the apostle justly termed it, both the Spirit of glory, and the Spirit of God."—Macknight. *But let none of you*—Who have the honour to bear the Christian name; *suffer*—By your own fault; suppose *as a*

A. M. 4064. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a
A. D. 60.

Christian, let him not be ashamed;

¹ but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time is come ² that judgment must begin at the house of God: and ¹ if it first be-

¹ Acts v. 41.—² Isaiah x. 12; Jeremiah xxv. 29; xlix. 12; Ezek. ix. 6.

murderer, or as a thief, &c.—At the time St. Peter wrote this epistle, the unbelieving Jews in Judea were extremely addicted to murder and robbery, and every kind of wickedness, as we learn from Josephus; for they robbed and killed, not only the heathen, but their own brethren, who would not join them in their opposition to the Romans. Hence the apostle judged it proper to caution the Christians, especially the Jewish Christians, in this manner, lest, being corrupted by such bad examples, they should be led to the commission of any such crimes. As the apostle is here cautioning them against those sins which, if they committed them, would expose them to punishment from the civil magistrate, by *αλλοτριεπισκοπος*, here rendered *a busy-body in other men's matters*, he cannot well be supposed to mean merely one who pries into the concerns of private families, as such a one could not properly be ranked with such criminals as are here mentioned. But he might mean one that affected to inspect and direct the behaviour of persons in public offices, from a factious disposition to find fault with their conduct, and thereby to raise commotions in the state; which Lardner hath shown was the practice of the Jews in Alexandria, Cesarea, and other places. Or we may, with L'Enfant, understand the word in the more general sense of meddling with other people's affairs from avarice, anger, revenge, malice, or other bad passions. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian*—That is, because he is a Christian; and if he suffer in a Christian spirit, *let him not be ashamed*—Of his sufferings; *but let him glorify, or praise, God on this behalf*—That is, for having judged him worthy to suffer in so good a cause; and for enabling him to do it with fortitude and patience. It may be proper to observe that this, with Acts xi. 26, xxvi. 28, are the only passages of Scripture in which the disciples are called *Christians*, after their Master.

Verse 17. *For the time is come*—Foretold by Christ, Matt. xxiv. 9; John xvi. 2; *that judgment must begin at the house of God*—In the Christian Church; God's own family, which he first visits, both in justice and mercy. The judgment here spoken of is thought by many commentators to signify the particular distress which was to happen before Jerusalem should be utterly destroyed. The Christians were to expect to feel some of the first effects of that general calamity: it was to begin with them, as Christ had plainly foretold in the passages just referred to. It was God's method of old to begin with sending calamities on his own people; and indeed a state of trial seems highly proper before a state of recompense. See chap. i. 6. There seems to be an allusion in this passage to Ezek. ix. 6, and

gin at us, ² what shall the end be of A. M. 4064
them that obey not the gospel of God? A. D. 60.

18 ² And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

¹ Luke xxiii. 31.—² Luke x. 12, 14.—³ Prov. xi. 31; Luke xxiii. 31.

Jer. xxv. 29. By us here, the apostle meant the Christians of that age, whether formerly Jews or Gentiles; for they appear to have been now persecuted generally everywhere. *And if it first begin at us*—Who have truly turned to God, and are taken into his favour through Christ, his beloved Son; *what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?*—Who, through unbelief and obstinacy, reject the counsel of God against themselves? how terribly will he visit them! The words, *who obey not the gospel of God*, properly describe the unbelieving Jews: they were not chargeable with idolatry; they acknowledged, and in a sense worshipped, the true God; but they rejected the gospel which God had revealed by his Son, and therefore the divine wrath was executed upon them in so dreadful a manner. See on 1 Thess. ii. 14–16. Whoever compares the accounts in the Scriptures, or ancient fathers, concerning the persecutions which befell the Christians about this time, with the sufferings of the Jews, as related by Josephus, will easily see that the distress only began with the Christians, and was light compared with what afterward fell upon the Jews: for when Jerusalem was destroyed, the Christians escaped with their lives, and enjoyed more peace and tranquillity than they had done before.

Verse 18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved*—Escape with the utmost difficulty. So the word *μολις*, rendered *scarcely*, signifies. That is, If it be not without much difficulty that the Christians are secured and preserved in those overflowing, devouring judgments which are coming on the Jewish nation; *where shall the ungodly and the sinner*—The impenitent and unbelieving, the obstinate and wicked part of the Jewish nation; *appear?*—That is, what will become of them? Dreadful will be their destruction. The meaning of the apostle, however, may be, *If the righteous, ο δικαιος, the righteous man, be scarcely, or not wholly saved* from suffering, that is, from chastisement, (in which light the apostle represents the persecutions to which the Christians were exposed,) if God judges, and, by various temporal afflictions and calamities, punishes him, *where shall the ungodly and impenitent sinner appear?* How terrible will be the wrath which will fall upon him? If the faults of the loyal subject, yea, of the dutiful son, be not passed over unnoticed, unchastised, by the holy and just Governor and Judge of the world, what has not the enemy and rebel to fear? Perhaps this may be the chief meaning of the apostle, and not the deliverance of the Christians from the Roman invasion, in which very few of them were concerned, to whom the apostle addressed his epistle; namely, those sojourning in

A. M. 4064. 19 Wherefore, let them that suffer
A. D. 60. according to the will of God, ° commit

the keeping of their souls to him in A.M. 4064
well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. A. D. 60.

• Psa. xxxi. 5; Luke

xxiii. 46; 2 Tim. i. 12.

Pontus, &c. See chap. i. 1. And the passage may be intended to signify also the difficulty with which pious men get to heaven, through this dangerous and insnaring world. Compare Acts xiv. 18; xxvii. 7, 8, 16, where the word *μολις*, here used, signifies *with difficulty*. "The turn of the latter clause of the verse in the original, *πυ φανεται*, is very lively; it seems as if the apostle were solicitous to lead the sinner to consider where he should hide his head, since wherever he was he would find God immediately appearing against him as an irresistible enemy. This he might say, by way of warning to persecutors, and to encourage Christians to hope that God would vindicate their cause, and preserve them from turning aside to crooked paths. And this the connection with the following verse favours."—Doddridge.

Verse 19. *Wherefore let them that suffer*—This temporary chastisement; *according to the will of*

God—Namely, for a good cause, and in a right spirit; *commit the keeping of their souls to him*—Intrust themselves to God's care, either to preserve their lives, if he see good, or to save their souls if they suffer death; or, *whatever becomes of their bodies*, let them commit their souls to him as a sacred depositum: *in well-doing*—Persevering to the end in the way of duty and obedience, notwithstanding all the sufferings to which they are exposed. In other words, let it be their care to do well, and suffer patiently, and God will take care of the rest. *As unto a faithful Creator*—In whose wisdom, power, goodness, truth, and faithfulness to his promises, they may safely trust: for as he called them into existence when they were not, he is able to preserve them without any visible means, and will dispose of them as he sees will conduce most to their eternal welfare.

CHAPTER V.

In this chapter, (1.) The apostle exhorts ministers to a cheerful, disinterested, humble, and faithful discharge of the duties of their office, in hope of a gracious reward, 1-4. (2.) He directs private Christians to submit to their elders, and to one another, and especially to be subject to God, in his providential dispensations, with humility and patience, casting all their care upon him, 5-7. (3.) He exhorts them to be sober, watchful, and steadfast in the faith, knowing that their brethren, everywhere, were exposed to the same, or similar trials, 8, 9. (4.) He prays earnestly to God to strengthen and establish them, and ends with a doxology and his salutations and benediction, 10-14.

A. M. 4064. **T**HE elders which are among you
A. D. 60. I exhort, who am also ° an elder,
and ° a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and
also ° a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 ° Feed the flock of God ° which A. M. 4064.
is among you, taking the oversight A. D. 60.
thereof, ° not by constraint, but willingly; ° not
for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

• Philem. 9.—° Luke xxiv. 48; Acts i. 8, 22; v. 32; x. 39.
° Rom. viii. 17, 18; Rev. i. 9.

° John xxi. 15-17; Acts xx. 28.—° Or, *as much as in you is*.
° 1 Cor. ix. 17.—° 1 Tim. iii. 3, 8; Tit. i. 7.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *The elders which are among you I exhort*—This was a name of office belonging to those who were appointed to feed and oversee the flock of Christ. They are indifferently called bishops, pastors, or rulers. The apostle addresses them here particularly, because the knowledge and good behaviour of the people depend, in a great measure, upon the kind of instruction which they receive from their teachers, and upon the care which their teachers take of them: *who am also an elder*—Or rather, *a fellow-elder*, as *συνπρεσβυτερος* signifies. So Peter, the first, and one of the chief, though not the head, of the apostles, appositely and modestly styles himself. Commentators justly observe, that if Peter had been *the prince of the apostles*, as the Papists affirm, he would in this place, and in the inscription of his two epistles, certainly have assumed to himself that high prerogative. *And a witness of the sufferings of Christ*

—Having seen him suffer, and now suffering with him. "One of the purposes for which Christ chose twelve of his disciples to be with him always was, that, having heard his discourses, and seen his miracles and sufferings, they might be able to testify these things to the world as what they themselves heard and saw. Wherefore *μαρτυς*, a witness, in this passage, signifies not only one who was present at a transaction, but who testifies it to others." These two circumstances of Peter's being a *fellow-elder* and a *witness* of the sufferings of Christ, are mentioned by him to give weight to his exhortation. *And also a partaker*—That is, hoping to be a partaker; *of the glory that shall be revealed*—When he shall appear the second time, in circumstances so different from those in which he appeared before; a glory which shall be bestowed on all faithful pastors, in different degrees; yea, and on all his genuine followers.

Verse 2. *Feed the flock of God*—Both by doctrine
625 b

A. M. 4064. 3 Neither as ^abeing ^e lords over
A. D. 60. ^b God's heritage, but ⁱ being ensam-
ples to the flock.

4 And when ^k the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive ^l a crown of glory ^m that fadeth not away.

^a Or, *overruling*.—^e Ezekiel xxxiv. 4; Matthew xx. 25, 26; 1 Corinthians iii. 9.—^b Psalm xxxiii. 12; lxxiv. 2. ⁱ Philippians iii. 17; 2 Thessalonians iii. 9; 1 Timothy iv. 12; Titus ii. 7.

and discipline; *which is among you*—Namely, the churches of Christ, which you are called to preside over; *taking the oversight thereof*—Greek, *ἐπισκοπεύετε*, *discharging the episcopal office*. By this it appears that those who are styled *bishops*, from their having the oversight of others, and also *presbyters*, or *elders*, are spoken of as the same persons. *Not by constraint*—Unwillingly, as if it were a burden; *but willingly*—“In the first age, when the profession of the gospel exposed men to persecution, and when the persecutions fell more especially on the bishops, it may easily be imagined that some who were appointed to that office would undertake it unwillingly; not only because they were not disposed to do the duties thereof diligently, but because they were not willing to suffer.” *Not for filthy lucre*—Which, if it be the motive of acting, is filthy beyond expression. The apostle means also, not for a maintenance; for the sake of which merely, or chiefly, no one should undertake the pastoral office. They that preach the gospel may *live by the gospel*, but no one ought to engage in such a work merely that he may live by it. “O consider this, ye that leave one flock and go to another, merely ‘because there is more gain, a larger salary!’ Is it not astonishing that men ‘can see no harm in this?’ That it is not only practised, but avowed, all over the nation?”—Wesley. *But of a ready mind*—With a sincere desire to glorify God, and to save the souls of men. In the Syriac version, the word *προθυμῶς*, here used, is translated *toto corde, with the whole heart*. Dr. Benson’s observation on this verse is, “How severely are they here condemned, who feed themselves and not the flock; who take the patrimony of the church, and commit the care of souls to others, to whom they allow a very small share of that plenty which they have for doing little.”

Verses 3, 4. *Neither as being lords, or lording it, over God's heritage*—Behaving in a haughty, domineering manner, as though you had dominion over their consciences. From this prohibition it would seem that, in the apostle’s days, the bishops or elders were beginning to assume that dominion over their flocks, which in after times they carried to the greatest height of tyranny. Or St. Peter, by inspiration, foreseeing what would happen, condemned in this prohibition the tyranny which in after times the clergy exercised. *But being ensamples to the flock*—Setting them an example worthy of their imitation; and therefore, being of a meek and lowly, kind and condescending mind, and be-

5 ¶ ^{*} Likewise, ye younger, sub- A. M. 4064.
mit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, A. D. 60.
^a all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for ^o God resisteth the proud, and ^p giveth grace to the humble.

^{*} Heb. xiii. 20.—¹ 1 Cor. ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 8; James i. 12. ^m Chap. i. 4.—^{*} Third Sunday after Trinity, epistle, verse 5 to verse 12.—^a Romans xii. 10; Eph. v. 21; Phil. ii. 3. ^o James iv. 6.—^p Isa. lvii. 15; lxvi. 2.

having toward them with such gentle, tender solicitude for their salvation, and such an entire freedom from the very appearance either of avarice or ambition, that you may gain their confidence, and win their affections. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear*—To judge the world; *ye*—Who have discharged your duty to your flocks faithfully; *shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*—A crown which shall bloom in immortal beauty and vigour, when all the transitory glories of this world are withered, like a fading flower. In the original expression, *ἀμαραντινον, amaranthine*, there is an allusion to the crowns of green leaves and herbs bestowed by the ancients as the rewards of military prowess, or of victory in the games. These, together with the honours of which they were the symbols, soon *faded away*; but the crown of glory, the reward to be given to faithful shepherds, will never fade, being *a crown of righteousness*, 2 Tim. iv. 8, and *a crown of life*, James i. 12. The word rendered *heritage* in the singular number, properly signifies *a lot*. But because the land of Canaan was divided among the Israelites by lot, the word came to signify, *a heritage*. Wherefore, believers being God’s people, or portion, the different churches or congregations are called here *God’s heritages*. In process of time, the name *κληρος, clergy*, was appropriated to the ministers of the gospel, because, being considered as the successors of the Levitical priests, they were regarded as God’s lot or portion.

Verses 5-7. *Likewise, ye younger*—Namely, in years, whether ministers or people; *submit yourselves unto the elder*—To those who are more advanced in years; give them all due respect, and be ready to take their counsel; *yea, all of you*—Elder or younger; *be subject one to another*—Endeavour, by mutual condescension, to make each other as easy and comfortable as possible. Perhaps, as in the preceding part of this chapter, the apostle, by *elders*, means persons holding sacred offices, such as pastors or teachers, he may here use the word in the same sense. If so, the word *νεωτεροι*, rendered *younger*, which signifies inferiors of any kind, (Luke xxii. 26,) and which is opposed to it here, may denote the laity, or people of the churches of Pontus, &c., whom the apostle further exhorts to be subject to one another. *And be clothed all over with humility*—The word *εγκομβωσασθε*, here used, is derived from the noun *εγκομβωμα*, which, Whitby says, was a frock put over the rest of the clothes; and that the apostle’s meaning is, that humility should be visible over

A. M. 4064. 6 ^a Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time :
A. D. 60.

7 ^r Casting all your care upon him ; for he careth for you.

8 ^a Be sober, be vigilant ; because ^t your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour :

9 ^a Whom resist steadfast in the faith, ^x know-

^a James iv. 10.—^r Psa. xxxvii. 5 ; lv. 22.—^x Luke xxi. 34, 36 ; 1 Thess. v. 6 ; Chap. iv. 7.—^t Job i. 7 ; ii. 2 ; Luke xxii. 11.—^x Eph. vi. 11, 13 ; James iv. 7.—^r Acts xiv. 22 ;

all the other Christian graces and virtues in our whole behaviour. *For God resisteth*—Greek, *avtirastetai*, *is set in battle array against the proud*—See on Jam. iv. 6 ; *and giveth grace to the humble*—As humility is the fruit of God's grace, so it prepares us for receiving larger measures thereof. *Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God*—Which is in all your troubles ; that is, receive his corrections with reverence and patient submission, even though wicked men should be made the instruments of them ; *that he may exalt you*—Raise you above your trials, and from that state of depression in which you are ; or exalt you to the glory and felicity of heaven ; *in due time*—The time which he knows will be most proper for your exaltation. *Casting all your care*—Your anxious care, as the word *μεριμναν* means, in all your wants and pressures ; *upon him ; for he careth for you*—With the care which a father exercises toward his children. That is, whatsoever difficulties you meet with, be not solicitous about them, but refer yourselves to God's providence, either for the removal of them, or support under them.

Verses 8, 9. *Be sober*—See on 1 Thess. v. 6. Keep your appetites and passions under proper restraint and government, or *awake*, as *νηψατε* also signifies ; namely, to a deep sense of the certainty and importance of things invisible and eternal ; *be vigilant*—Watchful against the subtle and malicious designs of your spiritual enemies. As if he had said, *Awake, and keep awake ; sleep no more ; be this your care, while you cast your temporal and anxious cares on God. How deeply had Peter himself suffered for want of the wakeful vigilance which he here recommends ! Because your grand adversary, the devil, full of rage, as a roaring lion*—Fierce and hungry, *walketh about*—Watching for an opportunity to insnare and destroy you ; *seeking*—With all subtlety likewise, *whom he may assault with the greatest likelihood of success, and devour*—Swallow up both soul and body. This manner of speaking strongly expresses the insatiable rage of this enemy of mankind to hinder their salvation, and the danger we are in from his devices and snares. He sometimes attacks the people of God in person, though not visibly, and sometimes by his ministers, the other evil spirits who are in league with him ; and sometimes by wicked men, his subjects, whom he instigates to tempt them by the terror of persecution. This account of the devil's malice is given with great propriety by Pe-

b

ing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, ^r who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered ^a a while, ^a make you perfect, ^b establish, strengthen, settle *you*.

11 ^o To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Thess. iii. 3 ; 2 Tim. iii. 12 ; Chap. ii. 21.—^r 1 Cor. i. 9 ; 1 Tim. vi. 12.—^a 2 Cor. iv. 17 ; Chap. i. 6.—^b Heb. xiii. 21 ; Jude 24.—^o 2 Thess. ii. 17 ; iii. 3.—^r Chap. iv. 11.

ter, to whom our Lord had said, *Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee. Whom resist*—As you regard your safety and life, be careful to oppose him in all his assaults ; *steadfast in the faith*—Firmly believing the truths and promises of the gospel, and adhering constantly to, and confiding in Christ, in whom all these truths and promises *are yea and amen*. To show the efficacy of faith, in enabling us to resist temptation, St. Paul calls it a *shield*, (Eph. vi. 16,) wherewith the fiery darts of the wicked one may be quenched ; *knowing* that the trials with which you are exercised are not peculiar to you, but *that the same afflictions* which you are called to sustain *are accomplished in*—That is, suffered by ; *your brethren that are in the world*—Till the measure allotted them is filled up, and you may reasonably hope that the same grace which is their support will be also yours.

Verse 10. *The God of all grace*—Of all mercy, compassion, and free, unmerited goodness ; and the source of all those influences of the Holy Spirit, by which alone true spiritual light and life, peace, purity, and consolation, can be attained ; *who hath called*—Invited ; *us unto his eternal glory*—And not merely to behold, but to possess it ; and hath sent us the invitation by *Christ Jesus*—His *Word made flesh* ; that is, not only *through him*, as Mediator, who hath procured the inestimable blessing for us by his obedience unto death, but *by him* as a Divine Messenger, the greatest that ever appeared among men, confirming and enforcing his message by a most holy life, by extreme sufferings, by mighty miracles, by an ignominious, painful death, and a most glorious resurrection. *After that ye have suffered a while*—Such trials as his infinite wisdom shall see fit to appoint. Observe, reader, sufferings must precede glory ! See chap. ii. 19, 23 ; iii. 14 ; iv. 12 ; Rom. viii. 17, 35 ; 2 Tim. ii. 12. But it is only *a while* the disciples of Christ are called to suffer ; a very short while compared with eternity. Or St. Peter may use the word *ολιγον*, here rendered *a while*, and which means *a little*, in respect of the degree as well as of the duration of suffering ; for, compared with the joys of heaven, the sufferings of this life are *light* as well as *momentary*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. *Make you perfect*—That no defect may remain in your Christian knowledge, experience, or practice. See on Heb. xiii. 21. *Stablish*—That nothing may

A. M. 4064. 12 ^d By Silvanus, a faithful brother
A. D. 60. unto you, as I suppose, I have *written
briefly, exhorting, and testifying ^f that this is
the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

13 The church that is at Babylon, elected

^d 2 Cor. i. 19.—^e Heb. xiii. 22.—^f Acts xx. 24.

overthrow your faith or hope, damp the flame of your love, or interrupt the constancy of your obedience; *strengthen*—That ye may conquer all your enemies, and may do, be conformed to, and suffer the will of God to the end; and *settle you*—As a house upon a rock. Or, inverting the order of the words, and taking the last particular first, as preparatory to the others, (which the sense of the several expressions seems to require, according to the usual progress of the work of grace in the hearts of believers,) the meaning will be, 1st, May he place you on your foundation, (so the word *θεμελιωσαι*, here rendered *settle you*, properly signifies,) even on the foundation which God hath laid in Zion, (1 Cor. iii. 11,) Christ Jesus, or on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (Eph. ii. 20,) namely, the fundamental doctrines attested by them. 2d, May he *strengthen you*, that no power of earth or hell may move you from that foundation. In consequence of this, 3d, May he *establish you* in his truth and grace, in faith, hope, love, and new obedience, that you may be steadfast and immovable in your adherence to the doctrines, your possession of the graces and privileges, and your performance of the duties of your holy calling. And in this way, 4th, May he make you *perfect*, or complete Christians, lacking nothing, destitute of no grace or virtue, and possessing every one in a mature state, a state of meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Thus the apostle, being converted, does now *strengthen his brethren*.

Verse 12. *By Silvanus*—The person probably of that name, whom St. Paul united with himself in writing the epistles to the Thessalonians, namely, Silas, who (Acts xv. 22) is called a *chief man among the brethren*, and a *prophet*, verse 32. Being Paul's constant companion in travel after the defection of John Mark, he, no doubt, assisted in planting churches in Galatia, and the other countries of the Lesser Asia, mentioned chap. i. 1. So being well known

together with you, saluteth you; and A. M. 4064.
so doth ^e Marcus my son. A. D. 60.

14 ^b Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. ⁱ Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

^e Acts xii. 12, 25.—^b Rom. xvi. 16.—ⁱ Eph. vi. 23.

to the brethren in those parts, he was a fit person to carry this letter to them from St. Peter; to whom, probably, after Paul's death, he had attached himself as an assistant. *A faithful brother, as I suppose*—As I judge upon good grounds, though not by immediate inspiration; *I have written briefly*—*Δι' ολιγων, in few words*; *exhorting and testifying*—*Or adding my testimony*, as *επιμαρτυρων* signifies; namely, to that which they had before heard from Paul; *that this is the true grace of God*—The true and only doctrine proceeding from the grace of God, and wherein the grace of God is offered and bestowed upon all penitent believers; and therefore earnestly exhorting you to attend to and seriously consider it.

Verses 13, 14. *The church that is at Babylon saluteth you*—See the preface. The word *church* is not in the original, but it is supplied in the Syriac, Vulgate, and other ancient versions, and by Œcumenius. Probably, as Beza observes, Peter omitted it as being a word of common use, which, in such a connection, would be easily supplied in the reader's mind. There being many Jews remaining in Babylon, and in the country adjacent, ever since the captivity, and Peter being the apostle of the Jews, it is likely he went thither to preach the gospel to them, and so planted a church among them. *Elect-ed together with you*—*Συνεκλεκτη, co-elect*, that is, a branch of God's chosen people, as all true believers are. See on chap. i. 2. *And Marcus my son*—So he calls him, because he had been converted by his ministry. With the family, of which he was a member, Peter was well acquainted, as may be gathered from his going immediately to the house of Mary, Mark's mother, after he was miraculously brought out of prison by the angel, Acts xii. 12. See more concerning him, Acts xiii. 5; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11. It is believed by many that he was the author of the gospel called by his name; this, however, is not certain. See the preface to that gospel.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER.

THIS second epistle of Peter is supposed to have been written many years after the former, namely, A. D. 67, a short time, before his martyrdom, which happened in 68, and to which he alludes in one or two places. The authority of it was, for some time, doubted of in the Christian Church, as Origen, Eusebius, St. Jerome, and others, have observed. What made the ancients call it in question was, first, its being omitted, (together with that of James, the 2d and 3d of John, and that of Jude,) in the first Syriac translation of the New Testament, which is supposed to have been made in the second century. But the only conclusion that can be drawn from the omission is, that the author had not seen these epistles, or rather, that they were not generally known, when he made his version. Now this might easily happen, if, as it is probable, he was a Syrian Jew. For Syria being at a great distance from Pontus, Galatia, &c., (to the Christians of which countries these epistles were originally sent,) it would be a considerable time before copies of them were dispersed among the people, for whom the Syriac version of the New Testament was made. So that the author might think it useless to translate them. Another reason why the authority of this second epistle of Peter was called in question was, the supposed difference of its style, particularly of the second chapter, from that of the other parts of St. Peter's writings. But "I cannot," says Blackwall, "find any great difference between the style of the first and second epistle: it is to me no more than we find in the style of the same persons at different times. There is much the same energy and clear brevity, the same rapid run of language, and the same commanding majesty, in them both. Take them together, and they are admirable, for significant epithets, and strong compound words; for beautiful and sprightly figures; adorable and sublime doctrines; pure and heavenly morals, expressed in a chaste, lively, and graceful style." As to the style of the second chapter, thought by some to be peculiarly different from that of other parts of St. Peter's writings, Bishop Sherlock supposes that the apostle, describing in that chapter the character of such seducers as endangered the faith of the Christian converts, adopts the language and sentiments of some Jewish author, (as St. Jude also is supposed to have done, see verse 14,) containing a strong description, in the eastern manner, of some false prophets in that or an earlier age. But for complete satisfaction on that subject, the reader is referred to that writer's Discourses on Prophecy, Disc. i. Diss. 1; and to the second part of Dr. Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History.

But, to prove the authenticity of this epistle, it may be sufficient to refer to the epistle itself, where we find divers marks of its being the genuine work of St. Peter. 1. The writer of it expressly calls himself, in the inscription, and in chap. iii. 2, "an apostle." 2. In other places he ascribes to himself things which agree to none but to Peter the apostle. For example, chap. i. 14, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus hath showed me;" alluding to John xxi. 19, where we are told that Jesus signified to Peter by what death, when old, he should glorify God. Chapter i. 16, this writer affirms that he was one of the three apostles who were with Jesus at his transfiguration, when, by a voice from God, he was declared to be "his beloved Son." Chap. iii. 15, this writer calls Paul his "beloved brother," in allusion, no doubt, to his having given Paul the right hand of fellowship: withal he commends his epistles as "Scriptures," that is, divinely-inspired writings. Having, therefore, thus repeatedly taken to himself the name and

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER.

character of an inspired apostle, the writer, if he was an impostor, must have been the most profligate of men. 3. By calling this his second epistle, the writer intimates that he had written to them formerly; he intimates the same thing, chap. i. 12-15; and, by so doing, shows himself to be the same Peter who wrote the first epistle. 4. The matters contained in this epistle are highly worthy of an inspired apostle; for, besides a variety of important discoveries, all tending to display the perfections of God and the glory of Christ, we find in it exhortations to virtue, and condemnations of vice, delivered with an earnestness and feeling, which show the author to have been incapable of imposing a forged writing upon the world, and that his sole design in this epistle was to promote the interests of truth and virtue among mankind.

In the preface to the former epistle it has been observed, that they were both addressed to the same people, as appears from 2 Epistle, chap. iii. 1. This epistle, therefore, like the former, was addressed to the whole of the brethren, whether of Gentile or Jewish extraction, who were dispersed in the widely-extended countries mentioned in the inscription of the former. And, as the matters which it contains were admirably calculated for confirming them in the faith of the gospel, and for comforting them under the persecutions to which they were exposed for their religion, it must have been of great use to all the brethren in these countries to have them in writing from an inspired apostle; and the epistle which contained them could not fail to be exceedingly valued by them, especially as it is written in a higher strain than common, both of discovery and of language; written also in the prospect of his soon dying a martyr for the truths which he had all along taught, during the course of a long life.

The general design of this epistle was to confirm the doctrines and instructions delivered in the former, to excite the Christian converts to adorn, and steadfastly adhere to, their holy religion, as a religion proceeding from God, notwithstanding the artifices of false teachers, whose character is at large described, or the persecution of their bitter and inveterate enemies. To be a little more particular: having congratulated the Christian converts on the happy condition into which they were brought by the gospel, I. He exhorts them, in order to secure the blessings of it, to endeavour to improve in the most substantial graces and virtues, chap. i. 1-11. II. To engage their attention the more effectually, he reminds them both that he wrote in the near view of eternity, and that the subjects on which he discoursed were not cunningly-devised fables, but attested by a miraculous voice from heaven, and by divinely-inspired prophecies, verses 12-21. III. He cautions them against the false teachers, whose character he describes, reminding them of the judgments executed on the apostate angels, on the old world, and on Sodom, and of the deliverance of Noah and of Lot; considerations calculated, on the one hand, to terrify such ungodly wretches; and, on the other, to comfort and establish the hearts of upright and pious Christians, chap. ii. 1-9. IV. He further describes the character of these seducers, warning all true Christians of the danger of being perverted by them, and them of the dreadful destruction to which they exposed themselves, verses 10-22. V. That the persons to whom he was writing might be more effectually guarded against the artifices of those who lay in wait to deceive, they are directed to adhere steadily and closely to the sacred Scriptures, and to consider the absolute certainty, and awful manner, of the final destruction of this world: and then the whole is concluded with several weighty and pertinent exhortations, chap. iii. throughout. See Macknight and Doddridge.

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

PETER.

CHAPTER I.

Here, (1,) The apostle salutes those Jews and Gentiles who had obtained true faith, prays for, and reminds them of its attendant blessings, 1-4. (2,) He encourages and exhorts them to add to their faith the vigorous exercise of various other graces, from a consideration of the happy issues thereof, 5-11. (3,) He intimates his resolution to help them as much as possible in their spiritual concerns before his approaching decease, 12-15. (4,) He confirms the doctrine of Christ's second coming, from the Father's testimony on the mount; and refers, for a more direct proof of it, to the inspired writings of the prophets, 16-21.

A. M. 4070. **SIMON**¹ Peter, a servant and an
A. D. 66. apostle of Jesus Christ, to them
that have obtained ^a like precious faith with us
through the righteousness ² of God and our Sa-
viour Jesus Christ:

2 ^b Grace and peace be multiplied unto you

through the knowledge of God, and A. M. 4070.
of Jesus our Lord, A. D. 66.

3 According as his divine power hath given
unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and
godliness, ^c through the knowledge of him
^d that hath called us ³ to glory and virtue:

¹ Or, *Symeon*, Acts xv. 14.—² Rom. i. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 13; Ephesians iv. 5; Titus i. 4.—³ Gr. of our God and Saviour, Titus ii. 13.

^b Dan. iv. 1; vi. 25; 1 Pet. i. 2; Jude 2.—^c John xvii. 3.
^d 1 Thess. ii. 12; iv. 7; 2 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 9; iii. 9.—³ Or, *by*.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1, 2. *To them that have obtained*—Not by their own works, but by the free grace of God; *like precious faith with us*—The apostles; the faith of those who have not seen being of the same nature, value, and virtue, equally precious, with that of those who saw our Lord in the flesh; *ev, in, or through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*—That is, *faith in, and received through*, the mercy (in consistence with the *justice*) of God the Father, and *in and through* the obedience unto death of our Saviour Jesus Christ. This is according to the common translation. "But on what authority," says Macknight, "our translators have rendered τὸ θεῶν καὶ σωτῆρος, of God and our Saviour, I know not." The literal translation of the clause undoubtedly is, *Faith in, or through, the righteousness, (namely, both active and passive,) of our God and Saviour, which is at once a principal object of saving faith, and that through which alone the justice of God is satisfied, and saving faith conferred upon us. Some, however, are of opinion that the relative our, in the first clause, though omitted in the second, is to be understood as repeated. The reading would then be, the righteousness of our God, and of our Saviour.* But the propriety of this construction is

justly questioned. *Grace and peace*—See on 1 Pet. i. 2; *through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord*—Through the experimental, practical knowledge of the Father and of the Son, (who, as appears from the order of the original words, are both here intended,) even that knowledge which is communicated by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, (see Matt. xi. 27; Eph. i. 17; 1 John v. 20,) and in which consisteth our eternal life, John xvii. 3, where see the note.

Verses 3, 4. *As his divine power hath given us all things*—There is a wonderful cheerfulness in this exordium, which begins with the exhortation itself; *that pertain to life and godliness*—To the present natural life, and to the continuance and increase of spiritual life, termed here *godliness*; *through the knowledge*—The divine and saving knowledge; *of him*—Christ; *that hath called us to glory*—Eternal glory hereafter, as the end; *and to virtue*—Or holiness, as the way leading thereto. Or *fortitude*, one particular branch of holiness, (frequently meant by the word *ἀρετή*,) may be here intended, as it is by the same word, verse 5. The original phrase, however, *διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς*, is literally, *by, or through glory and virtue*; that is, as some understand it, by his glorious power; or the glorious and powerful effu-

A. M. 4070. 4 • Whereby are given unto us
A. D. 66. exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corrup-

* 2 Cor. vii. 1.—† 2 Cor. iii. 18; Eph. iv. 24; Heb. xii. 10; 1 John iii. 2.

sion of the Spirit, as Whitby understands the words. *Whereby*—By means of which glorious power, or illustrious seal set to the declaration of the gospel; or, as some would render *δι' ὧν*, for the sake of which things; that is, that we might attain to this glory and virtue; are given unto us great and precious promises—Namely, the promises of the gospel, which he calls *great and precious*, because the things promised are the grandest that can be conceived by the human mind, and infinitely more valuable than any present enjoyments or expectations: promises of the pardon of sin, of acceptance with God, of his peculiar favour, adoption into his family, and being treated as his sons and daughters; favoured with liberty of access to him, and intercourse with him; with direction in difficulties, protection in dangers, succour in temptations, comfort in troubles, a supply of all our wants, and an assurance that all things shall work for our good; promises of the Spirit of adoption, of regeneration and sanctification, to be sent into our hearts as a pledge and earnest of our future felicity; and, to crown the whole, the promise of everlasting life, felicity, and glory. Both the promises and the things promised, which follow in their due season, are here intended; that by these—By the consideration of, and faith in, these true and faithful promises, and the great and glorious blessings exhibited in, and ensured to, true and persevering believers thereby, you might be encouraged and induced to renounce the world and sin, with every corrupt inclination and affection, design and desire, and be made partakers of the divine nature—Of a new, holy, and heavenly nature, derived from God, through the influence of his Spirit renewing you in his image, and giving you communion with himself so as to dwell in God, and God in you; having escaped the corruption that is in the world—The corrupt customs and habits, principles and practices, that are found in worldly men, *ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ*, through desire, namely, irregular and inordinate desire, the desire of unlawful things, or the immoderate desire of things lawful, that fruitful source of sin and misery.

Verse 5. *And besides this*—Besides your renouncing the corruption that is in the world, you must increase in all the graces of God's Spirit, and in the virtues to which they naturally lead. Or, as *αὐτοῦ* *ῥεο* is rendered by some learned critics, (the particle *εἰς* being supposed to be understood,) for this purpose, or for this very reason, namely, because God hath given you such great blessings; giving all diligence—Or, showing all earnestness, and making all haste, as *σπουδῇ πάναν* implies. The word *παραινέμεναι*, rendered giving, literally signifies, bringing in by the by, or over and above; implying that God works the work, but not unless we are earnest and diligent. Our earnestness and dili-

tion that is in the world through lust. A. M. 4070
5 And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;

• Chapter ii. 18, 20.—† Chapter iii. 18.—‡ 1 Peter iii. 7.

gence must follow the gift of God, and will be followed by an increase of all his gifts. *Add to*—And *in*, or *by*, the promises of God, and his other gifts, the graces here mentioned: superadd the latter without losing the former. The Greek word *επιχορηγήσατε* properly means, lead up as in a dance, one of these graces *in*, *by*, or *after* the other in a beautiful order. *Add to* (*εἰς*, *in*, or *by*) your faith that evidence of things not seen, termed before, the knowledge of God and of Christ, the root of all Christian graces; *virtue*—Or, *courage*; amidst all the difficulties, dangers, trials, and troubles you meet with, exercise that courage, or fortitude, whereby you may conquer all enemies and oppositions, and execute whatever faith dictates. In this most beautiful connection, each preceding grace leads to the following: each following tempers and perfects the preceding. They are set down in the order of nature, rather than the order of time: for though every grace bears a relation to every other, yet here they are so nicely ranged, that those which have the closest dependence on each other are placed together.

The propriety of the apostle's exhorting those to whom he wrote, to add courage to their faith, will more clearly appear, if we recollect that, in the first age, the disciples of Christ were frequently accused before the heathen magistrates of being Christians, and that, "on such occasions, it was incumbent on them to acknowledge it, notwithstanding they exposed themselves thereby to every species of persecution; because, by boldly professing their faith, they not only encouraged each other to persevere in their Christian profession, but they maintained the gospel in the world. Accordingly Christ solemnly charged all his disciples to confess him before men, and threatened to inflict the severest punishment on those who denied him, Matt. x. 32, 33."—Macknight. And even in the present state of the world, true and vital religion will always, more or less, meet with opposition from the carnal and wicked, and will frequently expose those who possess it to no little persecution, especially in some countries; if not to imprisonment, and the spoiling of their goods, yet to contumely, reproach, revilings, and various insults; so that it is still necessary, if we would prove ourselves the genuine followers of Jesus, that we should add to our faith courage, or fortitude and firmness of mind, that we may stand in the evil day, and war a good warfare. *And to your courage, knowledge*—Wisdom, teaching you how to exercise it on all occasions. The word may include also a general knowledge of the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the gospel, and of the whole nature and design of Christianity; as also an acquaintance with the principal evidences of its truth and importance: for, without a full persuasion of these, our courage must want

A. M. 4070. 6 And to knowledge, temperance;
A. D. 66. and to temperance, patience; and to
patience, godliness;

7 And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and
to brotherly kindness, charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound,

^b Galatians vi. 10; 1 Thess. iii. 12; v. 15; 1 John iv. 21.
^a Gr. *idle*.

its proper support, and will desert us in the day of trial.

Verses 6, 7. *And to knowledge, temperance*—This virtue consists in a confirmed habit of ruling all the affections, passions, and appetites of our nature in a proper manner, by placing our affections on proper objects; by restraining our angry, peevish, envious, and unholly tempers, and by using moderation in gratifying our appetites. Christian temperance, indeed, includes the voluntary abstaining from all pleasure which does not lead to God, extending to all things inward and outward, and implying the due government of our thoughts and imaginations, as well as of our desires and designs. It is the *using the world* properly: so to use all outward, and so to restrain all inward things, that they may become a means of what is spiritual; a scaling-ladder to ascend to what is above. *Intemperance* is to abuse the world. He that uses any thing below, looking no higher, and getting no farther, is intemperate. He that uses the creature only so as to attain to more of the Creator, is alone *temperate in all things*, and walks as Christ himself walked; *and to temperance, patience*—Bear as well as forbear; sustain as well as abstain; take up your cross, as well as deny yourself, daily; and the more knowledge you have, do this the more: the more steadily and resolutely renounce your own will; submit to, and acquiesce in, the will of God; and indulge yourself the less. *Knowledge puffeth up*; and the great boasters of knowledge, the Gnostics, were those that turned the grace of God into wantonness, being *lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God*, and of course effeminate and unprepared to encounter any opposition, or to endure any hardship on account of truth and a good conscience. But see that your knowledge be attended with temperance, and your temperance with patience; *and to patience, godliness*—Its proper support; a continual sense of God's wisdom, power, and goodness; of his holiness, truth, justice, and mercy; of his presence and providence, with a reverential, awful, filial, and loving fear of, and confidence in him. Otherwise your patience may be pride, surliness, stoicism; but it will not be Christianity. *And to godliness, brotherly kindness*—Sullenness, sternness, moroseness, are not consistent with genuine godliness. *Sour godliness*, so called, is of the devil. Of Christian godliness it may always be said:

"Mild, sweet, serene, and tender is her mood,
Nor grave with sternness, nor with lightness free;
Against example resolutely good,
Fervent in zeal, and warm in charity."

b

they make you that ye shall neither A. M. 4070
be 'barren' nor unfruitful in the A. D. 66.
knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things^m is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he wasⁿ purged from his old sins.

^l John xv. 2; Tit. iii. 14.—^m 1 John ii. 9, 11.—ⁿ Eph. v. 26; Heb. ix. 16; 1 John i. 7.

And to brotherly kindness, love—The pure and perfect love of God and of all mankind. The apostle here makes an advance upon the preceding article, *brotherly kindness*, which seems only to relate to the love of Christians toward one another.

Verse 8. *For if these things be in you*—This faith, this courage, this knowledge, &c. Not if they be understood and professed by you merely, but if they be *in you*, experienced in your hearts, and evinced in your lives; *and abound*—Increase more and more, otherwise you fall short; *they make you*—They cause; *that ye shall neither be barren*—Or rather, *slothful*, as *αργος* signifies; *nor unfruitful*—Cumberers of the ground; or taking pains to do good, but without success, your efforts being fruitless through your want of one or other of these graces. But these graces, possessed by you and kept in lively exercise, will neither suffer you to faint in your minds, nor be without fruit in your lives. Observe, reader, if there be in us less faithfulness, less watchfulness and care, less tenderness of conscience, less fervour of spirit, and diligence in working out our salvation, and serving God, and his cause, and people, since we were pardoned, than there was before; less outward obedience to the law of God, and less zeal and conscientiousness in doing his will, and glorifying him in and with our body and spirit, which are his, than when we were seeking remission of sins and regenerating grace, we are both *slothful and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ*—That is, in the faith, which in that case does not, cannot work by love.

Verse 9. *But he that lacketh these things*—And does not add them to his faith; *is blind*—With respect to spiritual things. The eyes of his understanding are again closed; he hath lost the *evidence of things not seen*; he no longer sees by faith God reconciled to him in Christ. Inward and outward holiness being the natural fruit of the knowledge of Christ, the person who pretends to have that knowledge, and yet does not aspire and labour after that holiness, is blind with respect to the nature of true Christianity; *and cannot see afar off*—Namely, the things of another world, but only the things of this world, which are present. The word *μωπαςων* signifies literally, *he is pur-blind*. He has lost sight of the precious promises: perfect love and heaven are equally out of sight. Nay, he cannot now see what he himself once enjoyed, *having*, as it were, *forgot that he was purged*, &c.—Greek, *ληθην λαβων τε καθαρισμω των παλαι αυτου αμαρτιων*, *having forgotten the purification from his former sins*; not remembering, or not having a proper sense of what

A. M. 4070. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren,
A. D. 66. give diligence ° to make your calling
and election sure: for if ye do these things, ° ye
shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered un-
to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

12 Wherefore ° I will not be negligent to put
you always in remembrance of these things,

° 1 John iii. 19.—° Chap. iii. 17.—° Rom. xv. 14, 15; Phil.
iii. 1; Chap. iii. 1; 1 John ii. 21; Jude 5.—° 1 Pet. v. 12;

he himself felt when his past sins were forgiven him, and he was first assured of his acceptance with God. "The apostle's expression here, in which he alludes to baptism, together with Ananias's words to Paul, (Acts xxii. 16.) *Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins*, is thought by many to imply, that in baptism the guilt of former sins is washed away. But Paul himself hath taught the sound meaning of Ananias's words, (Heb. x. 22.) *Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water*. Besides, Peter, in his first epistle, tells us expressly that *baptism is not the washing away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God*, in which respect it resembles circumcision, *which is not that which is outward, but of the heart*, by cutting off all irregular passions and appetites. The washing in baptism, therefore, is not a real, but an emblematical washing of the sinner from the guilt of his sins." Which emblem, as it contains a promise of pardon, so it is realized to all truly penitent sinners, who believe in Christ *with their hearts unto righteousness*, and to none else. See Macknight.

Verses 10, 11. *Wherefore*—Considering the miserable state of these apostates; *the rather*—That you may not be destitute of these things, but be fruitful in all graces and virtues; *brethren*—St. Peter nowhere uses this appellation, in either of his epistles, but in this important exhortation; *give diligence*—Namely, by the exercise and increase of the fore-mentioned graces. The word *σπουδασατε* means also *be in earnest*, and *make haste*, the matter being of infinite moment, and delays extremely dangerous. *To make your calling and election sure*—*Βεβαιω, firm*. As if he had said, God hath called you by his word, his providence, and his Spirit, to repentance, faith, and new obedience. By obeying this call, and turning sincerely to God, you became God's elect or chosen people; even elect, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience. See on 1 Pet. i. 2. Now as you made your *calling firm* or effectual by obeying it, so make your *election firm* by enduring to the end, remembering the Lord's words, *Many are called, but few finally chosen*. *For if ye do these things*—If you thus give diligence, and are thus in earnest, without delay, to add the graces and virtues here inculcated to your faith, and to make your calling and election firm; *ye shall*

though ye know *them*, and be es- A. M. 4070.
tablished in the present truth. A. D. 66.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as ° long as I am in
this tabernacle, ° to stir you up by putting you
in remembrance:

14 ° Knowing that shortly I must put off *this*
my tabernacle, even as ° our Lord Jesus Christ
hath showed me.

15 Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be

Chap. iii. 17.—° 2 Cor. v. 1, 4.—° Chap. iii. 1.—° Deut.
iv. 21, 22; xxxi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 6.—° John xxi. 18, 19.

never finally fall—Nay, ye shall not fall, *ποτε, once*, or *at any time*, into known sin, so as to come under guilt, condemnation, and wrath; nay, *ο μη πταισητε ποτε, ye shall not so much as stumble at any time*. Stumbling-blocks will, indeed, be in your way, probably not a few, but you shall not stumble at them, much less shall you fall over them; but you shall proceed forward on your way with steadiness, alacrity, and joy. *For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly*—*Πλουσιως, richly*, freely, and in the most honourable manner; *into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour*—The kingdom of his eternal glory. You shall depart hence in peace and triumph, knowing that as soon as you are absent from the body you shall be present with the Lord; and you shall be received as with a cordial welcome, and shall sail, as it were, into that blessed harbour with a full gale of consolation and joy.

Verses 12-14. *Wherefore*—Considering the evil consequent on the want or neglect of these graces, and the benefit which will arise from the exercise of them; since everlasting destruction would be the consequence of your lukewarmness and sloth, and everlasting glory will be the fruit of your earnestness and diligence, *I will not be negligent, &c.*—Therefore he wrote another letter so soon after the former; *to put you in remembrance of those things, though, as I am aware, you already know them in a great measure, and are established in the present truth*—The truth which I am now declaring; *yea, I think it meet*—*Δικαιον, just or reasonable, as long as I am in this tabernacle*—Or tent. See on 2 Cor. v. i. How short is our abode in the body! how easily does a believer pass out of it! *To stir you up*—To seek an increase of all Christian graces, and to practise all the Christian virtues; *by putting you in remembrance*—That they are necessary to your entrance into Christ's kingdom; *knowing*—As if he had said, I am the more earnest in this, because I know that *I must shortly put off, &c.*—That my death is soon to happen; *even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me*—By an express prophecy; meaning the revelation which Christ made to him, John xxi. 18, 19. And it is not improbable that Christ had showed him by a late revelation that the time was now drawing nigh.

Verse 15. *Moreover I will endeavour*—By writing

A. M. 4070. able, after my decease, to have these
A. D. 66. things always in remembrance.

16 For we have not followed ^v cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but ^w were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to

^y 1 Cor. i. 17; ii. 1, 4; 2 Cor. ii. 17; iv. 2.—^z Matt. xvii. 1, 2; Mark ix. 2; John i. 14; 1 John i. 1; iv. 14.—^a Matt. iii. 17;

these things in this epistle, and by every other means in my power, while it pleases God to continue me among you; *that ye may be able*—Through frequently reading what I here write; *after my decease to have these things always in remembrance*—“The apostle’s care in this was highly commendable; because the most important truths, if they are not remembered, have no influence on the mind. The gradation in this passage is beautiful. He proposed to put the brethren in remembrance of some revealed truths, with which they were acquainted; he proposed to do this, not once or twice, but always, as long as he lived; nay, he proposed [by leaving this written testimony among them] to put them in remembrance of these things after his death. Wherefore the ministers of the gospel, following Peter’s example, ought to insist most on the things which are of most importance to their people, although they are already well instructed in them, the influence of truth depending not so much upon the knowledge, as upon the frequent recollection of it.”—Macknight.

Verses 16–18. *For*—These things are worthy of being always remembered and regarded; for *we have not followed cunningly-devised fables*—Like those common among the heathen, but things infallibly true and infinitely momentous; *when we made known unto you the power*—The evidences and demonstrations which we gave of his divine power; (in the miracles which he wrought, whereby he demonstrated himself to be the Son of God;) *and coming of our Lord Jesus*—Namely, that the promised Messiah was already come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he. Or his second coming to raise the dead, to judge mankind, and to introduce his people into his eternal kingdom, might be chiefly intended. But it may be observed, if what the apostles have advanced concerning Christ had not been true, if it had been only of their own invention, then, to have imposed such a lie on the world, as it was in the very nature of things above all human power to defend, and to have done this at the expense of life and all things, only to engage the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, against them, would not have been *cunning*, but the greatest folly that men could have been guilty of. *But were eye-witnesses of his majesty*—At his transfiguration, which was a specimen of his glory at the last day. *For he received from God the Father divine honour and inexpressible glory*—Shining from hea-

him from the excellent glory, ^a This ^{A. M. 4070.}
is my beloved Son, in whom I am ^{A. D. 66.}
well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in ^b the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto ^c a light that shineth in a dark place, until

xvii. 5; Mark i. 11; ix. 7; Luke iii. 22; ix. 35.—^b Exod. iii. 5; Josh. v. 15; Matt. xvii. 6.—^c Psa. cxix. 105; John v. 35.

ven above the brightness of the sun; *when there came such a voice from the excellent glory*—From the Shechinah, as the Jews termed that glorious appearance which was a symbol of the presence of Jehovah; *This is my beloved Son, &c.*—See notes on Matt. xvii. 2–5. *This voice we heard*—Namely, Peter, James, and John. St. John was still alive when Peter wrote this; *when we were with him in the holy mount*—The mount made holy by that glorious manifestation, as mount Horeb was of old by the peculiar presence of God, Exod. iii. 4, 5.

Verse 19. *We have also*—Peter speaks here in the name of all Christians, *a more sure word*—Than that voice from heaven, or any particular revelation, not in itself, but more satisfactory to us, as being less liable to be mistaken; *of prophecy*—He means the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, which, one being consistent with another, and connected together, might properly be represented as one and the same word of prophecy. Some are of opinion that the apostle intended no comparison in this place, but that the comparative is used for the positive, and that his words were only intended to signify *a very sure word of prophecy*, or prophetic word; and it is certain that there are many instances in the New Testament of a similar kind, in which, though the comparative degree is used, the positive or superlative is evidently intended. Others assert, with much truth and propriety, that the series of prophecies contained in the Old Testament concerning Christ, when explained in the light of the New Testament, is a much clearer proof of Jesus being the Messiah, than any single miraculous fact, such as Christ’s transfiguration was. *Whereunto*—Unto which chain of prophecy concerning the conception and birth, the character, doctrine, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of the Messiah, with the erection and establishment, the extent, prosperity, and duration of his kingdom, and his second coming to raise the dead, and judge the world in righteousness—all evidently accomplished in Jesus of Nazareth, *ye do well to take heed*—In order that your faith, instead of being shaken by the objections of the enemies of the gospel, may be more fully confirmed; *even as unto a light*—*Λυχνω, a lamp, that shineth in a dark place*—The whole world anciently was indeed a dark place with respect to the knowledge of divine things, except that little spot, Judea, where this light shone; *until*

A. M. 4070. the day dawn, and ^d the day-star arise
A. D. 66. in your hearts :

20 Knowing this first, that ^o no prophecy of
the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

^d Rev. ii. 28 ; xxii. 16 ; 2 Corin. iv. 4, 6. — ^o Romans xii. 6.
¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16 ; 1 Pet. i. 11.

the day should dawn—Till the full light of the gospel should break through the darkness. As is the difference between the light of a lamp and that of the day, such is that between the light of the Old Testament and that of the New. Or the apostle meant by these words, that those to whom he wrote should attend to these prophecies concerning the Messiah, and compare them with the facts attested by the apostles and evangelists concerning Jesus of Nazareth, till their minds should be more fully enlightened by the word and Spirit of God; and *the day-star should arise in their hearts*—Till the Lord Jesus, the bright and morning star, (Rev. xxii. 16,) should be more fully revealed in them. Or “till the Holy Spirit should discover to their souls the glory and excellence of the gospel, and by his sanctifying and comforting influences give them the dawning of heaven in their hearts; and till the knowledge of Christ, and the experience of his power, truth, and love, had formed within them an assurance and anticipation of the light, holiness, and felicity of the saints in the presence of their glorified Saviour, even as the morning-star preceded and ushered in the rising sun and the perfect day.”—Scott. Who adds, that nothing can be more manifest than that the *day-dawn* and *day-star* are spoken of as arising in the hearts of true Christians, and that no external evidence of the divine origin of Christianity is meant, nor even that internal evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures which they contain in themselves, arising from the excellence of their doctrines, precepts, promises, &c. But the expressions must mean what is internal in our own experience. “The unnatural and far-fetched interpretations of those who oppose this conclusion, serve only to confirm the author in his judgment. This inward demonstration of the truth of Christianity would render the external evidences less necessary to those who enjoyed it; as they could no longer doubt of it when they saw the glory, and tasted the comfort of it, and experienced the truth and power of it in their hearts, and manifested it in their conduct.”

Verses 20, 21. *Knowing this first*—That you may not rashly or ignorantly put a sense upon any part

21 For ^t the prophecy came not ^o in A. M. 4070.
old time by the will of man : ^s but A. D. 66.
holy men of God spake as they were moved
by the Holy Ghost.

^t Or, at any time.—^s 2 Sam. xxiii. 2 ; Luke i. 70 ; Acts i. 16 ; iii. 18.

of the prophetic writings, not intended by the Divine Spirit which dictated them; that no prophecy of the Scripture—No prediction contained therein; is of any private interpretation—Greck, *ιδίαις επιλυσεως*, an expression of which various interpretations have been given, but only two of them shall be here noticed; namely, Doddridge's, who renders it, *of private impulse*, or original; and Macknight's, who reads, *of private invention*. But certainly no such sense can, with propriety, be forced upon the words: and why should it? Why should not the literal signification of them be acquiesced in? namely, that given in our translation. For surely no prophecy of Scripture, and hardly any doctrine, precept, or promise thereof, will or can be properly or fully understood by any man, let his natural abilities be what they may, without supernatural light from God, without the *Spirit of wisdom and revelation*, Eph. i. 17. For, as the apostle argues, 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14, (where see the notes,) as a man could not understand the things that belong to human nature, if he had not a human spirit in him, so *the things of God*, divine things, *knoweth no man*, clearly and fully, but by the illumination of the Spirit of God, which must be sought by sincere, fervent, importunate, persevering prayer. In other words, No man's private natural reason will enable him to understand the Scriptures, and the truths which they contain, properly and fully, and especially to relish, love, and delight in them, without the guidance of that Spirit which dictated them. And if this be true respecting the Scriptures in general, it is particularly so with regard to the prophetic writings; for prophecy especially *came not of old by the will of man*—Of any man's own will or pleasure. No true prophet either prophesied when he pleased or what he pleased. *But holy men of God*—The penmen of the sacred Scriptures; *spake*—Uttered their predictions or recorded them; *as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*—By an extraordinary impulse of the Divine Spirit, whose organs only they were in declaring what he was pleased to suggest to them; and what he moved, and enabled them to communicate, he must enable us to understand and profit by.

CHAPTER II.

The apostle, (1.) Cautions those to whom he wrote against false teachers, who are described by their pernicious principles and influence, 1–3. (2.) From the examples of the fallen angels, the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, he shows the certainty of their punishment; from which he foretels that the Lord would deliver the godly, as he did Lot out of Sodom, 4–9. (3.) He gives an alarming representation of seducers as extremely and aggravatedly wicked, under high pretences to liberty and purity, 10–22.

A. M. 4070. **BUT** ^a there were false prophets also
A. D. 66. among the people, even as ^b there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even ^c denying the Lord ^d that bought them, ^e and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their ¹ pernicious

^a Deut. xiii. 1.—^b Matt. xxiv. 11; Acts xx. 30; 1 John iv. 1; Jude 18.—^c Jude 4.—^d 1 Cor. vi. 20; Gal. iii. 13; Rev. v. 9.—^e Phil. iii. 19.—¹ Or, lascivious ways, as some copies

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *But*—Now that I am speaking of the divinely-inspired Jewish prophets, whose writings you must give heed to, I must remind you that *there were also false prophets among the people*—Of Israel, whose doctrine and pretended predictions were to be disbelieved and disregarded, and whose society was to be shunned. Under the name of *false prophets*, that appeared among the Israelites of old, those that even spake the truth, when God had not sent them, might be comprehended; and also those that were truly sent of him, and yet corrupted or softened their message. *Even as there shall be false teachers*—As well as true; *among you*—Christians. The entrance of false teachers into the church of Christ, their impious doctrines, their success in perverting many, and the influence of their doctrines in corrupting the morals of their disciples, were all very early made known by the Spirit to the Apostle Paul, as we learn from his speech to the elders of Ephesus, and from his epistles to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, and to Titus. The same discoveries were made to the Apostles Peter, John, and Jude, who, as well as Paul, published them in their writings, that the faithful might oppose these false teachers, and confute their errors, as soon as they appeared. Peter, therefore, here records the revelation which was made to him concerning the false teachers who were to arise in the church, and concerning their destructive ways. But, lest the prospect of these great evils should grieve the faithful too much, as suggesting a fear that God had forsaken his church, he observes, by way of preface, that such a thing was not unexampled; because that, together with many true prophets, there were also many false ones in God's ancient church, which, however, God had not therefore forsaken, but continued to superintend and take care of it. *Who privily shall bring in*—Into the church; *damnable, or destructive heresies*—As *αἱρεσεις ἀπωλειας* signifies; understanding by the word *heresies* not only fundamental errors in doctrine and practice, but divisions and parties occasioned by them, formed among the faithful. See note on 1 Cor. xi. 18, 19. *Even denying the Lord that bought them*—They either, first, by denying the Lord, introduced destructive divisions, or they occasioned first those divisions, and then were given up to a reprobate mind, even to deny the Lord, both by their doctrine and their works. By the *Lord* here may be understood either the Father, who hath redeemed mankind by the blood of his Son, or the Son, who hath

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ways; by reason of whom the way of ^a truth shall be evil spoken of. A. M. 4070. A. D. 66.

3 And ^f through covetousness shall they with feigned words ^g make merchandise of you: ^h whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

4 For if God spared not ⁱ the angels ^k that sinned,

read.—^f Rom. xvi. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 5.—^g 2 Cor. ii. 17; Chap. i. 18.—^h Deut. xxxii. 35.—ⁱ Job iv. 18; Jude 6.—^k John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 6.

bought them with his own blood. Observe, reader, the persons here spoken of as denying the Lord, and therefore as perishing everlastingly, were nevertheless bought by him; by which it appears that even those who finally perish were bought with the blood of Christ; a full proof this of the truth of the doctrine of general redemption. *And bring upon themselves swift destruction*—Future and eternal misery.

Verses 2, 3. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways*—Their destructive doctrines, and sinful practices. *By reason of whom the way of truth*—The doctrine of the gospel, and the genuine religion of Christ; *shall be evil spoken of*—By many others, who will blend all false and true Christians together, as if the errors and vices of those members who are corrupted were to be charged on those who are not infected with their disorders; or the vices of a few were to be imputed to all. *And through covetousness*—Having nothing in view but worldly gain; *shall they*—Namely, the false teachers here spoken of; *with feigned words*—Words formed to deceive, smooth and artful speeches, such as covetous merchants, or unfair traders, make use of to put off bad goods; *make merchandise of you*—Use you to gain by you. "In this single sentence," says Macknight, "there is a clear prediction of the iniquitous practices of those great merchants of souls, the Romish clergy, who have rated all crimes, even the most atrocious, at a fixed price; so that if their doctrine be true, whoever pays the price may commit the crime without hazarding his salvation." *Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not*—Was long ago determined, and will be executed speedily. All sinners are adjudged to destruction; and God's punishing some proves he will punish the rest; and *their damnation slumbereth not*—How fondly soever they may dream of escaping it. Thus, while the apostle asserts the justice of God, he declares his patience. He is slow to punish, that sinners may have time to repent. But if they continue impenitent, he will, without fail, punish them at last.

Verse 4. *For if*—Or *since*, as *εἰ γὰρ* may be here rendered; *God spared not the angels that sinned*—"The angels seem to have been placed originally in a state of trial. Those who stood are called in Scripture, *the holy angels*. The sin of the angels is spoken of likewise, John viii. 44, and Jude, verse 6, as a thing well known. Perhaps it was handed down by tradition from Adam and Eve, for the memory of it seems to have been preserved among the heathens in the fable of the Titans warring

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A. M. 4070. but ¹ cast *them* down to hell, and de-
A. D. 66. livered *them* into chains of darkness,
to be reserved unto judgment ;

5 And spared not the old world, but
saved ^m Noah the eighth *person*, ⁿ a preach-
er of righteousness, ^o bringing in the flood

¹ Luke viii. 31 ; Rev. xx. 2, 3. — ^m Genesis vii. 1, 7, 23 ; Heb.
xi. 7 ; 1 Peter iii. 20. — ⁿ 1 Pet. iii. 19.

against the gods. What the sin of the angels was is not well known. Jude, verse 6, says, *They kept not their first estate, or their own principality, as την αυτων αρχην* may be properly rendered, *but left their proper habitation*. Hence their sin, by many, is thought to have been pride, and a discontent with their station. See 1 Tim. iii. 6. But whatever it was, considering their high intellectual powers, they might easily have avoided it ; and therefore God did not spare them, as he spared Adam and Eve, who, on account of the greatness of the temptation spread for them by the evil angels, and their own inexperience, were fit objects of mercy." *But cast them down to hell*—The bottomless pit, a place of unknown misery. The original expression, *αλλα σειςαις ζοφου Ταρταρωσας*, is rendered by Macknight, *But with chains of darkness confining them in Tartarus*. The word *Tartarus*, he observes, is not found in the LXX., nor anywhere in the New Testament but here. Its meaning, therefore, must be sought for among the Greeks. Homer represents *Tartarus*, *Iliad*, viii. l. 13, as "a deep place under the earth, where there are iron gates and a brazen entrance." It is derived from a word expressive of terror, and signifies the doleful prison in which wicked spirits are reserved till they shall be brought out to public condemnation and execution. In like manner, Hesiod speaks of *Tartarus* as a place far under ground, where the Titans are bound with chains in thick darkness. But on other occasions the Greek writers speak of *Tartarus* as in the air, and at the extremity of the earth. Hence the epithet *Ταρταρον ηεροεντα*, *airy Tartarus*. The Jews, as appears from Job ii. 2, thought that at least some of the fallen angels were permitted to wander up and down the earth, and to tempt men. This was the doctrine of the evangelists likewise, who speak of the devil tempting our Lord ; and of Peter, who represents him as a roaring lion walking about, &c., 1 Epist. v. 8 ; as also of St. Paul, who insinuates that evil spirits have their habitation in the air, Eph. ii. 2 ; vi. 11, 12. Wherefore seeing the Greeks named the place where they supposed the Titans, the enemies of the gods, were confined, *Tartarus*, it was natural for Peter, when writing in the Greek language, concerning confining the evil angels in the place where they were shut up, to call it *Tartarus*, although his idea of *Tartarus* was different from that of the Greeks. Because it is said, Rev. xx. 3, that *Satan was cast, εις αβυσσον, into the abyss*, and Luke viii. 31, that the devil besought Jesus that *he would not command them to go out, εις αβυσσον, into the abyss*, Estius infers that *Tartarus* and *Hell* are the same ; and that

upon the world of the ungodly ; A. M. 4070.
A. D. 66. 6 And ^p turning the cities of Sodom
and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them*
with an overthrow, ^q making *them* an en-
sample unto those that after should live un-
godly ;

^o Chap. iii. 6. — ^p Gen. xix. 24 ; Deut. xxix. 23 ; Jude 7.
^q Num. xxvi. 10.

the greatest part of the angels who sinned are confined there, though some of them are allowed to roam about on the earth, tempting men. See Macknight and Doddridge. *Reserved unto judgment*—The full execution and open manifestation thereof. From this it follows that the angels who sinned are not at present suffering the punishment due to them for their crimes ; but, like malefactors, they are kept in durance till the time come when they are to be punished with the wicked of mankind, whom they have seduced. Whitby hath shown that this was the opinion of all the Christian writers for five centuries. And it is agreeable to our Lord's doctrine, who says, the fire into which wicked men are to be cast, is *fire prepared for the devil and his angels*.

Verse 5. *And spared not the old*—The antediluvian ; *world, but saved Noah*—Interposed amidst the general ruin for the preservation of one good man and his family ; *the eighth person, a preacher, &c.*—Bishop Pearson translates this clause, *the eighth preacher of righteousness* ; supposing that *Enoch*, (Gen. v. 24,) from whom Noah was descended, was the first preacher of righteousness, and that all the intermediate persons were likewise preachers thereof, and that Christ preached by them all. But of this there is no evidence ; and it seems certain that *Enoch* could not be the first preacher of righteousness : *Adam* was, in a wonderful manner, fitted to perform that office in the first world, as *Noah* was in the second ; and what excellent instructions both might give, is easy to be conceived ! Bishop Pearson adds, that if the above-mentioned sense of the passage be not admitted, it may be understood as denoting, not the order in which *Noah* was ranked, but merely the number of persons that were with him, namely, *Noah* with seven others, or *Noah* one of eight. By terming *Noah* a *preacher, κηρυκας, a crier, or herald, of righteousness*, Peter intimates that all the time *Noah* was preparing the ark, he proclaimed to the antediluvians the destruction of the world by a flood, that from the dread of that impending judgment of God they might be brought to repentance. His preaching, however, it appears, was attended with little or no success. *Bringing in the flood*—In a gradual, but irresistible manner ; *upon the world of the ungodly*—Whose numbers stood them in no stead.

Verses 6–8. *And turning the cities of Sodom, &c., into ashes*—When the inhabitants of those places were sunk into the lowest degeneracy ; *and condemned them with an overthrow*—Punished them with utter destruction, both of their persons and habitations ; *making them an ensample*—Not an ex-

A. M. 4070. 7 And ^r delivered just Lot, vexed
A. D. 66. with the filthy conversation of the
wicked :

8 (^r For that righteous man dwelling among
them, ^t in seeing and hearing, vexed his right-
eous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful
deeds ;)

9 ^r The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly
out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust
unto the day of judgment to be punished :

10 But chiefly ^r them that walk after the flesh

^r Gen. xix. 16.—^r Wisd. xix. 17.—^r Psa. cxix. 139, 158 ;
Ezek. ix. 4.—^r Psa. xxxiv. 17, 19 ; 1 Cor. x. 13.—^r Jude 4,

ample to be imitated, but an example to be avoided, as the word *υποδειγμα*, here used, signifies. Hence Jude, to express the same idea, uses the word *δειγμα*. *And delivered just Lot*—By the miraculous interposition of his providence ; *vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked*—Exceedingly grieved by the lewd behaviour of the lawless Sodomites. *For that righteous man, dwelling among them*—Lot appears to have dwelt sixteen years in Sodom, after he parted from Abraham ; a long space to abide in one of the lewdest and most outrageously wicked cities in the world, and not be tainted with their vices. Doubtless, as he was so exceedingly grieved with their lewd conduct from day to day, he often earnestly desired to leave the place, but he was directed, it seems, by God, to remain, that he might be an example of the divine goodness and power in delivering the godly from temptation, sin, and punishment. *In seeing their base actions, and in hearing their lewd speeches, he vexed*—*Εδρασανισεν, tormented ; his righteous soul from day to day*—For their wickedness was incessant ; *with their unlawful deeds*—The cry of which came up at length to heaven, and brought down upon them flaming destruction.

Verse 9. *The Lord, &c.*—This answers to verse 4, and closes the sense which was begun there ; *knoweth how to deliver*—As if he had said, It plainly appears, from these instances, that the Lord hath both wisdom and power sufficient, or can find out ways and means, and will do so ; *to deliver the godly*—Those who now suffer persecution ; *out of temptations*—That is, trials and afflictions of various kinds ; *and to reserve*—Or, *keep in ward*, as it were ; (so *τηρειν* seems here to signify ;) *the unjust*—The unrighteous, or ungodly ; *unto the day of judgment*—Temporal and eternal ; *to be punished*—In a most signal manner, or with a severity becoming their guilt and wickedness. “The multitude of the inhabitants of the old world, and of the cities of the plain, was, in the eye of God, no reason for not destroying them. He destroyed them all at once. On the other hand, the few godly persons among them were not overlooked by God because they were few, but preserved by an immediate interposition of his power. This last observation Peter makes to show that, notwithstanding God permits false teach-

in the lust of uncleanness, and despise A. M. 4070.
^r government. ^r Presumptuous are A. D. 66.
they, self-willed ; they are not afraid to speak
evil of dignities.

11 Whereas ^r angels, which are greater in
power and might, bring not railing accusation
^r against them before the Lord.

12 But these, ^r as natural brute beasts, made
to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the
things that they understand not ; and shall ut-
terly perish in their own corruption :

7, 8, 10, 16.—^r Or, *dominion*.—^r Jude 8.—^r Jude 9.
^r Some read, *against themselves*.—^r Jer. xii. 3 ; Jude 10.

ers to arise and deceive many, he will preserve the sincere from being deluded by them, and at length will destroy them out of the church. By God's keeping the unrighteous in ward to be punished at the day of judgment, we are taught that the punishment inflicted on the wicked in this life, will not hinder them from being punished in the next. The principal part of their punishment will be that which they shall suffer after the judgment.”

Verses 10, 11. *But chiefly them that walk after the flesh*—Their corrupt nature ; particularly in the *lusts of uncleanness*—Which are especially detestable in the eye of God ; and the crimes they commit so much resemble those of Sodom, that it is the less to be wondered at if they share in its punishment ; and with them may be joined those who *despise government*—The authority of their governors. *Presumptuous*—*Τολμηται, audacious*, ready to venture upon any thing that may serve their purposes ; *self-willed*—Uncontrollable in their own designs and ways ; *they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities*—Of persons in the highest dignity. *Whereas angels*—When they appear before the Lord, (Job. i. 6 ; ii. 1,) to give an account of what they have seen and done in the earth ; even those *who are greater in power and might*—Than the rest of those glorious beings ; *bring not railing accusation against them*—With whom they contend, namely, the devil, (as Jude, verse 9,) or, when they speak of rulers, they speak honourably of them, Dan. iv. 31 ; and, always avoiding all violence of language, they, with all calmness and decency, declare matters as they are, revering the presence of God, how much soever they may abhor the characters of wicked men.

Verses 12–14. *But these*—False teachers ; *as natural brute beasts*—As irrational animals, led merely by their brutish inclinations, several of which, in the present disordered state of the world, seem to be *made to be taken and destroyed* by mankind. He speaks chiefly of savage beasts, which men for their own security and preservation hunt down and destroy ; *speak evil of things that they understand not*—Namely, the mysteries of Christianity ; or magistracy, the institution, use, and benefit whereof *they understand not* ; and *shall utterly perish in their own corruption*—In that loose and abandoned course of life to which they have given up them-

A. M. 4070. 13^b And shall receive the reward
A. D. 66.

of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure^c to riot in the day-time. ^dSpots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while^e they feast with you ;

14 Having eyes full of ^fadultery, and that cannot cease from sin ; beguiling unstable souls : ^ga heart they have exercised with

^hPhil. iii. 19.—ⁱRom. xiii. 13.—^jJude 12.—^k1 Cor. xi. 20, 21.

selves, John viii. 21 ; who *account it pleasure to riot in the day-time*—Reckon it their chief happiness to pursue, even in the broad light of day, those riotous and voluptuous courses, which one would suppose they would endeavour to conceal under the cover of night. See 1 Thess. v. 7 ; Isa. iii. 9. *Spots they are*—In themselves ; *and blemishes*—To any church ; *sporting themselves with their own deceivings*—Making a jest of those whom they deceive, and even jesting while they are deceiving their own souls ; *while they feast with you*—When they join with you in the love-feasts. “The primitive Christians were used to feast together before they celebrated the Lord’s supper, because it was instituted by Christ after he had eaten the passover with his disciples. See 1 Cor. xi. 21. These previous suppers, it appears from Jude, verse 13, were called *αγαναι, love-feasts* ; because the rich, by feasting their poor brethren, expressed their love to them. But on these occasions, it seems, the false teachers and their disciples were guilty of great intemperance. *Having eyes full of adultery*—Many of them are as lewd as they are gluttonous. The Greek is, more literally, *having eyes full of an adulteress* ; a very strong expression, implying their having an adulteress continually before their eyes ; *and that cannot*—Or who act as if they could not ; *cease from sin ; beguiling*—*Δελεζοντες, insnaring* ; *unstable souls*—Such as are not established in the faith and practice of the gospel. *A heart exercised with covetous practices*—Well experienced in such contrivances as are calculated to promote their gain and carnal interest. *Cursed children*—Persons worthy to be had in utter abomination, and peculiarly exposed to the curse of God.

Verse 15. *Which have forsaken the right*—*Ευθεϊαν, straight* ; *way*—The way of truth and integrity, *and are gone astray*—Have wandered in dangerous and destructive paths ; *following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor*—(So the Chaldeans pronounced what the Jews called *Beor*,) namely, the ways of covetousness. Balaam loved wealth and honour so much, that to obtain them he acted contrary to his conscience. To follow his way, therefore, is to be guided by similar base passions, and to commit similar base actions ; *who loved the wages of unrighteousness*—“When Balaam was first sent for to curse the Israelites, Balak’s messengers carried only the rewards of divination in their hands, Num.

covetous practices ; cursed children : A. M. 4070. A. D. 66.

15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of ^eBalaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness ;

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity : the dumb ass, speaking with man’s voice, forbade the madness of the prophet.

^fGr. *an adulteress*.—^gJude 11.—^hNum. xxii. 5, 7, 21, 23, 28 ; Jude 11.

xxii. 7 : and therefore when God forbade him to go, he easily acquiesced, and refused to go, verse 13. But when Balak sent a second request by more honourable messengers, and with them a promise to promote him to very great honour, and to do whatever he should say to him, Balaam, inflamed with the love of the promised hire, endeavoured a second time to obtain permission to go. And though God allowed him to go, on the express condition that he should do nothing in the affair without his order, Balaam went with the resolution of cursing the Israelites, whether God permitted him or not ; as evidently appears from the circumstances of the story, to which the reader is referred. “And though he so far obeyed God that he blessed the Israelites, it was no dictate of his heart, but a suggestion of the Spirit of God, which he could not resist. For that his love of the hire, and his inclination to curse the Israelites continued, he showed by his behaviour afterward, when, to bring the curse of God upon the Israelites, he counselled Balak to entice them to fornication and idolatry by means of the Midianitish women, Numbers xxxi. 16 ; Rev. ii. 14.” in giving which advice he acted most unrighteously, knowing it to be evil, and that God’s purpose concerning the Israelites was irrevocable, Numbers xxiii. 19, &c. “He therefore gave the advice, not in the persuasion that it would be effectual, but merely to gain the promised hire, which therefore is called the hire of unrighteousness. In these things the false teachers, who, to draw money from their disciples, encouraged them by their doctrine to commit all manner of lewdness, might well be said to *follow in the way of Balaam* ; and their doctrine might justly be called, *the doctrine of Balaam*.”—Macknight.

Verse 16. *But was rebuked for his iniquity*—In a very extraordinary manner ; *the dumb ass*—On which he rode ; *speaking with man’s voice*—That is, in man’s language ; *forbade the madness of the prophet*—Namely, his endeavour to contradict the will of God, which might well be called *madness*, because it could have no effect but to bring the curse of God upon himself. “The apostle does not mean that the ass forbade Balaam, in so many words, to go with the princes of Moab ; but that her unwillingness to proceed in the journey, her falling down under him rather than go on, her complaint in man’s language of his smiting her three times for not going on, and her saying, *Was I ever wont to do so to thee*,

A. M. 4070. 17 ^h These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

18 For when ⁱ they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much wantonness*, those that ^k were ^l clean escaped from them who live in error.

19 While they promise them ^m liberty, they themselves are ⁿ the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

20 For ^o if after they ^p have escaped the pol-

^h Jude 12, 13.—ⁱ Jude 16.—^k Acts ii. 40; Chap. i. 4; Verse 20.—^l Or, for a little, or, a while, as some read. ^m Gal. v. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 16.—ⁿ John viii. 34; Rom. vi. 16.

were things so extraordinary, especially her speaking, that Balaam, from that miracle at least, ought to have understood that the whole was a rebuke from God of his foolish project." Though Balaam is termed a *soothsayer*, (Josh. xiii. 22,) and is said to have used enchantments, (Num. xxiv. 1,) Peter justly calls him a prophet, on account of God's speaking to him, and giving him a very remarkable prophecy, recorded Num. xxiv. 15. However, being a very bad man, he may often have feigned communications with the Deity to draw money from the multitude. Perhaps the only communications he ever had with God were on this occasion; and they may have been granted to him, that by uttering them in the hearing of Balak, and of the princes of Moab and Midian, the coming of one out of Jacob, who was to have dominion, might be known to the nations of the East.

Verse 17. *These are wells without water, &c.*—Pretenders to knowledge and piety, but really destitute thereof; *clouds*—Promising fertilizing showers of instructive and edifying doctrine, but yielding none; *carried with a tempest*—Driven by the violence of their own lusts from one error and vice to another; *to whom the mist*—Ο ζοφος, the blackness; *of darkness is reserved for ever*—Eternal darkness. Frequently in Scripture the word *darkness* signifies a state of disconsolate misery; here it denotes the punishment of the wicked after the day of judgment; which our Lord also hath represented by persons being cast into outer darkness. "There being few wells and little rain in the eastern countries, for a thirsty traveller to come to a well that had no water, was a grievous disappointment; as it was also to the husbandman to see clouds arise which gave him the prospect of rain, but which, ending in a tempest, instead of refreshing, destroyed the fruits of the earth. By these comparisons the ostentation, hypocrisy, levity, and mischief of the false teachers are set forth in the strongest colours."

Verses 18, 19. *When they speak great swelling words of vanity*—Propose their vain and false doctrine in a lofty style, or affect sublime strains of language, which are often void of any real meaning; *they allure through the lusts of the flesh*—By allow-

lutions of the world ^q through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For ^r it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, *'The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.*

^q Matt. xii. 45; Luke xi. 26; Heb. vi. 4, &c.; x. 26, 27. ^r Chap. i. 4; Verse 18.—^s Chap. i. 2.—^t Luke xii. 47, 48; John ix. 41; xv. 22.—^u Prov. xxvi. 11.

ing their hearers to live in lewd courses, or to gratify some unholy desires under pretence of Christian liberty, verses 10, 19; *those*—Who, as Christians; *were clean escaped from the spirit, customs, and company of them that live in error*—That is, in sin. In other words, they bring back again to their former sensuality, and other vices, those who, having been converted, had entirely forsaken their former evil ways and wicked companions. *While they promise them liberty*—From needless restraints and scruples, and from the bondage of the law; *they themselves are the servants of corruption*—Slaves to their own lusts, to sin, the vilest of all kinds of bondage; *for of whom*—Or what; *a man is overcome, of the same thing he is brought into bondage*—Becomes a perfect slave to it. The apostle seems here to allude to the ancient custom of making those slaves who were conquered or taken in battle. It was one of the Stoical paradoxes, that the wise man is the only *free man*, and that all wicked men are slaves. This maxim the apostle adopts, and supports it in a sound sense by the above unanswerable argument. Hence our Lord said to the Jews, who boasted of their freedom, (John viii. 34,) *Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin*. Of the slavery in which every carnal man lives, St. Paul has given us a lively picture, Romans vi. 16–20.

Verses 20–22. *For if after they*—The persons here spoken of as deluded; *have escaped the pollutions of the world*—The sins which pollute those who know not God; *through the knowledge of Christ*—That is, through faith in him, chap. i. 3; *they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end*—Their last state; *is worse than the beginning*—More inexcusable, and exposing them to a greater condemnation. *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness*—As set forth in the gospel; *than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment, &c.*—The doctrine of Christ, which enjoins nothing but what is holy. It would have been better, because their sin would have been less, and their punishment lighter. See the margin. *But it has happened unto them according to the true proverb*—The ancients used to

sum up their wisest and most useful observations in short, nervous, and impressive proverbs, which were more easily understood, and better remembered, than long, laboured discourses. *The dog, the sow*—Unclean creatures: such are all men in the sight of God before they receive his grace, and after they have made shipwreck of the faith. These proverbs teach us the absolute necessity of constant watchfulness and prayer, self-denial and mortification, in order to our persevering in the way of righteousness after we have entered upon it. And, as some think, they teach also that many, if not most of those who relapse into their former habits of sin, had contented themselves with a mere external reformation,

and had stopped short of a thorough change of nature, or being made new creatures in Christ Jesus. It may be worth observing, that the former of these proverbs is found Prov. xxvi. 11, and the latter is said to have been a common proverb among the ancients: see Eccl. xxvi. 24-26. Horace has a plain reference to both of them, lib. i. ep. 2. l. 26, where he is speaking of the travels of Ulysses, and says, "If he had been conquered by the charms of Circe, he had lived like an impure dog, or a sow that is fond of the mire." Surely these proverbs will not be thought coarse or unpolite in St. Peter, when some of the most elegant writers of antiquity have made use of, or referred to them.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter, (1.) The apostle represents this epistle as being sent to remind them of Christ's second coming, foretold by the prophets and apostles, since scoffers would quickly arise to deny and deride it, 1-7. (2.) He shows the true reason why this his coming is so deferred, and the certain, sudden, and awful nature of it, 8-10. (3.) He directs them how to improve it, and the information given them concerning the new state of the world that will attend it, as a powerful motive to holiness, patience, and steadfastness in the faith, 11-18.

A. M. 4070. **THIS** second epistle, beloved, I
A. D. 66. now write unto you; in both
which * I stir up your pure minds by way of
remembrance:

2 That ye may be mindful of the words
which were spoken before by the holy pro-

* Chap. i. 13.—† Jude 17.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. The doctrines and precepts delivered by the prophets and apostles, being the most effectual means of preserving the Christian converts from being seduced by the false teachers spoken of in the preceding chapter, the apostle begins this with informing the brethren that his design in writing both his epistles was to bring these doctrines and precepts to their remembrance. And as one of the greatest of these men's errors was their denying the coming of Christ to judge the world, and destroy this mundane system, he first exhorts the brethren to recollect what the holy prophets had anciently spoken on this subject, together with the commandments of the apostles of Christ to their disciples, to expect and prepare for these events. His saying, *This second epistle I now write, &c.*, implies that he had written a former one to the same people, and he here affirms that in them both he had one great end in view, which was to stir up their minds (which he terms *pure*, or rather *sincere*, as *ελικρινη* more properly signifies) to keep in remembrance and lay to heart what had been already taught them on these important subjects, so as to be properly influenced by it. The holy prophets intended, who had spoken of these things, were chiefly Enoch, mentioned Jude, verses 14, 15; David, Psa. l. 1-6; lxxv. 8; and Daniel, chap. xii. 2.

phets, ^b and of the commandment A. M. 4070.
of us the apostles of the Lord and A. D. 66.
Saviour:

3 ^c Knowing this first, that there shall come
in the last days scoffers, ^d walking after their
own lusts,

^c 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1; Jude 18.—^d Chap. ii. 10.

Verse 3. *Knowing this first*—That your faith in the prophetic word may not be shaken, but that you may be armed and prepared for the trial; *that there shall come in the last days*—The expression here used, *ἐν εσχάταις των ημερων*, is different from *υπεροικς χρονου*, *future*, or *latter times*, (1 Tim. iv. 1,) and from *εσχάταις ημεραις*, *the last days*, 2 Tim. iii. 1. It is also different from *ἐν εσχάταις των χρονων*, *these last times*, 1 Pet. i. 20. And it probably means the last part of the days of the world's duration. *Scoffers*—Or *mockers*, who shall ridicule the expectation of such awful events, and deride the truths, promises, and threatenings of the divine word; *walking after their own lusts*—Influenced by their appetites and passions, and their earthly and sensual inclinations. Here the apostle has laid open the true source of infidelity, and of men's scoffing at religion. "They may pretend to religion," as Dr. Benson says, "but they are governed by sense and appetite, and they take refuge in infidelity, and scoff at religion, to make themselves easy in their vices." "When the apostle wrote this passage, there were Epicureans and others among the Gentiles, and Sadducees among the Jews, who ridiculed the promises of the gospel concerning the resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, the destruction of the earth, and a future state of rewards and punishments. Wherefore, seeing the scoffers, of whom St. Peter here

A. M. 4070. 4 And saying, ° Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that ° by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth ° standing

° Isa. v. 19; Jer. xvii. 15; Ezek. xii. 22, 27; Matt. xxiv. 48; Luke xii. 45.—° Gen. i. 6, 9; Psa. xxxiii. 6; Heb. xi. 3. ° Gr. *consisting*.

speaks, had not yet appeared, but were to come in the last period of the duration of the world, it is probable that they were to arise in the church itself. Accordingly they are reproved, (verse 5,) for being wilfully ignorant of the Mosaic history of the creation and of the deluge; and Jude says, (verses 18, 19,) the scoffers separated themselves from other Christians, and had not the Spirit, though they pretended to be inspired. The evil of scoffing at the doctrines and promises of the gospel may be learned from Psa. i. 1, where scoffing at religion is represented as the highest stage of impiety."—Macknight.

Verses 4-6. *Where is the promise of his coming*—To raise the dead, judge mankind, and destroy the earth? We see no sign of any such thing. The promise of Christ's coming we have Matt. xv. 27, *The Son of man shall come in his glory, &c.*; John xiv. 3, *I will come and receive you to myself, &c.*, and in many other passages of the gospel; a promise which was renewed by the angels at our Lord's ascension, and is spoken of in many passages of the epistles, especially in those of St. Paul. By representing Christ's promised coming as a delusion, the scoffers set themselves and others free from all fear of a future judgment, and bereft the righteous of their hope of reward. *For since the fathers fell asleep*—Since our ancestors died; *all things*—Heaven, earth, air, water; *continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*—Without any such material change as might make us believe they will ever have an end. So say these scoffers. *For this they willingly are ignorant of*—As if he had said, It is from their ignorance, their gross, affected ignorance, that they argue after this manner. He says *willingly ignorant*, to signify that they had sufficient means of knowing better, but that they did not care to know or consider any thing respecting it. *That by the word of God*—His almighty word, which bounds the duration of all things, so that it cannot be either longer or shorter; *the heavens*—As by the heavens here the apostle means the atmosphere which surrounds this earth, the plural is put for the singular by a change of the number very common in the Scriptures; *were of old*—Anciently before the flood; *and the earth standing*—Or *subsisting*, (as *συνεστω* more properly signifies,) *out of the water*—Which had before covered it, namely, emerging from it by the divine command, (the earth being formed out of the chaos, which had been previously brought into existence for that purpose,) and the liquid element retiring to the channels prepared for it; and

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° out of the water and in the water: A. M. 4070. 6 ° Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But ° the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto ° fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

° Psa. xxiv. 2; cxxxvi. 6; Col. i. 17.—° Gen. vii. 11, 21, 22, 23; Chap. ii. 5.—° Verse 10.—° Matt. xxv. 41; 2 Thess. i. 8.

in the water—By which God appointed that it should be surrounded, nourished, and supported, water being the life of the vegetable creation; *whereby*—*δι' ὧν*, by which things, thus constituted; *the world that then was*—The whole antediluvian race, with all the brute animals, except such as were with Noah in the ark; *being overflowed with water, perished*—Perhaps *δι' ὧν*, by which things, refers to the heavens mentioned above, and may relate to *the windows of heaven being opened*, as the expression is Gen. vii. 11, and pouring forth upon the earth a destructive deluge of water. The apostle means that these scoffers did not consider God's power manifested in making the world, which must enable him also to destroy it if he pleased, and that they had little reason for saying that all things continued as they were from the creation.

Verse 7. *But*—Though the destruction of the old world by water shows that the present world may be destroyed, I do not say it will be destroyed by water. No: *the heavens and the earth, which are now*—This whole sublunary world; *by the same word*—Which at first created them, and afterward destroyed them, and then again restored them; *are kept in store*—*τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσι πυρὶ τηρημένοι*, are treasured up and preserved for fire; that is, preserved from a deluge for the purpose of being burned. Therefore the earth is not always to remain, but is to suffer a destruction even more terrible than the former; *at the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men*—The day when God will judge the world, and punish the ungodly with everlasting destruction. "In regard that Hammond and some other celebrated commentators understand this prophecy as a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, it will be proper here to inform the reader, that in support of their interpretation they appeal to the ancient Jewish prophecies, where, as they contend, the revolutions in the political state of empires and nations are foretold in the same forms of expression with those introduced in St. Peter's prediction. The following are the prophecies to which they appeal: Isa. xxxiv. 4; Ezek. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 10, 30, 31; Amos viii. 9; Hag. ii. 6; Matt. xxiv. 29. Now it is remarkable, in these prophecies none of the prophets have spoken, as Peter has done, of the entire destruction of this mundane system, nor of the destruction of any part thereof. They mention only the *rolling of the heavens together as a scroll*, the *obscuring of the light of the sun and of the moon*, the *shaking of the heavens and the earth*, and

A. M. 4070. 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant
A. D. 66. of this one thing, that one day is
with the Lord as a thousand years, and ¹a
thousand years as one day.

9 ^aThe Lord is not slack concerning

¹ Psa. xc. 4.—^a Hab. ii. 3; Heb. x. 37.—^a Isa. xxx. 18;
1 Pet. iii. 20; Verse 15.

the falling down of the stars. Whereas Peter speaks of the utter destruction of all the parts of this mundane system by fire. This difference affords room for believing that the events foretold by the prophets are different in their nature from those foretold by the apostle; and that they are to be figuratively understood, while those predicted by the apostle are to be understood literally. To this conclusion likewise the phraseology of the prophets, compared with that of the apostle, evidently leads. For the prophetic phraseology, literally interpreted, exhibits impossibilities; such as *the rolling of the heavens together as a scroll, the turning of the moon into blood, and the falling down of the stars from heaven as the leaf of a tree.* Not so the apostolic phraseology. For *the burning of the heavens, or atmosphere, and its passing away with a great noise, and the burning of the earth and the works thereon, together with the burning and melting of the elements,* that is, of the constituent parts of which this terraqueous globe is composed, are all things possible, and therefore may be literally understood; while the things mentioned by the prophets can only be taken figuratively. This, however, is not all. There are things in the apostle's prophecy which show that he intended it to be taken literally. As, 1st, He begins with an account of the perishing of the old world, to demonstrate, against the scoffers, the possibility of the perishing of the present heavens and earth. But that example would not have suited his purpose unless, by the burning of the present heavens and earth, he had meant the destruction of the material fabric. Wherefore the opposition stated in this prophecy between the perishing of the old world by water, and the perishing of the present world by fire, shows that the latter is to be as real a destruction of the material fabric as the former was. 2d, The circumstances of the present heavens and earth being treasured up and kept, ever since the first deluge, from all after deluges, in order to their being destroyed by fire at the day of judgment, shows that the apostle is speaking of a real, and not of a metaphorical destruction of the heavens and the earth. 3d, This appears likewise from the apostle's foretelling, that after the present heavens and earth are burned, a new heaven and a new earth are to appear, in which the righteous are to dwell for ever. 4th, The time fixed by the apostle for the burning of the heavens and the earth, namely, the day of judgment and punishment of ungodly men, shows that the apostle is speaking, not of the destruction of a single city or nation during the subsistence of the world, but of the earth itself, with all the wicked who have dwelt

his promise, as some men count A. M. 4070.
slackness; but ^a is long-suffering A. D. 66.
to us-ward, ^o not willing that any should
perish, but ^p that all should come to repentance.

^o Ezekiel xviii. 23, 32; xxxiii. 11.—^p Romans ii. 4;
1 Timothy ii. 4.

thereon. These circumstances show that this prophecy, as well as the one recorded 2 Thess. i. 9, is not to be interpreted metaphorically of the destruction of Jerusalem, but should be understood literally of the destruction of our mundane system, and of the general judgment."

Verse 8. *Be not ye ignorant*—Whatever they are; *of this one thing*—Which casts much light on the point in hand; *that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*—This is an allusion to Psa. xc. 4, where Moses had said, *A thousand years in thy sight are as one day,* which words St. Peter applies with regard to the period intervening between the time when he wrote, and the last day; denoting thereby, 1st, God's eternity, whereby he exceeds all measure of time in his essence and in his operation: 2d, His knowledge, to which all things past, or to come, are present every moment: 3d, His power, which needs no long delay in order to bring his work to perfection: and, 4th, His long-suffering, which excludes all impatience of expectation and desire of making haste. But it must be observed, that neither the apostle nor the psalmist meant that God does not perceive any difference between the duration of a day and that of a thousand years; but that these differences do not affect either his designs, or actions, or felicity, as they do those of finite creatures. So that what he brings to pass on the day he declares his purpose, is not more certain than what he will bring to pass a thousand years after such declaration. In like manner, what is to be brought to pass a long time after his declaration, is not less certain than if it had been done when declared. See Abernethy's *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 218. The apostle's meaning is in substance, that in one day, yea, in one moment, he could do the work of a thousand years; therefore he is *not slow*, he is always equally able, equally ready to fulfil his promise; *and a thousand years*, yea, the longest time, is no more delay to the eternal God *than one day* is to us: therefore he is long-suffering; he gives us space for repentance without any inconvenience to himself. In a word, with God time passes neither slower nor swifter than is suitable to him and his economy. Nor can there be any reason why it should be necessary for him either to delay or hasten the end of all things. How can we comprehend this? If we could have comprehended it, St. Peter needed not to have added, *with the Lord.*

Verse 9. *The Lord is not slack*—*Ὁυ βραδύει*, does not delay, or is not slow; *concerning his promise*—To fulfil it, as if the time fixed for the fulfilment of it were past; for it shall surely be fulfilled in its season; *but is long-suffering, to us-ward*—Children

A. M. 4070. 10 But ^a the day of the Lord will
A. D. 66. come as a thief in the night; in the
which ^r the heavens shall pass away with a
great noise, and the elements shall melt with
fervent heat, the earth also, and the works
that are therein, shall be burned up.

^a Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39; 1 Thess. v. 2; Rev. iii. 3;
xvi. 15.—^r Psa. cii. 26; Isa. li. 6; Matt. xxiv. 35; Mark xiii.

of men; not willing that any should perish—Any human being, any soul that he hath made. That is, he is not primarily willing; his first will, with regard to the whole posterity of Adam, hath been and is, that they should be eternally saved; and as a proof of it he hath given his Son a ransom for all; (1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9;) hath commanded his gospel, that is, the glad tidings of salvation, to be preached to all, to every human creature, (Mark xvi. 15,) and, to help man's weakness, causes his grace, even his saving grace, (as η χάρις η σωτηριος literally signifies,) to appear to, or to visit and strive with, all men, in order to their repentance, faith, and new obedience. But if they reject his counsel against themselves, which they are under no necessity of doing, by continuing impenitent, unbelieving, and disobedient, then, secondly, he wills, and that justly, that they should perish, for they are accountable to him, their rightful Lawgiver, Governor, and Judge, and he will judge them, and all the world, in righteousness.

Verse 10. But—Notwithstanding the long-suffering of God; the day of the Lord—The day of the consummation of all things, and of final judgment; will come, and that as a thief in the night—Because thieves commonly break into houses in the night-time, and occasion great fear to those who are within, any sudden, unexpected event, especially such as occasioned terror, was compared, by the Hebrews, to the coming of a thief in the night. The suddenness, therefore, and unexpectedness of the coming of the day of the Lord, and the terror which it will occasion to the wicked, are the circumstances in which it will resemble the coming of a thief, and not that it will happen in the night-time. In the which the heavens—That is, the aerial heavens, the atmosphere which surrounds this earth, and which the apostle calls the heavens, because Moses had called it so; shall pass away—The passing away of the heavens and the earth does not mean, it seems, that they will be removed to another part of space, or that they will be annihilated; but that, being burned, their form and constitution will be changed much more, probably, than the constitution or form of the old world was by the flood; destruction by fire being more complete and dreadful than destruction by water; with a great noise—Surprisingly expressed by the very sound of the original word, ροιζηδον. "That the thundering noise occasioned by the burning of the whole heavens, or atmosphere, will be terrible beyond description, may be conjectured by considering what a noise is made by those small portions of the air which are burned when it thunders, or which are set in commotion in a storm."

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11 Seeing then that all these things A. M. 4070.
shall be dissolved, what manner of A. D. 66.
persons ought ye to be ^r in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 ^a Looking for and ² hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens be-

31; Rom. viii. 20; Heb. i. 11; Rev. xx. 11; xxi. 1.—^a 1 Pet. i. 15.—^r 1 Cor. i. 7; Tit. i. 13.—² Or, hasting the coming.

But how much greater will be the noise arising from the general conflagration of the whole earth, with all that it contains. And the elements shall melt with fervent heat—Καυσμενα λυθησονται, burning shall be dissolved. The word ροιζηδον, rendered elements, signifies the first principles, or constituent parts of any thing. Hence it denotes the principles of science, (Heb. v. 12,) as well as the principles of bodies. Estius understands by the word the elements of which this terraqueous globe is composed; but as the melting of these is mentioned verse 12, Mac-knight is of opinion "that, in this verse, the apostle is speaking of the electrical matter, the sulphureous vapours, the clouds, and whatever else floats in the air, all which, burning furiously, will be disunited and separated." The earth also, and the works that are therein—Whether of nature or of art; shall be burned up—And has not God already abundantly provided for this? 1st, By the stores of subterranean fire, which are so frequently bursting out at Ætna, Vesuvius, Hecla, and many other burning mountains; 2d, by the ethereal (vulgarly called electrical) fire, diffused through the whole globe; which, if the secret chain that now binds it up were loosed, would immediately dissolve the whole frame of nature; 3d, By comets, one of which, if it touch the earth in its course toward the sun, must needs strike it into that abyss of fire. If in its return from the sun, when it is heated (as a great man computes) two thousand times hotter than a red-hot cannon ball, it must destroy all vegetables and animals long before their contact, and soon after burn it up.

Verses 11, 12. Seeing then that all these things—Which our eyes behold; shall be dissolved—And we shall be spectators of their dissolution, being raised from the dead before, or at the time of, its taking place; what manner of persons ought ye to be—How serious, how watchful, how free from levity and folly, how disengaged from, and dead to, this lower world, with all it contains; how unmoved by the trifling changes which are now continually occurring, the comparatively insignificant losses and gains, honour and reproach, pleasure and pain! How heavenly-minded, having our thoughts and affections set upon that world, with its riches, glories, and joys, which is durable and eternal; in all holy conversation—With men; and godliness—Toward God. Looking for—Earnestly desiring; and hasting unto—Or hasting on, (as σπευδοντας may signify,) namely, by your earnest desires and fervent prayers; the coming of the day of God—Fifty so called, because God will then make such a display of his glorious perfections as was never made before;

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A. M. 4070. ing on fire shall ^a be dissolved, and
A. D. 66. the elements shall ^a melt with fervent
heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise,
look for ^v new heavens and a new earth, where-
in dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for

^a Psa. v. 3; Isa. xxxiv. 4.—^a Mic. i. 4; Verse 10.—^v Isa. lxxv. 17; lxxvi. 22; Rev. xxi. 1, 27.

of his *power*, in raising all the dead, and transform-
ing all the living in a moment, in the twinkling of
an eye, and in destroying the present world, and
preparing for his people a new heaven and a new
earth; of his *wisdom*, in showing that he knew, and
will now bring into judgment, all the thoughts, de-
sires, and designs, the dispositions, words, and actions
of all the thousands of millions of human beings that
had lived on earth in the different ages of the world;
of his *justice*, in rendering unto every man, with
infinite exactness, according to his works, and *re-*
compensing tribulation to those that troubled his
saints and servants; of his *mercy* and *love* in justifying,
at his judgment-seat, his believing and obedient
people, and in conferring upon them an incorrupt-
ible and eternal inheritance; and of his *truth*, in
punctually fulfilling all his promises and threaten-
ings, and making good all his declarations. *Wherein*
the heavens being on fire, &c.—The apostle repeats
his former testimony, because of its great importance.
Macknight, however, thinks that, by *the elements*, in
this verse, we are not to understand, as in verse 10,
the *heavens* or *atmosphere*, but the elements of
which this terraqueous globe is composed; namely,
earth and water, and every thing which enters into
the composition of these substances, and on which
their constitution and form depend. Hence, 1st, In
speaking of them, he uses an expression which he
did not use in verse 10. There his words were, *The*
elements, burning, λυθησονται, shall be dissolved;
here he says, *The elements, burning, τηκεται, (for*
τακησεται,) shall melt; a “word which is applied to
the melting of metals by fire. Wherefore, as the
elements signify the constituent parts of any thing,
the expression, *shall melt*, applied to the constituent
parts of the terraqueous globe, intimates that the
whole, by the intense heat of the conflagration, is to
be reduced into one homogeneous fluid mass of burn-
ing matter. Consequently, that it is not the surface
of the earth, with all the things thereon, which is to
be burned, as some have imagined, but the whole
globe of the earth.” And that he is here speaking
of these elements, and consequently of the destruc-
tion of this earth, appears still further by the pro-
mise made in the next verse.

Verse 13. *Nevertheless we, according to his pro-*
mise, &c.—That is, “Though the present frame of
things shall be dissolved by fire, yet we look for
another, a more durable and perfect state; *new*
heavens and a new earth—New and everlasting
abodes, which the divine mercy will then open to
our enraptured view, into which it will conduct us,

such things, be diligent ^a that ye may ^{A. M. 4070.}
be found of him in peace, without ^{A. D. 66.}
spot, and blameless.

15 And account *that* ^a the long-suffering of
our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved bro-
ther Paul also, according to the wisdom given
unto him, hath written unto you;

^a 1 Cor. i. 8; xv. 58; Phil. i. 10; 1 Thess. iii. 13; v. 23.
^a Rom. ii. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 20; Verse 9.

and in which perfect righteousness, holiness, and
felicity, shall dwell for ever;” Rev. xxi. 1-7; xxii.
1-5. Some expositors suppose that these lower
heavens and this earth, having been melted down
by a general conflagration, shall thereby be refined,
and that God will form them into new heavens and
a new earth for the habitation of the righteous; a
supposition which seems to be favoured by St. Peter,
Acts iii. 21, where he speaks of *the restitution of*
all things, which God hath promised by the mouth
of all his holy prophets; by St. Paul, Rom. viii. 21,
where he says, *The creation itself shall be delivered*
from the bondage of destruction; and also by the
Lord Jesus himself, whose words (Rev. xxi. 5) are,
Behold, I make all things new. As St. Peter had a
revelation from Christ that he would create new
heavens and a new earth, he might justly call that
his promise; but the patriarchs and believing an-
cients were not without the expectation of such an
inheritance. See Gen. xvii. 7; Dan. xii. 2; Heb. xi.
10-16.

Verses 14, 15. *Wherefore, beloved*—Bearing these
great truths in your minds, give up your whole
souls to their influence; and, *seeing that ye look for*
such things—Since you expect the coming of Christ
to destroy the present mundane system, and to
create a new heaven and earth, and since death,
which will confirm your title to this inheritance, or
your exclusion from it, for ever, is fast approaching,
and may come both very soon and very unex-
pectedly; *be diligent*—*Σπουδασατε*, the same word
that is used chap. i. 10, which implies not only the
diligent use of all the means of grace, and the prac-
tice of universal holiness and righteousness, in con-
sequence of repentance toward God, and faith in
our Lord Jesus Christ, with the active exertion of
every gift of nature and of grace, but the doing all
this *earnestly* and *without delay*; relying not on any
power of your own, but on the influence of the
Divine Spirit, for all the help you stand in need of;
that ye may be found of him—Christ, when he
cometh; *in peace*—With God, being justified by
grace through faith, Rom. v. 1; *without spot*—
Cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,
and renewed after the divine image; and, as an
evidence thereof, *blameless*—In behaviour toward
God, your fellow-creatures, and yourselves; having,
in consequence of your regeneration, *lived soberly,*
righteously, and godly in this present world, and
adorned the doctrine of God your Saviour in all
things. *And*—Instead of considering his delaying
to come as a proof that he will never come, *account*

A. M. 4070. 16 As also in all his epistles, ^b speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which

^b Rom. viii. 19; 1 Cor.

that delay, and his long-suffering—Thereby manifested; *salvation*—Designed to promote your salvation, and the salvation of many others; giving sinners space for repentance, and an opportunity to prepare for these solemn and awful scenes, and so becoming a precious means of saving many more souls. As our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him—That admirable insight into, and understanding of, the mysteries of the gospel, which appears in all his epistles, and was given to him by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; *hath written to you*—This refers not only to the single sentence preceding, but to all that went before. This epistle of Peter being written to those to whom the first epistle was sent, the persons to whom St. Paul wrote concerning the long-suffering of God, and the other subjects here referred to, were the Jewish and Gentile Christians in the Lesser Asia. Accordingly, we know he wrote to the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Colossians, and to Timothy, things which imply that God's mercy in sparing and bearing with sinners, is intended for their salvation; and that an awful judgment, and an eternal state of happiness or misery, await all mankind.

Verse 16. As also in all his epistles—From this it appears that Peter had read Paul's epistles; and, as he speaks not of some but of all of them, it is probable that Paul was dead when St. Peter wrote this, namely, a little before his martyrdom, as appears from chap. i. 14. And seeing that Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, chap. ii. 4, and to the Hebrews, chap. x. 36, 38, wrote that the long-suffering of God was intended for salvation, by mentioning that circumstance, Peter intimated that he knew Paul to be the author of the epistles to the Romans, and to the Hebrews. *Speaking in them of these things*—Paul, in all his epistles, hath spoken of the things written by Peter in this letter. For example: he hath spoken of Christ's coming to judgment, 1 Thess. iii. 13; iv. 14–18; 2 Thess. i. 7–10; Tit. ii. 13; and of the resurrection from the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 22; Phil. iii. 20, 21; and of the burning of the earth, 2 Thess. i. 8; and of the heavenly country, 2 Cor. v. 1–10; and of the introduction of the righteous into that country, 1 Thess. iv. 17; Heb. iv. 9; xii. 14–24; and of the judgment of all mankind by Christ. *In which are some things hard to be understood*—According to the greatest number of MSS. the apostle does not say, *ev aic*, in which epistles, but *ev ois*, in or among which things; namely, the things which Paul had written concerning Christ's coming to judgment, the burning of the earth, the heavenly country, and the introduction of the righteous into that country. The Alexandrian, however, and six other MSS. read here, *ev aic*, in which epistles. This, Beza says, is the true reading, because he thinks it would have been improper in Peter to say that Paul had written obscure-

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they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. A. M. 4070. A. D. 66.

xv. 24; 1 Thess. iv. 15.

ly concerning subjects of which Peter himself had written more things hard to be understood than any Paul had written in any part of his epistles. Nevertheless "the common reading may be retained, because the antecedent to the neuter relative, *ois*, may be a word not expressed, but understood, namely, *γραμμασι*, which signifies letters or epistles, Acts xxviii. 21. On this supposition Peter's meaning will be, *In which epistles there are some things hard to be understood.*" Barclay, in his *Apology*, explains this of the 9th chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, in which there are some things that seem to be contrary to God's long-suffering to all, and which are very liable to be perniciously wrested; *which they that are unlearned*—Who are not taught of God, or are unteachable, as Estius translates the word *αμαθεις*, here used; namely, persons whose passions blind their understanding, and make them averse to the truth, or whose prejudices indispose them to admit it: and the *unstable*—The wavering, unsettled, double-minded, or men of two minds, as St. James's word, *διψυχοι*, signifies; who have no real, steady love of piety, but sometimes follow it, sometimes desert it, as good or bad inclinations happen to predominate in them. Whereas the *stable* are those who have a firm, unshaken, and warm attachment to the religion of Jesus: *wrest*—"The original word, *σβελευσιν*, signifies to put a person to the torture, to make him confess some crime laid to his charge, or reveal some secret which he knows. Applied to writings it signifies, by far-fetched criticisms and unsupported senses of words, to make a passage speak a meaning different from what the author intended. Hence in our language we have the expression, *to torture words*. Of this vice they are most commonly guilty who, from pride of understanding, will receive nothing but what they can explain. Whereas, the humble and teachable receive the declarations of revelation according to their plain, grammatical, unconstrained meaning, which it is their only care to attain, by reading the Scriptures frequently and with attention."—Macknight. *As they do also the other scriptures*—In this clause Peter expressly acknowledges Paul's epistles to be a part of the Scriptures, and therefore to have been written by divine inspiration. The affection with which Peter on this occasion speaks of Paul, and the honourable testimony which he bears to his writings, deserves great praise. He had been formerly rebuked by Paul before the brethren at Antioch for refusing to keep company with the Gentile converts; but if at that time he felt any displeasure at Paul for that rebuke, which we nowhere learn that he did, he had long ago laid it aside, and probably, instead of thinking ill of Paul on that account, had for many years admired him for his bold and steady testimony to the truth.

A. M. 4070. 17 Ye therefore, beloved, ° seeing
A. D. 66. ye know *these things* before, ° be-
ware lest ye also, being led away with the error
of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

° Mark xiii. 23; Chapter i. 12.—^d Eph. iv. 14; Chapter i.
10, 11; ii. 18.

Verses 17, 18. *Therefore, seeing ye know these things before*—Respecting the coming of the Lord to judgment, in what an awful manner the scene will close, and what dreadful vengeance will be executed on all the wicked, and especially on those that pollute the Church of Christ, into which they have professed to enter; and that scoffers will arise and ridicule the promise of Christ's coming, as also the danger there is of misunderstanding and misinterpreting the Scriptures, and so of being seduced and perverted thereby. Here St. Peter teaches that one great purpose for which the prophets were inspired to foretell the corruptions which were to arise in the church, and the evils which were to befall the sincere disciples of Christ, was to put them on their guard against these corruptions, and to arm them with fortitude to bear persecutions. *Beware*—Be on your guard; *lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, (ἀνεκκουον, the lawless,) fall from your own steadfastness*—In the faith and practice of the gospel; that steadfastness which, by God's

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18 ° But grow in grace, and in the A. M. 4070.
knowledge of our Lord and Saviour A. D. 66.
Jesus Christ. ° To him be glory both now and
for ever. Amen.

° Ephesians iv. 15; 1 Peter ii. 2.—^d 2 Timothy iv. 18,
Rev. i. 6.

assistance, you have hitherto retained. *But*—To prevent this falling away; *grow in grace*—In every Christian temper; and in order thereto, conscientiously and diligently use the means appointed. *And in the knowledge of Christ*—That is, in faith, the root of all piety and virtue; faith implying that knowledge of him which is communicated by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, mentioned Eph. i. 17, and promised John xvi. 14. *To him be glory, εις ημεραν αιωνος, to the day of eternity*—An expression naturally flowing from that sense which the apostle had felt in his soul throughout this whole chapter. Eternity is a day without night, without interruption, without end. *Amen*—Dr. Benson remarks, that when this word is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it is an earnest asseveration. In the conclusion of a sentence, it imports an earnest wish that it may be so. The doxology, with which this epistle concludes, is evidently directed to Christ, as are some of the other doxologies in Scripture.

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PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN.

CONCERNING the apostle and evangelist John, to whom this epistle, (or *treatise* rather,) as well as the gospel which bears his name, has been justly ascribed by all the earliest and best Christian writers without hesitation, see the preface to his gospel. Indeed, that the same person was the author of both works, is evident from the similarity, or rather sameness, of the sentiments, and expressions which runs through them both. A great many instances of this are enumerated by Dr. Macknight in his preface to this epistle, a few of which shall be here mentioned.

EPISTLE.

Chap. i. 1, That which was from the beginning,—*ο εθε*. *αααμεθα*, which we have looked upon concerning the word of life.

Chap. ii. 6, He who saith he abideth in him, ought himself to walk even as he walked.

Chap. ii. 8, A new commandment I write unto you.

Chap. iii. 11, This is the message, that we should love one another.

Chap. ii. 10, He that loveth, &c., abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

Chap. iii. 8, He who committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

Chap. iv. 9, In this was manifested the love of God, &c., that God sent his only-begotten Son, &c., that we might live through him.

Chap. iv. 12, No man hath seen God at any time.

Chap. v. 13, These things have I written to you who believe, &c., that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe, &c.

Various have been the opinions respecting the persons to whom this epistle was addressed. The most probable seems to be, that the apostle did not write to any particular church, but to all the Christians of that age, and in them, to the whole Christian Church in all succeeding ages. As to the time when the epistle was written there is the same uncertainty. Some indeed conclude, from chap. ii. 18; iv. 1, compared with Matt. xxiv. 24, that it was written a little before the destruction of Jerusalem; but several others fix the date at A. D. 90, 91, or 92. There are, however, many reasons for thinking that it was written before the Revelation. In the style of this apostle there is a remarkable peculiarity, and especially in this epistle. His sentiments, considered separately, are exceeding clear and intelligible; but when we search for their connection, we frequently meet with greater difficulties than we do in the epistles of Paul. The principal characteristic of his manner is an artless and amiable simplicity, and a singular modesty and candour, in conjunction with a wonderful sublimity of sentiment. His conceptions are apparently delivered to us in the order in which they arose in his own mind, and are not the product of artificial reasoning or laboured investigations.

His leading design is, "to demonstrate the vanity of faith separate from morality; to soothe and refine the warm and over-zealous tempers of the Christians to whom he writes, into that amiable charity and love, for which he himself was so eminent and illustrious; and to guard and arm them against the snares and efforts of *antichrist*, the grand apostate and seducer, and of all who were endued with his spirit."

GOSPEL.

Chap. i. 1, In the beginning was the Word.—Verse 14, And, *εθεαααμεθα*, we beheld his glory.—Verse 4, In him was life.

Chap. xv. 4, Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, &c., no more can ye except ye abide in me.

Chap. xiii. 34, A new commandment I give unto you That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Chap. xi. 10, If a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

Chap. viii. 44, Ye are of your father the devil; he was a murderer from the beginning.

Chap. iii. 16, God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth, &c., might have everlasting life.

Chap. i. 18, No man hath seen God at any time.

Chap. xx. 3, These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, &c., and that believing ye might have life through his name.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL
OF
JOHN.

CHAPTER I.

Here, (1,) The apostle bears testimony to Jesus as the Word of life, which, as manifested in the flesh, they had heard, seen, and handled; and thereby shows the firm ground on which his preaching and writing, and the faith of believers, were built, 1-4. (2,) Represents the necessity of holiness, in order to fellowship with God and Christ, 5, 6. (3,) Bears witness to the guilt and depravity of mankind, and represents pardon and sanctification as blessings necessary, and provided for them through the blood of Christ, and ensured to all the truly penitent, by the mercy and faithfulness of God, 7-10.

A. M. 4094. **THAT** * a which was from the be-
A. D. 90. ginning, which we have heard,
which we have seen with our eyes, b which we
have looked upon, and c our hands have han-
dled, of the Word of life;

2 (For d the life e was manifested, A. M. 4094.
and we have seen it, f and bear A. D. 90.
witness, g and show unto you that eternal life
h which was with the Father, and was mani-
fested unto us;)

* St. John Evangelist's Day, epistle, verse 1 to the end.
a John i. 1; Chap. ii. 13.—b John i. 14; 2 Pet. i. 16; Chap.
iv. 14.—c Luke xxiv. 39; John xx. 27.

d John i. 4; xi. 25; xiv. 6.—e Rom. xvi. 26; 1 Tim. iii. 16;
Chap. iii. 5.—f John xxi. 24; Acts ii. 32.—g Chap. v. 20.
h John i. 1, 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *That which was*—That is, as the expression here means, *the word which was*, namely, with the Father, (verse 2,) before he was manifested; *from the beginning*—This phrase sometimes means the beginning of the gospel dispensation, as chap. ii. 7, 8, and is thus interpreted here by Whitby, Doddridge, and Macknight. But if the apostle be speaking, as the context seems to show he is, of the *eternal Word*, the Son of God, he could not mean to tell us merely that he existed from the beginning of the gospel, for who needed to be informed of that? since it was well known by all professing Christians, that, even as to his human nature, he had existed near thirty years before the gospel dispensation was in any degree opened by the ministry of his forerunner, John the Baptist. The expression, *from the beginning*, here seems to be equivalent with *in the beginning*, (John i. 1,) and therefore to mean from the beginning of time, or rather, from eternity; *that which we*—The apostles; *have heard*—Most credibly attested by authentic witnesses; nay, have heard discoursing to us times innumerable; *which we have seen with our eyes*—And that not only daily, for three years before his crucifixion, but repeatedly after his resurrection from the dead; *which we have looked upon*—Ἐθεασαμεθα, *have contemplated*; the word is different from that rendered *we have seen*, in the former clause; and denotes their beholding him attentively, and considering maturely and diligently his person and conduct, his words and actions,

his doctrine, sufferings, and miracles, and all the other particulars by which he manifested the reality and extraordinary nature of his life in the flesh. *And our hands have handled, &c.*—Here the apostle seems chiefly to allude to what Christ said to his disciples when he appeared to them after his resurrection, and said, *Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*, Luke xxiv. 39. On many other occasions, however, the disciples had an opportunity of handling their Master, and knowing that he had a real body. For example, when he washed their feet; when he took Peter by the hand to prevent him from sinking as he walked on the water; when the disciples gave him the loaves and fishes, and when he, after multiplying them, put them into their hands to be distributed to the multitude. John, in particular, had an opportunity of feeling Christ's body when he leaned on his bosom during the last passover supper, John xiii. 23. *Of the Word of life*—He is termed the *Word*, John i. 1, the *Life*, John i. 4, as he is the living word of God, who with the Father and the Spirit, is the fountain of life to all creatures, particularly of spiritual and eternal life.

Verse 2. *For the life*—The living Word; *was manifested*—In the flesh to our very senses; *and we have seen it*—In its full evidence; *and bear witness*—Testify by declaring, by preaching, and writing, verses 3, 4. Preaching lays the foundation, writing builds thereon: *and show unto you*—Who have not seen; *the eternal life*—The eternal Word and Soa

A. M. 4094. 3 ¹ That which we have seen and
A. D. 90. heard declare we unto you, that ye
also may have fellowship with us: and truly
² our fellowship is with the Father, and with
his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, ¹ that
your joy may be full.

5 ² This then is the message which we have
heard of him, and declare unto you, that ³ God

¹ Acts iv. 20.—² John xvii. 11; 2 Cor. i. 9; Chap. ii. 24.
³ John xv. 11; xvi. 24; 2 John 12.—⁴ Chap. iii. 11.—⁵ John
i. 9; viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 35, 36.

of God, who lives himself for ever, and is the author
of eternal life to us, John x. 28; Heb. v. 9; *which
was with the Father*—John i. 1, 2; in his bosom,
John i. 18; of the same nature and essence with
himself, and was with him from eternity; and *was
manifested to us*—With all the genuine characters
of the Son of God and the promised Messiah. That
the apostle speaks of his eternity *a parte ante*, (as
they say,) and as from everlasting, is evident, in that
he speaks of him as he was in and from the begin-
ning; when he was with the Father, before his
manifestation to us; yea, before the making of all
things that were made, as John i. 2, 3. So that he is
the eternal, vital, intellectual Word and Son of the
eternal, living Father. Now here was condescension
and kindness indeed! that a person possessed of
eternal, essential life, should put on flesh and blood,
or the entire human nature; should assume infirm-
ity, affliction, and mortality, in order to visit sinful
mortals, to dwell among and converse with them;
to reveal to them, procure for them, and then confer
on them, eternal life; even felicity and glory un-
speakable with himself for ever!

Verses 3, 4. *That which we have seen*—Him, I
say, of whom we have such infallible knowledge, or
that which we have seen and heard from him and of
him; *declare we to you*—For this end; *that ye also
may have fellowship with us*—May enjoy the same
fellowship which we enjoy; or, in other words, that,
being fully satisfied and firmly persuaded of the
truth of our testimony, and laying hold on him by
a lively faith, you may have fellowship with God and
with Christ, such as we apostles, and other faithful
Christians have, and may partake with us of the
benefits and privileges we enjoy thereby. *And truly
our fellowship*—Whereby he is in us, and we in
him; *is with the Father*—We are savingly acquaint-
ed with, have access to, and intercourse with, the
Father, and partake of all those blessings which God
the Father has promised to those that are in cove-
nant with him; *and with his Son Jesus Christ*—
And we partake also of all those privileges Christ
has purchased for his members, namely, pardon, re-
conciliation, the divine favour, adoption into God's
family, the Spirit of adoption sent into our hearts,
regeneration, sanctification, a lively, joyful hope of
the heavenly inheritance, and an earnest of that in-
heritance by his Spirit dwelling in us, whereby we
sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. *And these*

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is light, and in him is no darkness at A. M. 4094.
all. A. D. 90.

6 ^o If we say that we have fellowship with him,
and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the
truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the
light, we have fellowship one with another, and
^p the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us
from all sin.

^o 2 Corinthians vi. 14; Chapter ii. 4.—^p 1 Corinthians vi.
11; Eph. i. 7; Hebrews ix. 14; 1 Peter i. 19; Chapter ii. 2;
Rev. i. 5.

things write we unto you—We not only declare them
in word, which might soon escape from your re-
membrance, but we put them down in writing, that
you may frequently peruse and consider them; *that
your joy may be full*—So our Lord also, John xv. 11;
xvi. 22; that is, to confirm you in the faith, and di-
rect you into that way, wherein you may have an
abundant source of comfort. There is a joy of faith,
a joy of hope, and a joy of love. Here the joy of
faith is chiefly intended: and the expression, *your
joy*, chiefly means your faith, and the joy arising
from it. It likewise, however, implies the joy of
hope, and the joy of love.

Verses 5-7. *This then is the message*—That is,
one part of it; *which we have heard of him*—The
Son of God; *that God is light*—The light of truth,
wisdom, holiness, glory. What light is to the nat-
ural eye, that God is to the spiritual eye; *and in
him is no darkness at all*—Not the least mixture of
ignorance or error, of folly, sin, or misery; *if we
say*—Either with our tongue, or in our heart; if we
endeavour to persuade ourselves and others, that
we have fellowship with him—If we pretend to, or
make a profession of it; *and walk in darkness*—
Live in a state of ignorance, error, folly, or sin,
which things are as contrary to his wise and holy
nature, as darkness is to that of light, whatever pro-
fessions we may make of our acquaintance with
Christianity, and of being zealous for its interests;
we lie, and do not the truth—Our conduct shows
that our professions are false, and that the truth is
not in us. *But if we walk in the light*—In the way
of truth, knowledge, and holiness; *as he is* (a deep-
er word than *walk*, and more worthy of God) *in the
light*—Is essentially and perfectly wise and holy,
then we may truly say, *we have fellowship one with
another*—God with us, and we with him; for that is
the fellowship the apostle is speaking of verse 6,
namely, fellowship or intercourse between the head
and the members of the community: a fellowship
which consists in the Father's bestowing blessings
on us through the mediation of Christ, and in our
receiving these blessings from the Father and the
Son with thankfulness. As if the apostle had said,
We who have seen, and you who have not seen, do
alike enjoy that fellowship with God and Christ, the
imitation of God being the only sure proof of our
having fellowship with him. *And the blood of Jesus
Christ his Son*—With the grace purchased thereby;

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A. M. 4094. 8 ^a If we say that we have no sin,
A. D. 90. we deceive ourselves, ^r and the truth
is not in us.

9 ^a If we confess our sins, he is faithful and

^r 1 Kings viii. 46; 2 Chron. vi. 36; Job ix. 2; xv. 14; xxv. 4; Prov. xx. 9; Eccles. vii. 20; James iii. 2.

cleanseth us from all sin—Taketh away all the guilt, and therewith all the power of sin, both original and actual. There is also a cleansing from all sin in a higher sense, even from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, (see 2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. v. 25, 26; Col. i. 22; Tit. ii. 14,) from whatever is contrary to the mind of Christ and the image of God, which may be experienced in the present life, by the blood of Christ, who, having died to procure for us the influences of the Spirit for fully sanctifying our nature, may be truly said to cleanse us from all sin by his blood. Of this cleansing, however, the apostle does not speak directly in this verse, but he speaks of it verse 9.

Verses 8-10. *If we say*—Before Christ's blood has cleansed us; *that we have no sin*—To be cleansed from; or if, even after we have experienced the cleansing virtue of his blood, and are acquitted through the merit of it from all past guilt, and saved from all evil tempers, words, and works; if, even after this, after we are both justified, regenerated, and sanctified, we say *we have no sin*, but are perfectly sinless, and that our spirit and conduct can bear the scrutiny of God's holiness and justice, as exhibited in his spiritual and holy law; *we deceive ourselves*—And that in a very capital point; *and the*

just to forgive us *our sins*, and to A. M. 4094.
^a cleanse us from all unrighteousness. A. D. 90.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

^r Chap. ii. 4.—^a Psa. xxxiii. 5; Prov. xxviii. 13.—^c Verse 7; Psa. li. 2.

truth is not in us—Neither in our mouth nor in our heart; we must be destitute even of that self-knowledge which, in the nature of things, must necessarily precede every other branch of experimental and practical religion. *If we confess our sins*—With penitent and believing hearts; *he is faithful*—Having promised this blessing by the unanimous voice of all his prophets; *and just*—Surely then he will punish: no; for this very reason he will pardon. This may seem strange, but, upon the evangelical principle of atonement and redemption, it is undoubtedly true. Because when the debt is paid, or the purchase made, it is the part of equity to cancel the bond, and consign over the purchased possession; both *to forgive our sins*—To take away all the guilt of them, and to give us peace with himself, and peace of conscience; *and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*—From all iniquity of heart and life, and to purify our souls from all vile affections and unholy dispositions, from every thing contrary to the pure and perfect love of God. Yet still we are to retain, even to our lives' end, a deep sense of our past sins: still, *if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar*—Who saith, *all have sinned*; *and his word is not in us*—We give it no place in our hearts.

CHAPTER II.

(1.) *He points believers to the intercession and atonement of Christ for help against despondency, and peace and comfort in case of any relapse into sin, 1, 2.* (2.) *He testifies that all saving knowledge of Christ and union with him produce holy obedience to God's law, and love to his people, 3-11.* (3.) *After addressing Christians in their different characters, as little children, young men, and fathers, he warns them all against an inordinate love to the world, and against antichristian errors, 12-23.* (4.) *He encourages them to stand fast in the faith and holiness of the gospel, according to the light and influence of the Holy Ghost, 24-29.*

A. M. 4094. **M**Y little children, these things
A. D. 90. write I unto you, that ye sin
not. And if any man sin, ^a we have an advocate

^a Rom. viii. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *My little children*—So the apostle frequently addresses the whole body of Christians, and so our Lord himself addressed his disciples, John xiii. 33. It is a tender and affectionate appellation, denoting paternal authority, love, and concern, which, in the character of an apostle, St. John might have used in any period of his life; but as used in this epistle, it seems to imply, together with apostolical authority, the apostle's advanced age. It is a

with the Father, Jesus Christ the A. M. 4094.
righteous: A. D. 90.

2 And ^b he is the propitiation for our sins:

^b Rom. iii. 25; 2 Cor. v. 18; Chap. i. 7; iv. 10.

different word from that which is translated *little children*, in several parts of the epistle, to distinguish it from which, it may here be rendered *beloved children*. *These things write I unto you, that ye sin not*—Thus he guards them beforehand against abusing the doctrine of reconciliation. All the words, institutions, and judgments of God, are levelled against sin, either that it may not be committed, or that it may be abolished. *And if any man sin*—Let him not lie in sin, despairing of help; for *we have an*

A. M. 4094 and not for ours only, but ° also for
A. D. 90. the sins of the whole world.

3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 ^d He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, ° is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But ^f whoso keepeth his word, ^e in him verily is the love of God perfected : ^b hereby know we that we are in him.

6 ⁱ He that saith he abideth in him, ^k ought

^c John i. 29; iv. 42; xi. 51, 52; Chap. iv. 14.—^d Chap. i. 6; iv. 20.—^e Chap. i. 8.—^f John xiv. 21, 23.—^g Chap. iv. 12.—^h Chap. iv. 13.—ⁱ John xv. 4, 5.—^k Matt. xi. 29;

Advocate—We have for our Advocate not a mean person, but Him of whom it was said, *This is my beloved Son*; not a guilty person, who stands in need of pardon for himself; but *Jesus Christ the righteous*—Not a mere petitioner, who relies purely upon liberality, but one that has merited, fully merited, whatever he asks. *And he is the propitiation*—The atoning sacrifice, through the merit of which our sins are pardoned when we repent and believe in him. The word *ἱλασμος*, here rendered *propitiation*, is nowhere found in the New Testament, but in this passage, and chap. iv. 10. But it occurs often in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, where it signifies a *sacrifice of atonement*. Thus, Lev. vi. 6, 7; Num. v. 8, *κριος ἱλασμος*, is a *ram for a sin-offering*. And Ezek. xlv. 27, *προσφέρειν ἱλασμον*, is, *to offer a sin-offering*. “In considering the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin, St. John, like the other apostles, followed his Master, who, in the institution of his supper, directed his disciples to consider it as designed to bring to their remembrance his blood *shed for many for the remission of sins*.” *For our sins*—Who believe; *and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world*—Just as wide as sin extends, the propitiation extends also.

Verses 3-6. *Hereby we do know that we, truly and savingly, know him*—As he is the Advocate, the righteous One, the Propitiation; *if we keep his commandments*—Particularly those of faith and love. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar*—“The Nicolaitans and Gnostics, notwithstanding they lived in an habitual course of the most criminal sensual indulgences, boasted that they were the objects of God's love, and sure of obtaining eternal life, merely because they possessed the knowledge of the true God, and of his mercy in forgiving men's sins. In this boasting the apostle declared them liars, either because they spake what they knew to be false, or at least what was in itself most false.” *But whoso keepeth his word*—Sincerely endeavours to live in obedience to all his commands; *in him verily is the love of God*—Reconciled to us through Christ; *perfected*—Perfectly known, or shows itself to be sincere. See on chap. iv. 12. *Hereby*—By our keeping his word; *know we that*

b

himself also so to walk, even as he ^{A. M. 4094.}
^{A. D. 90.} walked.

7 Brethren, ^l I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment ^m which ye had from the beginning: The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8 Again, ⁿ a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: ° because the darkness is past, and ^p the true light now shineth.

John xiii. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 21.—^l 2 John 5.—^m Chap. iii. 11; 2 John 5.—ⁿ John xiii. 34; xv. 12.—^o Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 5, 8.—^p John i. 9; viii. 12; xii. 35.

we are in him—Truly united to him by a lively faith, and have communion with him. So is the tree known by its fruits. *To know him, to be in him, to abide in him*, are nearly synonymous terms; only with a gradation; knowledge, communion, constancy. *He that saith he abideth in him*—An expression which implies a durable state; a constant, lasting knowledge of and communion with him; *ought himself*—Otherwise they are vain words; *so to walk, even as he walked*—In the world. *As he* are words that frequently occur in this epistle. Believers, having their hearts full of him, easily supply his name.

Verses 7, 8. *I write no new commandment*—Ministers must avoid all suspicion and affectation of novelty in their doctrine. *But an old commandment*—Concerning holiness of life, and loving one another. *Which ye had from the beginning*—Which was given to your fathers at the first forming of your commonwealth, Lev. xix. 18. *The old commandment is the word*—The doctrine of the gospel also; *which ye have heard from the beginning*—Which was delivered at the first publication thereof, and has been insisted upon ever since, Matt. v. 43; John xv. 12. *Again, a new commandment I write unto you*—Namely, with regard to your loving one another; a commandment which is true *in him and in you*—It was exemplified in him, and is now fulfilled by you, in such a manner as it never was before. “The new commandment,” says Macknight, “of which the apostle speaks, is that contained in verse 6. That Christ's disciples ought to walk even as he walked; and in particular that, as Christ laid down his life for his people, they ought to lay down their lives for one another, chap. iii. 16. Thus, to walk as Christ walked, St. John, with great propriety, termed a *new commandment*, because, notwithstanding the precept to love one another was strongly enjoined in the law of Moses, consequently was not a new commandment, the precept to *love one another as Christ loved us*, was certainly a new commandment, and so is termed by Christ himself, (John xiii. 34,) and is thus explained and inculcated chap. iii. 16: *He laid down his life for us, therefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*.” *Which thing is true*—This translation is exact; for the word

633

A. M. 4094. 9 ^a He that saith he is in the light,
A. D. 90. and hateth his brother, is in darkness
even until now.

10 ^r He that loveth his brother abideth in the
light, and ^s there is none ¹ occasion of stumbling
in him.

11 But he that hateth his brother is in
darkness, and ^t walketh in darkness, and
knoweth not whither he goeth, because

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 2; ² 2 Pet. i. 9; Chap. iii. 14, 15.—³ Chap. iii. 14.
⁴ 2 Pet. i. 10.—⁵ Gr. *scandal*.

ἀληθές, being in the neuter gender, cannot agree with ἐντολή, *commandment*, which is feminine; we must "therefore supply *πράγμα*, (*action* or *thing*,) or some such general word, expressive of the subject of the command. By saying that the thing enjoined in the new commandment was true, concerning the persons to whom the apostle wrote, he perhaps meant that some of them had already hazarded their lives in assisting their brethren." *Because the darkness is past*, &c.—The apostle not only means the darkness of heathenism, but that of the Mosaic dispensation, together with the corrupt doctrines and practices of the Jews under that dispensation; and particularly the impious notion that they were commanded in the law to hate the Gentiles, Matt. v. 43. This darkness was gradually passing away by means of the shining of the light which was true; that is, by the publication of Christ's doctrine and example in the gospel. The Mosaic law, with its obscure types, was likewise ready to vanish, in consequence of the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jewish nation; which events were soon to take place.

Verses 9–11. *He that saith he is in the light*—In Christ; united to him, and truly enlightened by the gospel and the grace of God; and yet *hateth his brother*—(The very name shows the love due to him;) *is in darkness until now*—Void of Christ, and of all true light. *He that loveth his brother*—See chap. iii. 14; *abideth in the light*—Thereby shows that he possesses the saving knowledge of God and of Christ, and that he is truly enlightened with the doctrine of the gospel. *And there is none occasion of stumbling in him*—He walks so as neither to give nor take offence. The apostle alludes here to Christ's words, (John xi. 9,) *If any one walk in the day he doth not stumble*, &c. By expelling ill-will, pride, anger, immoderate selfishness, and all other evil passions, which are occasions of sin, love removes every stumbling-block lying in our way, and enables us to do our duty to our brethren in Christ, or to mankind in general, with ease and pleasure. *But he that hateth his brother*—And he must hate if he does not love him; there is no medium; *is in darkness*—In a state of spiritual blindness, of sin, perplexity, and entanglement. For his malevolence blinds his reason to such a degree that he does not see what is right, and it extinguishes every virtuous inclination which would lead him to practise what is right, and puts him wholly under the power

that darkness hath blinded his eyes. A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90.

12 I write unto you, little children,
because ^u your sins are forgiven you for his
name's sake.

13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have
known him ^x *that is* from the beginning. I
write unto you, young men, because ye have
overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little
children, because ye have known the Father.

¹ John xii. 35.—² Luke xxiv. 47; Acts iv. 12; x. 43; xiii. 38;
Chap. i. 7.—³ Chap. i. 1.

of bad passions; so that, in this darkness, he is in danger not only of stumbling, but of destroying himself; not knowing *whither he goeth*—Whether to heaven or hell, or how near he is to destruction; while he that loves his brother has a free, disencumbered journey.

Verse 12. *I write unto you, little, or beloved, children*—Because this appellation is used (verse 1) to denote Christians of all ages and characters. Beza, and many other critics, suppose that St. John here addresses the whole body of Christ's disciples, as their common instructor, (see on verse 1,) whom he afterward divides into three classes. In support of this opinion, it may be observed, 1st, That the word by which, in the distribution, he expresses young Christians, is *παιδια*, which properly means young children, and not *τεκνια*, which, it seems, should be here rendered *dear, or beloved children*; 2d, That the reason which St. John assigns for writing to those to whom he gives the latter appellation, namely, that their sins were forgiven them, through Christ, is applicable to the whole body of believers; and was a strong reason, for such of them as John addressed, not to love the world, &c.

Verse 13. Here he distributes the whole body of Christians into three classes, according to their different standings in the faith, and their proficiency in Christian knowledge and holiness; namely, *fathers, young men, and young children*. The *fathers* were the most ancient believers, who had made the greatest progress in the knowledge, experience, and practice of true religion. *Young men* were those in the greatest vigour of the spiritual life, and who were considered by the apostle as soldiers fighting under Christ against the powers of darkness. *Little or young children* were the newly converted, who, being under instruction, were called in the first age catechumens. *Fathers, ye have known him that is from the beginning*—You have attained to a more perfect and intimate acquaintance with the Ancient of Days, (Dan. vii. 9,) the eternal God, than others, though true believers, and with Christ, who is from the beginning, chap. i. 1; and therefore you should more diligently keep his commandments, (verses 3, 4,) and this particularly of loving one another. Instead of, *Ye have known him who is from the beginning*, Macknight reads, *Ye have known him from the beginning*, and paraphrases the clause thus: "Old Christians, I write to you what follows, (verse 15,) *because you have known Christ*, his doctrine, and

A. M. 4094. 14 I have written unto you, fathers,
A. D. 90. because ye have known him *that is*
from the beginning. I have written unto you,
young men, because ⁷ ye are strong, and the
word of God abideth in you, and ye have over-
come the wicked one.

15 ^a Love not the world, neither the things
that are in the world. ^a If any man love the

⁷ Eph. vi. 10.—^a Rom. xii. 2.—^a Matt. vi. 24; Gal. i. 10;
James iv. 4.

precepts, and manner of life, *from the beginning*, and must know that what I am going to write is his precept." *I write unto you, young men*—Who are in the flower of your spiritual age, and are strong in grace, *vigorous Christians*, verse 14; *because ye have already overcome the wicked one*—Have resisted his strongest temptations to apostacy; or, more at large, you have manifested your spiritual strength in your conflicts with, and conquests over the devil, and his associates, the world and the flesh; and therefore take heed you be not hereafter foiled by them. *I write the same precept unto you, young children*—Or new converts; of short standing in grace, and of little knowledge, strength and experience in divine things; *because ye have known the Father*—As your Father, (though ye have not yet overcome,) *by the Spirit witnessing with your spirits that you are the children of God*. In other words, As children in the first place learn to know their parents, so you have attained to some saving knowledge of God your heavenly Father, and of his willingness and power to support and strengthen you, and therefore you must take care to conduct yourselves at all times as his loving and obedient children.

Verse 14. *I have written, &c.*—He repeats almost the same words, in order that they might the more regard them. As if he had said, Observe well what I now write. He speaks very briefly and modestly to those who needed not much to be said to them, as having that deep acquaintance with God, which comprises all necessary knowledge; *young men, ye are strong*—In God and his grace, Eph. vi. 10; in faith, hope, love, and in prayer; *and the word of God abideth in you*—Deeply rooted in your hearts, whereby you have often foiled your great adversary. Macknight thus paraphrases the verse: "Old Christians, *I have written to you* to walk even as Christ walked, (verse 6,) by loving your brethren as he loved you, verse 8; *because ye have known him from the beginning*, and have been deeply affected with the knowledge of his love. *Vigorous Christians, I have written the same precept to you*, (verse 8,) *because ye are strong* in all the Christian virtues, *through the word of God abiding in you, and ye have already overcome the devil.*"

Verses 15–17. To you all, whether fathers, young men, or little children, I say, *Love not the world*—

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world, the love of the Father is not in him. A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90.

16 For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, ^b and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And ^o the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

^b Eccles. v. 11.—^o 1 Cor. vii. 31; James i. 10; iv. 14;
1 Pet. i. 24.

Pursue your victory by overcoming the world, and all the temptations which may assault you from it, whether from prosperity or adversity, from riches or poverty, honour or reproach, pleasure or pain, life or death; from the persons of the world, or from the things that are in the world—Whether they assault you through the medium of your senses, or your appetites and passions. *If any man love the world*—Esteem, desire, or pursue it, or any thing in it, inordinately, so as to place his happiness in the enjoyment of it; *the love of the Father is not in him*—There being a real inconsistency between the love of the world and the love of God; between being *carnally minded*, esteeming, desiring, and pursuing immoderately visible and temporal things, which is death, and being *spiritually minded*, having our thoughts and affections set on invisible and heavenly things, *which is life and peace*, Rom. viii. 6. *For all that is in the world*—That is tempting and alluring; *the lust*—*Επιθυμία, the desire; of the flesh*—The pleasure arising from gratifying the outward senses, whether of the taste, smell, or touch, or the bodily appetites; *the desire of the eyes*—Those things, which, being seen by the eyes, are earnestly desired and sought after, and which they take pleasure in beholding, especially riches, including also the pleasures of imagination, (to which the eye chiefly is subservient,) of that internal sense whereby we relish whatever is grand, new, or beautiful; *and the pride of life*—Those things wherein men are wont to take the greatest pride, and which chiefly feed pride of heart; all that pomp in clothes, houses, furniture, equipage, manner of living, things which generally procure honour from the bulk of mankind, and so gratify pride and vanity. It therefore directly includes the desire of praise, and, remotely, covetousness. All these desires are *not of the Father, but of the world*—That is, from the prince of this world, or from that corruption of nature that prevails in worldly men. *And the world passeth away*—Namely, all the enjoyments of the world; *and the desire thereof*—All that appears desirable in it, and causes it to be so much sought after; or all that can gratify the above-mentioned desires, *passeth away* with it; *but he that doeth the will of God*—That loves him, and not the world, and seeks happiness in him, and not in worldly things, *abideth* in the enjoyment of what he loves, and makes the object of his pursuit, for ever.

A. M. 4094. 18 ^d Little children, ^e it is the last
A. D. 90. time: and as ye have heard that ^f antichrist shall come, ^g even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know ^h that it is the last time.

19 ⁱ They went out from us, but they were not

^d John xxi. 5.—^e Heb. i. 2.—^f 2 Thess. ii. 3, &c.; 2 Pet. ii. 1; Chap. iv. 3.—^g Matt. xxiv. 5, 24; 2 John 7.—^h 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1.—ⁱ Deut. xiii. 13; Psa. xli. 9; Acts xx. 30.

Verse 18. *Little, or young, children*—The former caution against the love of the world belongs chiefly to old experienced Christians, or those who have attained some considerable knowledge and experience in divine things, because they are most apt to offend in that particular; this against seducers belongs chiefly to younger Christians, who are less established, and therefore more liable to be seduced. *It is the last time*—Greek, *εσχρη ωρα εστι, it is the last hour*, namely, as some understand it, of the duration of the Jewish Church and state, a sense of the expression which is favoured by the consideration that it was the period in which our Lord had foretold the rise of many false Christs. And therefore the apostle here cautions them against such deceivers, intimating, at the same time, for their encouragement and comfort, that the power of their persecutors, the Jews, would speedily be broken. Doddridge, however, Wesley, and many others, by the *last hour*, or last time, here understand the last dispensation of grace. As if the apostle had said, "The last dispensation that God will ever give to the world is now promulgated, and it is no wonder if Satan endeavour, to the utmost, to adulterate a system from which his kingdom has so much to fear." *And as ye have heard that antichrist shall come*—*Ερχεται, cometh*. "The word *αντιχριστος, antichrist*, is nowhere found but in John's first and second epistle. It may have two meanings. For if the preposition *anti*, in *αντιχριστος*, denotes *in place of*, the name will signify one who puts himself in the place of Christ: consequently *antichrist* is a false Christ. But if the preposition denotes *opposition*, *antichrist* is one who opposeth Christ. The persons to whom this epistle was written had heard of the coming of *antichrist* in both senses of the name. For the first sort of antichrists were foretold by our Lord, Matt. xxiv. 5: *Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many*. The second sort were foretold Matt. xxiv. 11, *Many false prophets will arise and deceive many*. From what John hath written, verse 22 of this chapter, and chap. iv. 3, and 2 Epist. verse 7, there is reason to think that by *antichrist* he meant those false prophets, or teachers, who were foretold by our Lord to rise about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and who were now gone abroad. Some of these denied the humanity of Jesus Christ, others of them denied his divinity; and as both sorts opposed Christ, by denying the redemption of the world through his death, it is probably of them chiefly that John speaks in his epistles. When the apostle mentions these

of us; for ^k if they had been of us, ^l A. M. 4094. they would *no doubt* have continued ^m with us: but *they went out*, ⁿ that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

20 But ^o ye have an unction ^p from the Holy One, and ^q ye know all things.

^k Matt. xxiv. 24; John vi. 37; x. 28, 29; 2 Tim. ii. 19. ^l 1 Cor. xi. 19.—^m 2 Cor. i. 21; Heb. i. 9; Verse 27.—ⁿ Mark i. 24; Acts iii. 14.—^o John x. 4, 5; xiv. 26; xvi. 13; Verse 27.

false teachers collectively, he calls them *the antichrist* in the singular number, as St. Paul called the false teachers collectively, of whom he prophesied, 2 Thess. ii. 3, *the man of sin*. But when John speaks of these teachers as individuals, he calls them *many antichrists*, in the plural number."—Mac-knight. Thus also Mr. Wesley: "Under the term *antichrist*, or the spirit of antichrist, he includes all false teachers as enemies to the truth; yea, whatever doctrines or men are contrary to Christ. It seems to have been long after this that the name of antichrist was appropriated to that grand adversary of Christ, *the man of sin*, 2 Thess. ii. 3." *Even now are there many antichrists*—Many seducers revolted from Christianity, (verse 19,) who were actuated by an antichristian spirit, and do secretly undermine the interest of Christ, and so make way for the grand antichrist. The preterit tense, *γέγονασι*, is here used to signify, not only the existence of many antichrists at that time, but also that there had been many antichrists who had gone off the stage; *whereby we know that it is the last time*—The last hour of the Jewish state, namely, by Christ's prediction, Matt. xxiv. 24.

Verse 19. *They went out from us*—Separated themselves from the communion of the true church of Christ. Hence it is one of the marks of antichrist, that he had been once in the Christian Church, and a teacher by profession, but had left it or apostatized; *but they were not of us*—When they went, their hearts were before departed from God; *for if they had been of us*—Had been inspired by the same spirit wherewith we are inspired; *they would, no doubt, have continued with us*—For upright men, of a pure intention, would never have seen any cause to leave us, and divine grace would have preserved such from being overcome by the temptations of these artful deceivers; *but they went out*—They were permitted to apostatize outwardly; *that they might be made manifest*—See 1 Cor. xi. 19. (This was made manifest by their going out;) *that they were not all of us*—Sound members of our body, really believing the same truths which we believe, and partaking of the same grace which we partake of.

Verse 20. *But ye have an unction*—*Χρισμα, a chrism*, (perhaps so termed in opposition to the name of antichrist,) an inward teaching *from the Holy Ghost*, whereby *ye know all things*—Necessary for your preservation from these seducers, and for your eternal salvation. There seems to be no proof that the apostle here, as some suppose, was address-

A. M. 4094. 21 I have not written unto you
A. D. 90. because ye know not the truth, but
because ye know it, and that no lie is of the
truth.

22 ^p Who is a liar but he that denieth that
Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth
the Father and the Son.

23 ^a Whosoever denieth the Son, the same
hath not the Father: [*but he that acknow-*

^p Chap. iv. 3; 2 John 7.—^a John xv. 23; 2 John 9.—^r John
xiv. 7, 9, 10; Chap. iv. 15.

ing those of the primitive Christians only who were
endowed with extraordinary gifts, especially the gift
of discerning spirits. It rather appears, that through
the whole epistle he is addressing true Christians in
general, that is, divinely illuminated, justified, and
regenerated persons, all of whom are represent-
ed in this very epistle as *dwelling in God, and
God in them*, and as *knowing that he dwelt in them
by the Spirit which he had given them*, chap. iii. 24;
v. 16; which is perfectly agreeable to the doctrine
of the other apostles, particularly of St. Paul, who
represents believers in general as *the temple of God,
having the Spirit of God dwelling in them*, 1 Cor.
iii. 16; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. ii. 22: and who
declares positively, that *if any man have not the
Spirit of Christ he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9; and
that only they *who are led by the Spirit of God are
the sons of God*, Rom. viii. 14. Now, this Spirit,
which all true believers possess, at least in his ordi-
nary graces, as a Spirit of light and life, of love,
peace, and joy, of holiness and happiness, is a Spirit
of truth as well of grace, and leads those on whom
he is conferred into at least all essential truth, all the
grand leading doctrines of the gospel, which would
sufficiently secure those to whom the apostle wrote
against the seducing teachers, the antichrists here
referred to.

Verses 21–23. *I have not written unto you*—In the
manner I have done; *because ye know not the truth*
—In which case I must have entered largely into
the discussion of this matter; *but*, on the contrary, I
have contented myself with these short intimations;
because ye know it—Approve of and embrace it, and
I am desirous to confirm you in the knowledge of it;
and *because no lie is of the truth*—No false doc-
trine can proceed from, or agree with, that gospel
which you have embraced; in other words, that all
the doctrines of these antichrists are irreconcilable
to it. Or perhaps the doctrine, contrary to that
which was taught by the apostles, may be called a
lie, because the teachers who propagated such doc-
trines knew them to be false, especially the doc-
trines which they propagated concerning the person
and actions of Christ. They, therefore, in particu-
lar are called *ο ψευδης*, the liar, as in the next clause.
Who is the liar—The false teacher foretold to come
before the destruction of Jerusalem; *but he that denieth
that Jesus is the Christ*—Who is guilty of that
lying but he who denies the truth which is the sum

ledgeth the Son hath the Father A. M. 4094
also. A. D. 90.

24 Let that therefore abide in you, ^a which ye
have heard from the beginning. If that which
ye have heard from the beginning shall remain
in you, ^t ye also shall continue in the Son, and
in the Father.

25 ^u And this is the promise that he hath pro-
mised us, *even eternal life.*

² John 6.—^t John xiv. 23; Chap. i. 3.—^u John xvii. 3;
Chap. i. 2; v. 11.

of all Christianity? That Jesus is the Christ, that
he is the Son of God, that he came in the flesh, is
one undivided truth; and he that denies one part, in
effect denies the whole. *He is antichrist*—He de-
servedly bears that name; *that denieth the Father
and the Son*—Denies God to be the Father of Christ,
by denying Christ to be his Son. Or who, in de-
nying the Son, denies the Father also. He denies
the Son directly, and by consequence denies the
Father, who testified by a voice from heaven that
Jesus was his Son, and by all the miracles which
Christ wrought. *Whosoever denieth the Son*—Even
the only-begotten and eternal Son of God, either in
his person, his natures, offices, or merits. *The
same hath not the Father*—Has no interest in him
as his Father, since that is obtained only through
Christ; and, consequently, he hath not communion
with the Father. *But he that truly and believingly
acknowledgeth the Son, hath communion with the
Father also*—The last clause of this verse, in our
English Bible, is printed in italic letters, to show
that it is not in the common Greek copies. Beza,
however, hath inserted it in his edition of the Greek
Testament, on the authority of some ancient MSS.,
and of the Syriac and Vulgate versions. Mill also,
on this verse, mentions a number of MSS. which
have this clause. Estius reckoned it genuine, as did
Doddridge, who says, "It is to be found in so many
good MSS. that I cannot but believe it made a part
of the original, by whatever accident it was omitted
in some early copy, to which, as it seems, too much
regard has been paid."

Verses 24, 25. *Let that therefore abide in you*—
Namely, that doctrine concerning the Father and
the Son; *which ye have heard from the beginning*
—Of the preaching of the gospel: retain a firm be-
lief of it, and let your minds be so impressed with a
sense of its certain truth and infinite importance,
that it may have the desired influence on your spirit
and conduct. *If that which ye have heard, &c.,
shall remain fixed and rooted in you*—If you per-
severe in the faith of the gospel, and show that you
do so by your life and conversation; *ye also shall
continue in the Son and in the Father*—Genuine
members of Christ's mystical body, and conse-
quently in the love of God, and in communion with
him. And, to encourage you in this, remember the
promise, *that he, the Son, hath made to us, if we
abide in him, even eternal life.*

A. M. 4094. 26 These things have I written
A. D. 90. unto you ^r concerning them that se-
duce you.

27 But ^r the anointing which ye have re-
ceived of him abideth in you, and ^r ye need
not that any man teach you: but as the same
anointing ^r teacheth you of all things, and
is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath

^r Chap. iii. 7; 2 John 7.—^r Verse 20.—^r Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Heb. viii. 10, 11.—^r John xiv. 26; xvi. 13; Verse 20.

Verses 26, 27. *These things*—From verse 21; *have I written unto you*—St. John, according to his custom, begins and ends with the same form, and having finished a kind of parenthesis, (verses 21–26,) continues (verse 27) what he said verse 20; *concerning them that would seduce you*—That is, I say it to arm you against the solicitations of those who endeavour to draw you from the truth and grace of the gospel; from the experience and practice of real Christianity. *But the anointing*—The spirit of illumination; *which ye have received of him*—Who hath given you the promise of eternal life; *abideth in you*—Continually and powerfully; and—in consequence thereof; *ye need not that any man teach you*—Namely, the principles of Christ's religion, and things necessary to salvation; (see on Jer. xxxi. 34; Heb. viii. 11;) *but as the same anointing teacheth you*—Which is always the same, always consistent with itself. See on verse 20. But this does not exclude men's need of being taught by them that partake of the same anointing, much less their need of being put in remembrance of the things they already know, and being confirmed therein. *Teacheth you of all things*—Which it is necessary for you to know; *and is truth*—Certain and infallible; *and is no lie*—Like that which antichrist teaches. *And as it*—The truth I speak of; *hath taught you, ye shall abide in him*—In Christ, and in

taught you, ye shall abide in ^r him. A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90.

28 And now, little children, abide in
him; that ^b when he shall appear, we may have
confidence, ^c and not be ashamed before him at
his coming.

29 ^d If ye know that he is righteous, ^e ye know
that ^e every one that doeth righteousness is born
of him.

^r Or, it.—^b Chap. iii. 2.—^c Chap. iv. 17.—^d Acts xxiii. 14.
^e Or, know ye.—^e Chap. iii. 7, 10.

the belief and profession of his truth. The whole discourse, from verse 18 to this, is peculiarly adapted to young Christians, whom he terms *little children*.

Verses 28, 29. *And now, little*—Or rather, *beloved, children*, (for, having finished his address to each, he now returns to all in general,) *abide in him*—Maintain your union with and interest in him, by living a life of faith, love, and new obedience; of prayer, watchfulness, and self-denial; *that when he shall appear*—As he assuredly will, in his own glory and in that of his Father, with all his holy angels; *we may have confidence*, (a modest expression,) *and not be ashamed before him at his coming*—And put to confusion. O how will you, ye Jews, Deists, and nominal Christians, and especially ye apostates from the faith, and all who, having begun in the Spirit, end in the flesh, be ashamed before him in that day! But how certainly may all, who approve their fidelity to him, expect from his mercy and love a gracious reception, and an abundant reward! *If ye know*—That is, as certainly as you know; *that he is righteous*, so surely *ye know* also *that every one*—And none else; *that doeth*—That practiseth; *righteousness*—From a believing, loving heart; *is born of him*—Is regenerated and made a new creature by the power of God's Spirit, (John i. 13,) and so is made like him by partaking of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. For all his children are like himself.

CHAPTER III.

The apostle here, (1.) Extols the love of God in making believers his children, and sets forth their high dignity and glorious expectations, 1, 2. (2.) He shows that all saving hope of eternal glory, union with Christ, and regeneration by his Spirit, infallibly promote holiness, and victory over sin, 3–10. (3.) He represents love to the brethren as a distinguishing mark and characteristic of the children of God, and shows how that love must be proved to be sincere, 11–21. (4.) Mentions some of the blessed effects of faith, love, and obedience, 22–24.

A. M. 4094. BEHOLD ^a what manner of love
A. D. 90. the Father hath bestowed upon
us, that ^a we should be called the sons

of God! therefore the world know- A. M. 4094.
eth us not, ^b because it knew him A. D. 90.
not.

^a Sixth Sunday after Epiphany, epistle, verse 1 to verse 9.

^a John i. 12.—^b John xv. 18, 19; xvi. 3; xvii. 25.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. The apostle, in the last verse of the preceding chapter, having declared that every one who

worketh righteousness is born of God, begins the chapter with an exclamation expressive of his high admiration of the love of God in calling them his

A. M. 4094. 2 Beloved, now are ° we the
A. D. 90. sons of God, and ° it doth not yet
appear what we shall be : but we know
that, when he shall appear, ° we shall be

° Isa. lvi. 5; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iii. 26; iv. 6; Chap. v. 1.
° Rom. viii. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 17.—° Rom. viii. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 49;

children, although they are not acknowledged to be such by the men of the world, because carnal men have no just notion of the character of God. *Behold what manner*—The word *καταρν*, thus rendered, signifies both *how great*, and *what kind*; of love—Love immensa, condescending, and kind, compassionate, forgiving, patient, forbearing, sanctifying, comforting, enriching, exalting, and beautifying, *the Father*—Of universal nature, of men and angels, and of our Lord Jesus Christ; *hath bestowed on us*—Fallen and depraved creatures, sinful, guilty, and dying; *that we should be called sons*, (*τεκνα*, children,) of God—Should be accounted, acknowledged, and treated by him as such; should be brought so near, and rendered so dear to him; should have free access to him, as children to a father, and be taken under his peculiar direction, protection, and care, and constituted his *heirs*, and *joint-heirs* with his only-begotten and beloved Son: and all this on the easy condition of turning to him, in repentance, faith, and new obedience. *Therefore the world*—The carnal and worldly part of mankind; *knoweth us not*—Is not acquainted with our true character, our principles and practices, our disposition and behaviour, our present privileges and future expectations; and therefore does not acknowledge us for what we really are, nor esteem and love us, but hates and persecutes us; *because it knew him not*—God's eternal and only-begotten Son, through whom we have received the adoption, but accounted him a sinner, an impostor, and a blasphemer, and crucified him as such. As if he had said, Since the enmity of carnal men against the divine will, and the divine nature, is so great that Christ himself, *the image of the invisible God*, inhabited by the fulness of the Deity, was unknown and hated when he dwelt in the flesh, it is no wonder that we are hated also in those respects in which we resemble him. Nevertheless,

Verse 2. *Beloved*—It is a most certain and joyful truth, that *now are we*, who believe on God's Son with our heart unto righteousness; *the children of God*—And, persevering in that faith, we shall be acknowledged as such before men and angels in the day of final accounts; a truth which draws after it a long train of glorious consequences. For the happy condition we shall be in hereafter exceeds all that we can now conceive; *and it doth not yet appear*—Even to ourselves, though supernaturally enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation; *what we shall be*—How pure and holy, intelligent and wise in our souls, how spiritual and glorious in our bodies, how exalted in dignity, how great in power, how rich in inheritance, how happy in enjoyments! *But we know*—In the general, on the testimony of him who cannot lie; *that when he*—The Son of God; *shall appear, we shall be like him*

like him; for ° we shall see him as A. M. 4094.
he is. A. D. 90.

3 ° And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Phil. iii. 21; Col. iii. 4; 2 Pet. i. 4.—° Job xix. 26; Psa. xvi. 11; Matt. v. 8; 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 7.—° Chap. iv. 17.

—In all these respects; our souls perfectly conformed to his wise and holy soul, our bodies to his immortal and glorious body, and that we shall share with him in his felicity, honour, and riches, world without end. *For we shall see him as he is*—Which it would be impossible we should do if we were not like him. Or rather, as perhaps the apostle chiefly means, the great privilege being granted us, of seeing him as he is, the sight of him will transform us into his likeness. "The sight of God," [in Christ,] as Archbishop Tillotson proves at large, (see his works, vol. iii. p. 194,) "is put to express the knowledge and enjoyment of him, because of its excellence and dignity, its largeness and comprehension, its spirituality and quickness, its evidence and certainty." The apostle alludes to Christ's words, which he has recorded in his gospel, (John xvii. 24.) *Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me*: and therefore is speaking, not of a transient, but of an abiding sight of Christ, as is plain, because only such a view of him could be a reason for our being like him. And since we are to live with him for ever, our bodies must be fashioned like to his body, corruptible bodies not being capable, in the nature of things, of inheriting the kingdom of God. And with respect to our minds, the *seeing of Christ as he is* cannot be supposed effectual to make us like him, unless it be an abiding sight; which, by exciting in us an admiration of his glories, esteem for his excellences, gratitude for his goodness, love to his person, delight in his will, with all wise, holy, and happy affections, will assuredly produce that happy effect. At the day of judgment, it is probable that the wicked will have a transient sight of Christ *as he is*, but will not thereby be made like him, in body or mind.

Verse 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him*—An expectation of seeing Christ as he is, built on a solid foundation, namely, the foundation of being a child and heir of God; *purifieth himself*—By applying to, and confiding in, the purifying blood of Christ, with a penitent, believing heart; by earnestly praying for and receiving the purifying Spirit of God; by obeying the purifying word, (1 Pet. i. 22,) and by exercising purifying faith in the truths and promises of the gospel, Acts xv. 9: *even as he is pure*—The person who is inspired with this well-grounded hope, will keep before his eyes the pure and holy character of Christ, as the *mark* to which he is to *press*, that he may be prepared to receive the *prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus*, (Phil. iii. 14,) it being God's will and pleasure that believers should be conformed to the image of his Son, in order to their having the high honour and great happiness of dwelling with him, Rom. viii. 29;

A. M. 4094. 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for ^h sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know ⁱ that he was manifested ^h to take away our sins; and ^l in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: ^m whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7 Little children, ⁿ let no man deceive you:

^h Rom. iv. 15; Chap. v. 17.—ⁱ Chap. i. 2.—^h Isa. liiii. 5, 6, 11; 1 Tim. i. 15; Heb. i. 3; ix. 26.—^l 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 22.—^m Chap. ii. 4; iv. 8; 3 John 11.—ⁿ Chap. ii. 26.

and that they should not expect to enjoy the privilege of sitting down at the marriage-feast, unless they had previously put on the wedding-garment. Mark this, reader: and give up all hope of being admitted into heaven hereafter, without a conformity to Christ in holiness here.

Verses 4, 5. The truth asserted in the preceding verse is so important, and the apostle knew so well that carnal men would be prone to flatter themselves that they might be admitted into heaven after they die, without being holy while they live, that he here enlarges on the important subject. *Whosoever committeth sin*—That is, as the apostle here means, known sin, whether by doing actions which God hath forbidden, or by omitting duties which he hath enjoined, or by uttering words which are false, profane, slanderous, malicious, passionate, or trifling and foolish; or by indulging tempers contrary to those of Christ; *transgresseth also the law*—The holy, just, and good law of God, and so sets his authority at naught; *for sin is the transgression of the law*—Which is implied in the very nature of sin. The apostle's meaning is, That no one should think lightly of his sins, because every sin, even the least, being a violation of the law of God, if not repented of and pardoned, through faith in Christ, will most certainly be punished. *And ye know that he, Christ, was manifested*—That he came into the world for this very purpose; *to take away*—The guilt, power, and pollution of *our sins*—By his atoning sacrifice, and the sanctifying influences of his word and Spirit; *and in him is no sin*—So that he could not suffer on his own account, but to expiate our sins, and to make us like himself.

Verse 6. *Whosoever abideth in union and fellowship with him*—By loving faith; *sinneth not*—Doth not commit known sin, while he so abideth: *whosoever sinneth*—Transgresseth any known law of God; *hath not seen him, neither known him*—His views and knowledge of him have been so superficial that they deserve not to be mentioned, since they have not conquered his love of sin, and the prevalence of it, and brought him to a holy temper and life. Or he has not attained to, or has not retained, a spiritual, experimental acquaintance and communion with him. For, certainly, when a person sins, or transgresseth any known law of God, the loving eye of his soul is not fixed upon God; neither doth he then experimentally know him, whatever he did in time

^o he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. A. M. 4094. A. D. 99.

8 ^p He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, ^q that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 ^r Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for ^s his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

^o Ezek. xviii. 5-9; Rom. ii. 13; Chap. ii. 29.—^q Matt. xiii. 38; John viii. 44.—^r Gen. iii. 15; Luke x. 18; John xvi. 11; Heb. ii. 14.—^s Chap. v. 18.—^t 1 Pet. i. 23.

past. Macknight thinks it probable that "some of the heretical teachers, condemned by the apostle in this epistle, to make their disciples believe that their opinions were derived from Christ, boasted their having seen and conversed with him during his ministry on earth, consequently that they knew his doctrine perfectly. But the apostle assured his children that, if these teachers, who avowedly continued in sin, had ever seen or conversed with Christ, they had utterly mistaken both his character and his doctrine."

Verses 7-10. *Little, or beloved children, let no man deceive you*—In this important matter, by vain words, however serious and plausible they may seem to be. For a being, himself immutably holy, can never dispense with the want of holiness in his intelligent creatures. The apostle's words imply, that some pretenders to inspiration had endeavoured to deceive the brethren, by teaching what the apostle here condemns. And as it is a solemn address of the apostle to the disciples, it shows the importance of the matter which it introduces. *He that uniformly doeth, or practiseth, righteousness, in all the known branches of it, is righteous, even as, or because, he, Christ, is righteous*—He is righteous after Christ's example. The apostle speaks of that practical righteousness which is consequent on justification and regeneration, when, being created anew in Christ Jesus, (Eph. ii. 10,) we have both inclination and power to maintain an unblameable conduct, and all good works. *He that committeth sin*—That knowingly transgresses God's law, is a child, not of God, but of the devil; *for the devil sinneth*—That is, hath sinned; *from the beginning*—Was the first sinner in the universe, and has continued to sin ever since. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested*—In our flesh, lived, and died, and rose again for us; *that he might destroy the works of the devil*—Namely, all error, sin, and misery. And will he not perform this for, and in, all that trust in him? The word *λυσθαι*, rendered *destroy*, properly means to *dissolve*, or *demolish*, and implies the demolition of that horrible fabric of sin and misery which Satan, with such art, industry, and malice, hath reared in this our world. *Whosoever is born of God*—Is truly regenerated by divine grace, through living faith, and received into the number of God's children; *doth not*—Knowingly and voluntarily; *commit sin; for his seed*—The incorruptible seed of the

A. M. 4094. 10 In this the children of God are
A. D. 90. manifest, and the children of the devil:

whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

¹ Chap. ii. 29.—² Chap. iv. 8.—³ Chap. i. 5; ii. 7.—⁴ Or, commandment.—⁵ John xiii. 34; xv. 12; Verse 23; Chap. iv. 7, 21; 2 John 5.—⁶ Gen. iv. 4, 8; Heb. xi. 4; Jude 11.
^{*} Second Sunday after Trinity, epistle, verse 13 to the end.

word of God, (1 Pet. i. 23; James i. 18,) accompanied with his Spirit, (John iii. 6,) or a divine principle of living, loving, and obedient faith; *remaineth in him*—Implanted in his inmost soul; *and he cannot sin*—It would be contrary to the nature of that divine principle which is implanted in him, that he should sin; that principle having not only manifested to him the infinite evil and destructive consequences of sin, but produced in him a fixed hatred to it, and given him power over it; *because he is born of God*—Is inwardly and universally changed. *In this*—Or by this mark; *the children of God are manifest, &c.*—It manifestly appears, to all who have understanding to judge in spiritual matters, who are the children of God and who are not, namely, by their committing or not committing known sin. *Whosoever doeth not righteousness*—Does not live a holy and righteous life; *is not of God*—Is not one of his true children; *neither he that loveth not his brother*—With such a love as the apostle proceeds to describe and insist upon. Here the apostle passes from the general proposition respecting universal holiness, to a particular branch of it, namely, brotherly love.

Verses 11-14. *For, &c.*—As if he had said, I have just declared that the want of brotherly love is a proof that a man is not of God, and a little consideration may convince you of the truth of the assertion: *for this is the message that ye heard of us*—The apostles and ministers of Christ; *from the beginning*—Of our ministry among you; *that we should love one another*—A doctrine frequently inculcated by our Lord Jesus in person: *not as Cain, (see the margin,) who was of the wicked one*—Who showed he was a child of the devil, by killing his brother. *And wherefore slew he him?*—For any fault? No: but just the reverse; for his goodness. *Because his own works were evil*—In a very high degree; *and his brother's righteous*—And he could not bear that his brother's sacrifice was accepted of God while his own was rejected; a circumstance that, instead of humbling him and bringing him to repentance, as it ought to have done, only excited his envy and hatred, which at length settled into the most rancorous malice, and produced that horrible effect. *Marvel not, &c.*—As if he had said, Since there is a great

b

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

^a John xv. 18, 19; xvii. 14; 2 Tim. iii. 12.—^b Chap. ii. 10.
^c Chap. ii. 9, 11.—^d Matt. v. 21, 22.—^e Gal. v. 21; Rev. xxi. 8.—^f John iii. 16; xv. 13; Rom. v. 8; Eph. v. 2, 25; Chap. iv. 9, 11.

deal of the same malignant temper remaining in the carnal part of mankind, and there are many who are, in that sense, though not by natural descent, of the seed of Cain, marvel not *if the world hate you*—Remembering they lie in the wicked one, and are under his influence. *We know, &c.*—That is, we ourselves could not love our brethren, unless we were passed from spiritual death to spiritual life—That is, unless we were born of God. *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death*—Namely, in spiritual death, and is obnoxious to eternal death. In other words, he is not born of God: and he that is not born of God cannot love his brother. See on chap. iv. 7. Reader, observe this: all mankind, being born in sin, are in a state of spiritual death, and in the way to eternal death, till they are born again; and none are born again who do not truly love both God and his people.

Verse 15. He, I have just said, who loveth not his brother, abideth in death; is void of the life of God: *for whosoever hateth his brother*—And there is no medium between loving and hating him; *is*—In God's account; *a murderer*—Every degree of hatred being a degree of the same temper which moved Cain to murder his brother. *And no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him*—But every loving believer hath. For love is the beginning of eternal life. It is the same in substance with future felicity and glory. The word *αθροποκτονας*, here rendered *murderer*, is by Macknight translated a *manslayer*, who, as he observes, differs from a murderer as manslaughter differs from murder: adding, "The hatred of one's brother may be the occasion, by accident, of putting him to death. For he who indulgeth hatred to his brother, lays himself open to the influence of such passions as may hurry him to slay his brother. So our Lord tells us, in his explication of the precept, *Thou shalt not kill*, Matt. vi. 21. For he mentions causeless anger and provoking speeches as violations of that command, because they are often productive of murder."

Verses 16, 17. *Hereby perceive we the love of God*—The word *God* is not in the original: it seems to be omitted by the apostle just as the name of *Jesus* is omitted by Mary, when she says to the gardener, *Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, &c.*, John xx. 15;

A. M. 4094. 17 But ^s whoso hath this world's
A. D. 90. good, and seeth his brother have need,
and shutteth up his bowels of *compassion* from
him, ^h how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, ⁱ let us not love in word,
neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know ^k that we are of the
truth, and shall ² assure our hearts before him.

20 ¹ For if our heart condemn us, God is
greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 ^m Beloved, if our heart condemn us not,
ⁿ then have we confidence toward God.

^s Deut. xv. 7; Luke iii. 11.—^h Chap. iv. 20.—ⁱ Ezek. xxxiii. 31; Rom. xii. 9; Eph. iv. 15; James ii. 15; 1 Pet. i. 22.
^k John xviii. 37; Chap. i. 8.—² Gr. *persuade*.—¹ 1 Cor. iv. 4.—^m Job xxii. 26.—ⁿ Heb. x. 22; Chap. ii. 28; iv. 17.
^o Psa. xxxiv. 15; cxlv. 18, 19; Prov. xv. 29; Jer. xxix. 12.

in which place there is a very emphatical language, even in silence. It declares how totally her thoughts were possessed by the blessed and glorious subject. It expresses also the superlative dignity and amiableness of the person meant; as though he, and he alone, were, or deserved to be, both known and admired by all. *Because he laid down his life*—Not merely for sinners, but for us in particular. From this truth believed, and salvation received by that faith, the love of Christ, and, in consequence thereof, the love of the brethren, take their rise, which may very justly be admitted as an evidence that our faith is no delusion. *But whoso hath this world's good*—Worldly substance, far less valuable than life; and *seeth his brother have need*—(The very sight of want knocks at the door of the spectator's heart;) and *shutteth up*—Restraineth, whether asked or not; *his bowels of compassion*—Excited, it may be, by the view of misery; *how dwelleth the love of God in him?*—Certainly not at all, however he may talk of it, as the next verse supposes him to do. Thus the apostle having, in the preceding verse, observed, that we know the love of Christ by his laying down his life for us, and that the consideration of his love to us should induce us "so to love him as, at his call, to lay down our lives for the brethren; here tells us, that if, so far from laying down our lives for them, we refuse them, when in need, some part of our worldly goods to support their lives, the love of God can in no sense be said to be in us."

Verses 18-20. *My beloved children, let us not love merely in word or in tongue*—Contenting ourselves with complimentary expressions of regard, or with giving our Christian brethren nothing but fair speeches; *but in deed and in truth*—Let our actions approve the sincerity of our professions, and, by relieving them in their necessities and straits, let us show that we sincerely love them. *And hereby*—*Εν τρω*, in this, by being compassionate, kind, and bountiful, according to our ability; *we know*—We have a satisfactory evidence by this real, operative love; *that we are of the truth*—That we have true faith, and are the genuine disciples of Christ and children of God; *and shall assure our hearts before*

22 And ^o whatsoever we ask, we re- A. M. 4094.
ceive of him, because we keep his com- A. D. 90.
mandments, ^p and do those things that are pleas-
ing in his sight.

23 ^q And this is his commandment; That we
should believe on the name of his Son Jesus
Christ, ^r and love one another, ^s as he gave us
commandment.

24 And ^t he that keepeth his commandments,
^u dwelleth in him, and he in him. And ^v hereby
we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit
which he hath given us.

^p John viii. 29; ix. 31.—^q John vi. 29; xvii. 3.—^r Matt. xxii. 39; John xiii. 34; xv. 12; Eph. v. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 Pet. iv. 8; Chap. iv. 21.—^s Chap. ii. 8, 10.—^t John xiv. 23; xv. 10; Chap. iv. 12.—^u John xvii. 21, &c.—^v Rom. viii. 9; Chap. iv. 13.

him—Shall enjoy an assurance of his favour, and the testimony of a good conscience toward God. The *heart*, in St. John's language, is the *conscience*. The word *conscience* is not used in his writings. *For* if we have not this testimony; if in any thing our *heart*—Our conscience, *condemn us*, much more does God, who is greater than our heart—An infinitely more holy and impartial Judge; and *knoweth all things*—So that there is no hope of hiding it from him.

Verses 21, 22. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not*—If our conscience, duly enlightened by the word and Spirit of God, and comparing all our thoughts, words, and works with that word, pronounce that they agree therewith; *then have we confidence toward God*—Our consciousness of his favour continues, with liberty of access to him, and intercourse with him; and we have this further blessing, that *whatsoever we ask*—According to his will; *we receive of him*—Or shall receive in the time, measure, and manner which he knows will be most for his glory and for our good. This general declaration must be limited by the conditions which in other passages of Scripture are represented as necessary in order to our petitions being granted by God: such as, that we ask things which his word authorizes us to ask, 1 John v. 14, 15; and that we ask them in faith, James i. 6; or in a full persuasion of, and reliance upon, his wisdom, power, and goodness; and with sincerity and resignation. Such prayers they who live in his fear and love, and comply with his will, as far as they know it, walking before him in holiness and righteousness, may expect will be heard and answered.

Verses 23, 24. *And this is his commandment, That we should believe, &c.*—Namely, all his commandments: in one word, *That we should believe and love*—In the manner and degree which he hath taught. This is the greatest and most important command that ever issued from the throne of glory. If this be neglected, no other can be kept; if this be observed, all others are easy. *And he that keepeth his commandments*—That thus believes and loves; *dwelleth*, or abideth *in him*—In Christ Jesus, or in God the Father; and *he*—Christ, or the Father; *in him*—

This seems to be an allusion to our Lord's words, John xiv. 23; *If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* That is, in this way we obtain fellowship with the Father, as well as with the Son; yea, the most intimate acquaintance, friendship, and communion, and are

thereby made unspeakably happy; and hereby we know that he abideth in us—That we have this intimate union and communion with him; by the Spirit which he hath given us—The Spirit of adoption and regeneration, witnessing with our spirits that we are his children, and producing in us love, joy, and peace, holiness and happiness.

CHAPTER IV.

The apostle, (1.) Cautions the Christian converts against being deceived by seducing spirits, and shows how they might distinguish between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error, 1-6. (2.) Enforces brotherly love as the proper characteristic of a sincere Christian, especially from the love of God and Christ toward us, 7-16. (3.) Describes our love to God in its cause, nature, and effects, 17-21.

A. M. 4094. A. D. 90. **BELoved**, ^a believe not every spirit, but ^b try the spirits whether they are of God: because ^c many false prophets are gone out into the world.

^a Jer. xxix. 8; Matt. xxiv. 4.—^b 1 Cor. xiv. 29; 1 Thess. v. 21; Rev. ii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. Because the Gnostics and other heretics, in the first age, to gain the greater credit to their erroneous doctrines, assumed to themselves the character and authority of inspired teachers, John put his disciples in mind, (chap. ii. 27,) that they had an unction from the Holy Spirit, by which they were enabled to judge with certainty, both of teachers and of their doctrine. He therefore, in this chapter, commands them not to believe rashly every teacher who pretended to be inspired, but to try the inspiration by which any preacher professed to speak, whether it was from God or from evil spirits; that after trial they might know whom it was their duty to attend to, and whom they ought to disregard and reject. And to secure them, as far as possible, from being deceived, he especially desires them to consider whether the teacher, who came to them, pretending to inspiration, held the great and fundamental doctrines of the gospel, which all the teachers, really inspired of God, regularly and uniformly maintained. His words may be paraphrased as follows: *Believe not every spirit*—By which any teacher is, or professes to be, actuated: or, believe not every teacher who pretends to be inspired by the Spirit of God; *but try the spirits*—Namely, whether they are of God—By the rule which God hath given. We are to try all spirits by the written word: *To the law and to the testimony!* If any man speak not according to these, the spirit which actuates him is not of God. *Because many false prophets*—Or false teachers; *are gone forth into the world*—With an intention to draw disciples after them.

Verse 2. *Hereby*—By the following plain mark; *know ye the Spirit of God*—In a teacher. *Every spirit*—Of a teacher; *that confesseth that Jesus*

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2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of A. M. 4094. God: ^d Every spirit that confesseth ^{A. D. 90.} that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God:

^e Matt. xxiv. 5, 24; Acts xx. 30; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Pet. ii. 1; Chap. ii. 18; 2 John 7.—^d 1 Cor. xii. 3.

Christ is come in the flesh, is of God—Doddridge, with many other commentators, reads this clause, *Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ, who is come in the flesh, is of God*: that is, that confesseth him to be the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and that both with heart and voice, sincerely believing him to be such, and behaving to him and confessing him as such, though this might expose them to the loss of all things, even of their property, liberty, and lives. This must be acknowledged to be a perfectly Scriptural and very proper mark of trial, proving those in whom it was found to be possessed of the Spirit of God and of Christ. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged, though the original words, ο ομολογει Ιησυν Χριστον εν σαρκι εληλυθοντα, might bear this rendering, they much more favour the sense given them in our translation, signifying, literally and exactly, *that confesseth Jesus Christ hath come in the flesh.* This imports two things: 1st, That Jesus is the Christ, whose coming was foretold by the Jewish prophets, in opposition to the unbelieving Jews; a truth which those who confessed, whether in Judea or in the Gentile countries, exposed themselves to the danger of having their goods spoiled, and their bodies imprisoned, if not also tortured and put to death. So that those who voluntarily made this confession, manifested that they preferred Christ and his gospel to all other things whatever. The clause imports, 2d, That this great personage, the Messiah, the Son of God, had really come in the flesh, and had a real human nature, in opposition to a sect which arose very early in the Christian Church, called the *Docetae*, who would not allow that Christ had a real body, and that he really suffered, died, and rose again. This sect St. John seems to have had in his eye throughout this epistle.

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A. M. 4094. 3 And every spirit that confesseth not
A. D. 90. that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is
not of God. And this is that *spirit* of antichrist,
whereof ye have heard that it should come; and

* Chap. ii. 22.—† 2 Thess. ii. 7; Chap. ii. 18, 22.—‡ Chap.

Hence, in the very beginning of it, he speaks of *seeing, hearing, and handling* Christ; and here, to the fundamental article of Jesus's being the Messiah, he adds, that he *came in the flesh*; with which doctrine his atoning for sin by the sacrifice of himself, and his rising from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep, were closely and necessarily connected, and therefore the acknowledgment of it was a point of the greatest importance.

The Socinians indeed contend, that to confess Jesus Christ hath come in the flesh, means simply to confess that he was a mere man: and from this they infer that he had no existence before he was conceived of his mother. In proof of their sense of the clause, they cite Heb. ii. 14, where the writer says, he *partook of our flesh and blood*. Now, though it may be true that these words import nothing more than that Christ was a man, like other men, St. John's words, *hath come in the flesh*, have evidently a more extensive meaning. For, as Bishop Horsley observes, the sense of a proposition ariseth, not from the meaning of a single word contained in it, but from the union of the whole into one sentence, especially if that union suggests any circumstance by which the sense of the proposition is modified. This is the case of the clause, *hath come in the flesh*; words which, while they specify the manner of his coming, imply that he might have come in a different manner if he had pleased. Accordingly the apostle hath used the verb *to come* in that sense 1 John v. 6. *This is he who came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by the water and the blood*. For his meaning plainly is, that Jesus came attested as the Christ by water and blood jointly, although he might have come attested by either of these separately; and that Jesus existed as the Christ before he came attested by the water and the blood. Thus the clause, *hath come in the flesh*, implies that he might have come in another manner than in the flesh, namely, in the form of God, as mentioned Phil. ii. 6, 7. It implies that he existed before he came in the flesh, and chose to come in that manner, rather than in any other; consequently that he is more than a mere man. That Jesus Christ might have come in another manner, was the opinion of Clemens Romanus, one of the apostolical fathers mentioned Phil. iv. 3: for in his epistle to the Corinthians, he saith, "The sceptre of the majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pride of pomp and arrogance, although he had it in his power; but in humility, as the Holy Spirit spake concerning him." See Macknight, and Bishop Horsley's 5th letter to Priestley.

Verse 3. *Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*—That doth not acknowledge him to be the true Messiah, as above

† even now already is it in the world. A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90. 4 Ye are of God, little children,
and have overcome them: because greater is he
that is in you, than he that is in the world.

v. 4.—‡ John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11; Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12.

observed, and that he came in that particular manner, though he might have come otherwise; *is not of God*—"To determine whether the Socinian interpretation of the clause, *hath come in the flesh*, expresses the apostle's meaning, let that interpretation be substituted for the expression of which it is the interpretation, and the passages under consideration will run thus: verse 2, *Every spirit, every teacher, calling himself inspired, who confesseth Jesus Christ hath come a mere man, is from God*; verse 3, *And every spirit who doth not confess Jesus Christ hath come a mere man, is not from God*. Wherefore, as St. John is here giving marks by which true and false teachers were to be distinguished, if the Socinian sense of the phrase, *hath come in the flesh*, be just, he hath made it the mark of a true teacher, that he confesseth Jesus Christ as a mere man; and the mark of a false teacher, that he doth not confess Jesus Christ as a mere man, but affirmeth that he is more than a mere man; consequently, by so doing, St. John has condemned himself as a false teacher; because, having declared (chap. iv. 15; v. 5) that Jesus Christ is the *Son of God*, he hath confessed that he is more than a mere man." And also in his gospel, having told us, (chap. i. 14,) that *the Word* (who he had said, verse 1, *was with God and was God*) *was made flesh and dwelt among us, and they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father*, "he hath certainly confessed that Jesus Christ is more than a mere man: for whose glory did the apostles behold, if it was not the glory of the *Word made flesh, the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*? Wherefore, John having confessed that Jesus is the only-begotten Son of God, he cannot be supposed to have branded those teachers as deceivers, who did not confess Jesus Christ to be a mere man, but affirmed him to be more than a man; because, by so doing, he would have condemned himself as a false teacher." *And this is that spirit of antichrist which ye have heard, &c.*—"From this, as well as from chap. ii. 18, it appears that *antichrist* is not any particular person, nor any particular succession of persons in the church, but a general name for all false teachers in every age, who disseminate doctrines contrary to those taught by the apostles; especially if these doctrines have a tendency to derogate from Christ's character and actions as the Saviour of the world."—Macknight.

Verses 4-6. *Ye—Who abide in the truth taught you from the beginning; are of God, and have overcome them*—Namely, these seducers, in all their snares and delusions: that is, the doctrine to which you adhere has prevailed against those who deserve the name of *antichrist*, (as undoubtedly all who oppose the Christian interest in some measure did,) and as you have the true miraculous gifts of the Spirit among

A. M. 4094. 5 ¹ They are of the world: therefore
A. D. 90. speak they of the world, and ² the
world heareth them.

6 We are of God. ¹ He that knoweth God,
heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not
us. Hereby know we ² the spirit of truth, and
the spirit of error.

7 ² Beloved, let us love one another: for love

¹ John iii. 31.—² John xv. 19; xvii. 14.—³ John viii. 47;
x. 27; 1 Corinthians xiv. 37; 2 Corinthians x. 7.—⁴ Isaiah
viii. 20; John xiv. 17.

you, to which they falsely pretend, it is soon seen that the advantage is clearly on your side. *Because greater is he that is in you*—Namely, the Spirit of Christ; *than he*—The spirit of antichrist; *that is in the world*—The Son of God, who stands at the head of that interest in which you are embarked, and who aids you by the mighty communications of his Spirit, is infinitely too strong for Satan, the great head of the apostacy, and for all his confederates. Thus, the issue of the divine government will be, that truth and virtue shall be finally victorious over error and wickedness, because God, the Patron of truth and virtue, possesseth far greater power and wisdom than the evil spirits who promote error and wickedness. *They*—Those false teachers; *are of the world*—Of the number of those that know not God; *therefore speak they of the world*—From the principle, wisdom, and spirit, that actuate worldly men; *and, of consequence, the world heareth them*—Namely, with approbation. “Lest the faithful should be discouraged by the success which false teachers oftentimes have in spreading their errors, the apostle observes that their success arises generally from their accommodating their doctrines to the prejudices and evil inclinations of the world. Wherefore, from the prevalence of any doctrine no argument can be drawn in favour of its truth.” *We*—Apostles; *are of God*—Immediately taught and sent by him, and have approved ourselves to be so by such irresistible evidence, that I may now venture to say, *he who knoweth God*—And experiences the governing influence of his fear and love, *heareth and regardeth us*; but *he who is not of God heareth not us*—Neither believes nor obeys our word; but, by rejecting our testimony, attended as it is with such evidence, he proves himself destitute of all true religion. *Hereby we know*—From what is said verses 2–6; *the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error*—“This mark, by which St. John directed his disciples to judge of teachers, is not to be understood of their hearkening to the apostles personally, but of their receiving their doctrine with that submission which was due to persons inspired by the Spirit of God. Wherefore, though the apostles be all dead, yet as they still speak in their divinely-inspired writings, John, in this passage, declares that their writings are the test by which the disciples of Christ are to judge both of teachers and of their doctrine.”

Verses 7, 8. *Let us love one another*—From the doctrine he has just been defending, he draws this

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is of God; and every one that loveth ¹ A. M. 4094.
is born of God, and knoweth God. ² A. D. 90.

8 He that loveth not, ³ knoweth not God; for
⁴ God is love.

9 ¹ In this was manifested the love of God to-
ward us, because that God sent his only-begotten
Son into the world, ² that we might live through
him.

¹ Chapter iii. 10, 11, 23.—² First Sunday after Trinity.
epistle, verse 7 to the end.—³ Chap. ii. 4; iii. 6.—⁴ Verse
16.—⁵ John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8; viii. 32.—⁶ Chap. v. 11.

exhortation: as if he had said, Think it not enough speculatively to admit the Christian doctrine, but let it be your great care to acknowledge it practically, and especially with respect to that most important article, brotherly love. The frequency and earnestness with which the apostle, in the present epistle, inculcates this love, is very remarkable. The greatest part of this chapter, and of chapter iii., is employed in pressing this duty. See also chap. ii. 8–11. *For love is of God*—Is from him as its source, and particularly enjoined by him as a duty of the greatest importance, and of absolute necessity, in order to our pleasing and imitating him. *And every one that loveth is born of God*—Every one, in whose heart this divine principle reigns, and conquers the selfish and contrary passions, shows by it that he is regenerated and transformed into the divine image; *and that he knoweth God*—By the teaching of his Holy Spirit, as the God of love, infinitely amiable in himself, and infinitely loving to his people. On the other hand, *he that loveth not*, whatever he may pretend, *knoweth not God*—Has no experimental and saving knowledge of him; *for God is love*—Its great fountain and exemplar. He enjoins it by his law, and produces and cherishes it by the influences of his Spirit; and the due contemplation of him will naturally inflame our hearts with love to his divine majesty, and to our fellow-creatures for his sake, whose creatures they are, and especially to his children, who love him, bear his image, and are peculiarly dear to him. This little sentence, *God is love*, brought St. John more sweetness, even in the time he was writing it, says Bengelius, than the whole world can bring. God is often styled holy, righteous, wise; but not holiness, righteousness, or wisdom, in the abstract, as he is said to be love: intimating that this is his darling, his reigning attribute; the attribute that sheds an amiable glory on all his other perfections.

Verse 9. *In this was manifested the love of God*—Namely, most eminently above all other instances thereof; *because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world*—That is, evidently, sent him, who was his only-begotten Son before he was sent. “This,” as Macknight justly observes, “is an allusion to our Lord’s words, John iii. 16, *God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, &c.* Christ is called God’s only-begotten Son, to distinguish him from all others, who in Scripture are called *the sons of God*; and to heighten our idea of

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A. M. 4094. 10 Herein is love, * not that we
A. D. 90. loved God, but that he loved us,
and sent his Son 'to be the propitiation for
our sins.

11 Beloved, * if God so loved us, we ought also
to love one another.

12 * No man hath seen God at any time. If
we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and
his love is perfected in us.

* John xv. 16; Rom. v. 8, 10; Tit. iii. 4.—† Chapter ii. 2.
* Matt. xviii. 33; John xv. 12, 13; Chap. iii. 16.—* John i.
18; 1 Tim. vi. 16; Verse 20.

God's love to us, in giving a person of such dignity, and so beloved of God, to die for us. It is supposed, that by giving Christ the title of *God's only-begotten Son* in this passage, the apostle intended to overturn the error of Ebion and Cerinthus, who affirmed that Christ was not God's Son by nature, but that, like other good men, he was honoured with the title of God's Son on account of his virtues; in which opinion these heresiarchs have been followed by some in modern times. They, however, who hold this opinion ought to show a reason why the epithet of *the only begotten* is appropriated to Christ." *That we might live through him*—That the sentence of condemnation to the second death, to which we were obnoxious, might be reversed, and that being justified by living faith, and regenerated by the quickening Spirit of God, we might live a spiritual life in the divine favour, and in union with Christ here, and might be conducted to eternal life hereafter.

Verses 10–12. *Herein is love*—Worthy of our highest admiration; *not that we loved God*—First; for we were, on the contrary, in a state of enmity to him, in which, if we had remained unsolicited and untouched by his love and grace, we should have persisted and perished; *but that he loved us*—First, (verse 19,) without any merit or motive in us to induce him to do it; *and*, in his boundless compassion to our necessities and miseries; *sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*—That is, to make atonement to his injured justice for them by offering himself as a sacrifice, and so to introduce us into his favour on honourable terms. *If God so loved us*—With such a transcendent, free, and inconceivable love; *we ought also to love one another*—In imitation of his divine example, from a sense of the happy state into which we are brought, and in gratitude to him for so inestimable a favour. And it is of the greater importance that we should do this, because it is absolutely necessary in order to our having fellowship with him. *For no man hath seen God at any time*—Nor indeed can see him, since he is in his own nature invisible; nor can any one have any knowledge of him, or intercourse with him by his senses, or any information concerning his will and the way of pleasing him by any visible appearance of him, or converse with him; yet, from what his *only-begotten Son* hath taught us, we know that *if we love one another*—In consequence of first loving him; *God dwelleth in us, abideth, in us*—This

13 * Hereby know we that we dwell
in him, and he in us, because he hath
given us of his Spirit.

14 And * we have seen and do testify, that
the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of
the world.

15 * Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the
Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the

† Chap. ii. 5; Verse 18.—* John xiv. 20; Chap. iii. 24.
* John i. 14; Chap. i. 1, 2.—† John iii. 17.—* Rom. x. 9;
Chap. v. 1, 5.

is treated of verses 13–16; *and his love is perfected*—Has its full effect; *in us*—This is treated of verses 17–19.

Verses 13, 14. *Hereby*—*Ev teta, by this, we know*—Have full proof; *that we dwell, μενομεν, we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*—In the enlightening, quickening, renewing, and comforting influences thereof. Some commentators understand the apostle as speaking here of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; but surely these gifts, of whatever kind they might be, never were to any man a certain evidence of his possessing real piety and union with God, as is manifest from our Lord's words, (Matt. vii. 22,) *Many will say to me in that day of final judgment, We have prophesied in thy name, &c.; then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, &c.* And St. Paul (1 Cor. xiii. 2) declares, that though a man had such a measure of miracle-working faith, that he could *remove mountains*, yet if he had not love to God and mankind, it would profit him nothing. The ordinary graces of the Spirit, such as are enumerated Gal. v. 22, 23; Eph. v. 9; Col. iii. 12–17; Rom. xii. 9–21, are certain evidences of a person's being a child of God; but the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit are not, inasmuch as they sometimes have been and still may be possessed by persons destitute of true religion. *And we have seen*—Or known, by undoubted evidence, ourselves; *and therefore do boldly testify to others; that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world*—And that it is in and by him alone, how proudly soever the unbelieving and carnal world may reject and disdain him, that present and eternal salvation can be obtained. These things are the foundation and the criteria of our abiding in God and God in us, namely, the communion of the Spirit, spoken of verse 13, and the confession of the Son, verse 15.

Verses 15–17. *Whosoever shall*—From a principle of loving faith, openly confess—In the face of all opposition and danger, maintaining this profession with resolution and zeal, and acting in conformity to it; *that Jesus is the Son of God*—The Christ, the Saviour of the world; *God abideth in him, and he in God*—There is a blessed union between God and his soul, so that it is, in the language of Scripture, the habitation of God; who, as it were, lives and walks in him, Eph. ii. 22; 1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 18. *And we have known and believed*—By the in-

A. M. 4094. love that God hath to us. ^d God is
A. D. 90. love: and ^e he that dwelleth in love,
dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is ¹ our love made perfect, that ^f we
may have boldness in the day of judgment:
^g because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love
casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He
that feareth, ^h is not made perfect in love.

^d Verse 8.—^e Verse 12; Chapter iii. 24.—^f Gr. *love with us*.
^g Jam. ii. 13; Chap. ii. 28; iii. 19, 21.—^h Chap. iii. 3.

fluence of the same Spirit; *the love that God hath to us*—And hath manifested, not only by giving his Son to die for us, (verses 9, 10,) but by making us his children in and through his Son, chap. iii. 1. *God is love*—The apostle repeats what he had declared verse 8, where see the note; *and he that abideth in love*—Namely, in love to God, his people, and all mankind; *abideth in God, and God in him*—His union and communion with God are hereby continued and increased. *Herein*—Or *hereby*, that is, by the continuance of this communion with God; *is our love made perfect*—We are brought to love him with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves; *that we may have*—That is, so that we shall have; *boldness in the day of judgment*—When all the stout-hearted shall tremble; *because as he, Christ, is, so are we*—Who are fathers in Christ; *in this world*—Even while we live on earth, so far as the imperfections of this mortal life, to which we are here confined, will admit.

Verses 18, 19. *There is no fear in love*—No slavish or tormenting fear, diffidence, or distrust, can be where love reigns; *but perfect, mature love casteth out such fear, because such fear hath torment*—And so is inconsistent with the happiness of love. *He that feareth is not made perfect in love*—In the sense above explained. Study therefore to increase more and more in that noble affection of love to God, and you will find your happiness increasing in proportion to it. Observe, reader, a mere natural man has neither the fear nor love of God; one that is awakened and convinced of sin, has fear without love; a

19 We love him, because he first ^{A. M. 4094.}
loved us. ^{A. D. 90.}

20 ⁱ If a man say, I love God, and hateth his
brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his
brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love
God, ^k whom he hath not seen?

21 And ^l this commandment have we from
him, That he who loveth God, love his brother
also.

^b Verse 12.—^c Chap. ii. 4; iii. 17.—^k Verse 12.—^l Matt.
xxii. 37, 39; John xiii. 34; xv. 12; Chap. iii. 23.

babe in Christ, love and fear; a father in Christ, love without fear. *We love him, because he first loved us*—This is the sum of all religion, the genuine model of Christianity. None can say more; why should any one say less, or speak less intelligibly?

Verses 20, 21. *If any man say, I love God*—And even say it with the utmost confidence; *and hateth his brother*—Which he will do more or less, if he do not love him; *he is a liar*—He affirms what is false, although, perhaps, he may not know it to be so; *for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen*—Who is daily presented to his senses to raise his esteem, or move his kindness or compassion toward him; *how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?*—Whose excellences are not the objects of his senses, but are discovered imperfectly from his works of creation, providence, and grace, or from the declarations and promises of his word; his invisible nature being an obstacle to our loving him, which our weak and carnal minds cannot be expected easily to conquer. Indeed, we never could love him unless, as the apostle observes, his love were *shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us*. *And this commandment have we from him*—Both from God and Christ; *that he who loveth God, love his brother in Christ also*—That is, every one, whatever his opinions or modes of worship may be, purely because he is the child and bears the image of God. Bigotry is properly the want of this pure and universal love. A bigot only loves those who embrace his opinions, and he loves them for that, not for Christ's sake.

CHAPTER V.

The apostle, (1.) Discourses on the character of those who truly believe in Jesus as the Christ, describing them as born of God, as loving him, their heavenly Father, and all his children, and as overcoming the world, 1-5. (2.) Speaks of the offices of Christ, exhibited emblematically by water and blood, and of the witnesses in heaven and earth, that bear testimony to him and his salvation, 6-9. (3.) Bears witness to the happiness of believers in having eternal life in Christ, and their prayers of faith heard, for his sake, 10-17. (4.) He adds a reflection on the happy difference which regeneration and the knowledge of God in Christ had made between them and the ignorant and wicked world, and directs them to guard carefully against all idolatry, 18-21.

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A. M. 4094. **W**HOSOEVER ^a believeth that ^b Jesus is the Christ, is ^c born of God: ^d and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

^a John i. 12.—^b Chapter ii. 22, 23; iv. 2, 15.—^c John i. 13.
^d John xv. 23.—^e John xiv. 15, 21, 23; xv. 10; 2 John 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1-4. *Whosoever, &c.*—The apostle having discoursed in the preceding chapters, on the privileges of the children of God, now adds a further illustration of the great essential parts of their character, in order that those to whom he wrote might be enabled to form a more accurate judgment of their own concern in the matters spoken of. And the scope and sum of the whole first paragraph appears from the conclusion of it, verse 13. *These things have I written to you who believe, &c. Whosoever believeth*—Namely, with a living faith, a faith of the divine operation; *that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ*—The true Messiah, the Son of God, so as to be ready to confess this, even when the confession of it might expose him to imprisonment and martyrdom; *is born of God*—Is a child of God, not only by adoption, but by regeneration; he is renewed, in a measure at least, after the divine image, and made a partaker of the divine nature. See on John iii. 6. *And every one that loveth him that begat*—That is, God, who begat him again by the influence of his word and Spirit, 1 Pet. i. 23; Tit. iii. 5; *loveth him also that is begotten of him*—Hath a natural affection to all the children of his heavenly Father, whom he views as his brethren and sisters in Christ, and as joint heirs with him of the heavenly inheritance. *By this we know*—This is a plain proof; *that we love the children of God*—Namely, as his children, in that we love God, and keep his commandments—In the first place, and then love his children for his sake. “Grotius, to render the apostle’s reasoning clear, thinks the original should be construed and translated in the following manner: *By this we know that we love God, when we love the children of God, and keep his commandments.* But not to mention that this construction is forced, it represents the apostle as giving a mark by which we know when we love God; whereas his intention is to show how we may know that we love the children of God in a right manner. Now this was necessary to be showed, since men may love the children of God because they are their relations, or because they are engaged in the same pursuits with themselves, or because they are mutually united by some common bond of friendship. But love, proceeding from these considerations, is not the love of the children of God which he requireth. By what mark, then, can we know that our love to the children of God is of the right sort? Why, saith the apostle, *by this we may know that we love the children of God in a right manner, when we love*

3 • For this is the love of God, ^a that we keep his commandments; ^b and ^c his commandments are not grievous.

4 • For ^d whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even our faith.*

^a Mic. vi. 8; Matt. xi. 30.—^b First Sunday after Easter, epistle, verse 4 to verse 13.—^c John xvi. 33; Chap. iii. 9; iv. 4.

God, and, from that excellent principle, keep his commandments, especially his commandment to love his children, because they bear his image. True Christian love, therefore, is that which proceeds from love to God, from a regard to his will, and which leadeth us to obey all his commandments.—Mac-knight. *For this is the love of God*—The only sure proof of it; *that we keep his commandments*—That we conscientiously and carefully shun whatever we know he hath forbidden, and that we do whatever he has enjoined; *and his commandments are not grievous*—To any that are born of God; for, as they are all most equitable, reasonable, and gracious in themselves, and all calculated to promote our happiness in time and in eternity, so fervent love to him whose commandments they are, and to his children, whom we desire to edify by a holy example, will make them pleasant and delightful to us. *For*—Whereas the great obstruction to the keeping of God’s commandments is the influence of worldly motives and considerations on men’s minds; *whatsoever*—An expression which implies the most unlimited universality, (the word used by the apostle being *πᾶν*, the neuter gender, to comprehend all sorts of persons, males and females, old and young, Jews and Gentiles, freemen and slaves,) *is born of God, overcometh the world*—Conquers whatever it can lay in the way, either to allure or fright the children of God from the line of duty to God, their fellow-creatures, or themselves, or from keeping his commandments. *And this is the victory that overcometh the world*—The grand means of overcoming it; *even our faith*—The faith which is the evidence of things not seen, and the subsistence, or anticipation, of things hoped for; a full persuasion especially, 1st, That Christ is the Son of God, (verse 5,) and consequently that all his doctrines, precepts, promises, and threatenings, are indisputably true, and infinitely important; 2d, That there is another life after this awaiting us, wherein we shall be either happy or miserable beyond conception, and for ever; 3d, That Christ has overcome the world for us, (John xvi. 33,) and hath obtained grace for us to enable us to overcome it; and that we have an interest by faith in all he hath done, suffered, or procured for us. “The power of faith, in enabling men to overcome the temptations laid in their way by the things of the world, and by worldly and carnal men, is finely illustrated by examples, (Heb. xi.,) which show that before the coming of Christ the children of God, by believing the things which he discovered to them, whether by the light of natural reason or by particular revelations, resist

A. M. 4094. 5 Who is he that overcometh the
A. D. 90. world, but ^h he that believeth that
Jesus is the Son of God ?

6 This is he that came ⁱ by water and blood,

^h 1 Cor. xv. 57; Chap. iv. 15.—^j John xix. 34.

ed the greatest temptations, sustained the bitterest sufferings, and performed the most difficult acts of obedience, and thereby obtained a great and lasting fame. But now that Christ hath come, and made the gospel revelation in person and by his apostles, the faith of the children of God, by which they overcome the world, hath for its object all the doctrines and promises contained in that revelation, and particularly the great doctrine which is the foundation of all the rest, namely, that Jesus is the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, as the apostle observes in the following verse."

Verse 5. *Who is he that overcometh the world*—That is superior to all earthly care, desire, fear? Who is the man, and where is he to be found? Surely none have gained, or will gain, this important victory, but they who believe that *Jesus is the Son of God*—"The great principles," says Doddridge, "peculiar to our divine religion, a sense of redeeming love, and the prospect of such a sublime and perpetual happiness as the gospel opens upon us, can alone be sufficient to teach us to triumph over these transitory vanities, and to establish a uniform character, superior to the variety of temptations with which we may be assaulted: while the boasted triumphs of others, upon meaner principles, have been very partial and imperfect, and they have evidently been seduced by one vanity, while they have gloried in despising another." "That the Jews," says MacKnight, "universally believed their Messiah, or Christ, was to be the Son of God, appears from many passages of the New Testament, especially from the following: *Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*, Matt. xvi. 16. *Devils also came out of many, crying out, Thou art Christ, the Son of God*, Luke iv. 41. *These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, John xx. 31. And that the Jews universally believed the Son of God to be *God*, appears from the following passages: *Jesus answered, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God*, John v. 17, 18. *The Jews answered, For a good work we stoned thee not, but for blasphemy, because thou, being a man, makest thyself God*, John x. 33. *The high-priest said, I adjure thee, &c., that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him, Thou hast said. Then the high-priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: what think ye? they answered, He is guilty of death*, Matt. xxvi. 63. "The high-priest and council, composed of men of the highest learning and rank among the Jews, equally with the common people, believed that the Messiah was to be

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even Jesus Christ; not by water only, ^{A. M. 4094.}
but by water and blood. ^{A. D. 90.} ^k And it is
the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

^h John xiv. 17; xv. 26; xvi. 13; 1 Tim. iii. 16.

the Son of God, and that *the Son of God* is himself God, otherwise they could not have reckoned Jesus a blasphemer for calling himself *Christ, the Son of God*. From these indisputable facts it is evident that the modern Socinians contradict the gospel history in two of its essential articles, when they affirm that the first Jewish Christians, before their conversion, had no idea that their Messiah was to come down from heaven, having never been taught to expect any other than a man like themselves. Next, since John hath so frequently declared, and, in what followeth the verse under consideration, hath proved that *Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God*, the same Socinians must be mistaken when they affirm, that in this epistle John is silent concerning the divinity of Christ, and hath not in any part of it censured those who deny it."

Verse 6. *This is he that came by water and blood*—Here the apostle evidently alludes to the testimony borne by him in his gospel, that when the soldier pierced Christ's side, *forthwith there came out blood and water*; a fact which the apostle represents as of great importance; adding, *He that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe*. It was important, not only, 1st, As being a full proof, in opposition to the doctrine of the Docetæ, that Christ came *in the flesh*, and really died; of which see on John xix. 34: but, 2d, Because it was emblematical of the offices which he sustained, and of the salvation he hath procured for his people. For the water was a symbol of the purity of his doctrine, instructing men in the purest morals, and of his own pure and holy example; and, what is of still greater importance, of the purifying grace of which he is the fountain, sanctifying and cleansing such as believe in him, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit: while the blood which issued from him was an emblem both of the sufferings which awaited his followers, who were to seal the truth with their blood, and of his own sufferings, whereby he hath made atonement for the sins of the world, and procured for his followers a free and full justification. Thus, as an eminent divine observes, he also manifested himself to be the Son of God, the promised Messiah, by fulfilling those types and ceremonies of the law which were performed by water and blood: the former whereof, denoting purification from sin, he fulfilled by cleansing us by his Spirit, (signified by water, John vii. 38, 39,) from the corruption of nature, and the power and pollution of sin, and so restoring the image of God in us, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 27; Eph. v. 25, 26; Tit. ii. 14; iii. 5. The latter, which figured the expiation of our sin, he fulfilled by shedding his blood to atone for our sins, and to procure for us deliverance from the guilt and punishment of them,

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A. M. 4094. 7 For there are three that bear re-
A. D. 90. cord in heaven, the Father, ¹ the

Word, and the Holy Ghost: ² and A. M. 4094
these three are one. A. D. 90.

¹ John i. 1; Rev. xix. 13.

² John x. 30.

(Rom. v. 9; Gal. iii. 13; Eph. i. 7,) and to restore us to the favour of God again. *Not by water only*—Not only was his doctrine pure, and his life holy, and not only may purifying grace be derived from him, but he came by *blood*, shed for the expiation of our guilt, for these things must go together; because it will not avail us to be enabled to avoid sin, and to live in a holy manner for the time to come, except the sins of the time past be expiated. *And it is the Spirit that beareth witness*—To these things, namely, in the writings of the ancient prophets, who have spoken largely concerning both, and in the discourses and writings of the apostles, who have borne a still more clear and full testimony to them; and also in the hearts of all the faithful, who, as they are fully convinced of their need of both pardon and holiness, so through the merits and Spirit of Christ they receive both.

Verse 7. *For there are three, &c.*—It is well known that the authenticity of this verse has been a subject of much controversy. “The arguments, on both sides of the question, taken from ancient Greek MSS. and versions, and from quotations made by the fathers, and from printed editions, have been stated with the greatest fidelity and accuracy by Mill in his long note at the end of John’s first epistle, where he observes that this verse is wanting in all the ancient Greek MSS. of the New Testament which have come down to us, except a few, which shall be mentioned immediately. It is wanting likewise in the first Syriac, and other ancient versions, particularly the Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic, and in many of the present Latin MSS. With respect to quotations from the fathers, Mill acknowledges that few of the Greek writers, who lived before the council of Nice, have cited this verse. The same he observes concerning those who, after that council, wrote in defence of the Trinity against the Arians, and other heretics; which, he thinks, shows that this verse was not in their copies.” But, on the other hand, the proofs of the authenticity of this verse are, “1st, Some of the most ancient and most correct *Vatican* Greek copies, from which the Spanish divines formed the Complutensian edition of the Greek Testament, and with which they were furnished by Pope Leo X.,” one of which Mill speaks of as peculiarly eminent, of great antiquity, and approved fidelity. “2d, A Greek copy, called by Erasmus, *Codex Britannicus*, on the authority of which he inserted this verse in his edition anno, 1522, but which he had omitted in his two former editions. This is supposed to be a MS. at present in the Trinity College library, Dublin, in which this verse is found with the omission of the word *αγιον*, *holy*, before *πνευμα*, *Spirit*. It likewise wants the last clause of verse 8, namely, *and these three are one*. All Stephens’s MSS., being seven in number, which contain the catholic epistles, have this verse: only they want the words *εν ορανω*, *in heaven*. 4th, The Vulgate version, in most of the

MS. copies and printed editions of which it is found, with some variations. 5th, The testimony of Tertullian, who alludes to this verse, *Præream*, c. 25, and who lived in an age in which he saith, *Præscript*, c. 30, the *authentica literæ* (the authentic writings) of the apostles were read in the churches. By *authentica literæ* Mill understands, either the autographs of the apostles, which the churches, to whom they were written, had carefully preserved, or correct transcripts taken from these autographs. Also the testimony of Cyprian, who flourished about the middle of the third century, and who, in his epistle to Jubajanus, expressly cites the latter clause of this verse. The objections which have been raised against the testimonies of Tertullian and Cyprian, Mill hath mentioned and answered in his long note at the end of 1 John v., which see in page 582 of Kuster’s edition. 6th, The testimony of many Greek and Latin fathers in subsequent ages, who have cited the last clause of this verse; and some who have appealed to the Arians themselves as acknowledging its authenticity. Lastly, the Complutensian edition, anno 1515, had this seventh verse exactly as it is in the present printed copies, with this difference only, that instead of *these three are one*, it hath substituted the last clause of verse 8, *And these three agree in one*, and hath omitted it in that verse. These arguments appear to Mill of such weight, that, after balancing them against the opposite arguments, he gave it as his decided opinion that, in whatever manner this verse disappeared, it was undoubtedly in St. John’s autograph, and in some of the copies which were transcribed from it.”

“Instead of passing any judgment in a matter so much contested,” says Macknight, “I shall only observe, 1st, That this verse, instead of disturbing the sense of the verses with which it is joined, rather renders it more connected and complete. 2d, That in verse 9, *the witness of God* is supposed to have been before appealed to: *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater*. And yet, if verse 7 is excluded, the witness of God is nowhere mentioned by the apostle. 3d, That in the opinion of Beza, Calvin, and other orthodox commentators, the last clause of verse 7 hath no relation to the unity of the divine essence. If so, the Trinitarians, on the one hand, need not contend for the authenticity of this verse, in the view of supporting their doctrine, nor the Arians, on the other, strive to have it excluded from the text as opposing their tenets. 4th, That the doctrine which the Trinitarians affirm to be asserted in this verse is contained in other places of Scripture. So Wall saith. Dr. Benson likewise, in his Dissertation, written to prove this verse not genuine, saith, ‘If it were genuine, there could nothing be proved thereby but what may be proved from other texts of Scripture.’” The reader who wishes for more satisfactory information respecting the authenticity of the text, may find it in

Dr. Calamy's Vindication of it, annexed to his Sermons on the Trinity, preached at the lecture at Salt-er's Hall, and published in 1722.

There are three that bear witness, &c.—When there is a cause depending in any court, and proof is to be given in order to the decision of it, witnesses are produced, and if they are credible, and liable to no just objection, the cause is determined according to the evidence they give, unless they, to whom it belongs to determine the matter, are partial or biased. Now St. John, aiming at the establishment of those in the truth to whom he wrote this his first epistle, represents the cause depending before them as very weighty; a cause of such consequence, that it highly concerned them to weigh all matters well before they came to a determination. It was really no less a matter than whether Christianity was true or a forgery: and he intimates to them that they had very good evidence to assist them in determining. There were two sets of witnesses, the one above, the other below; and both of them unexceptionable. The one was of *persons*, and the other of *things*, which, by a figure, are represented as witnesses. The persons witnessing were, of all others in the universe, the most worthy of credit and regard, being all truly and properly divine persons, even *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*—Persons with whom none that had the least knowledge of Christianity could be unacquainted. For these are the very persons in whose name they had been baptized, and to whom they had been most solemnly dedicated. There is only this difference to be observed, that the second witness mentioned has another name given him. In the form of baptism he is called the *Son*, but here the *Word*; a name or title which St. John seems to have taken a peculiar pleasure in giving to the Lord Jesus, for he begins his gospel with it, John i. 1, repeats it again in verse 14 of the same chapter, and in entering upon this epistle, represents it as the great subject about which he was going to write; and mentions it again in the Apocalypse, chap. xix. 13. And as for the third witness, the Holy Ghost, he would not have been mentioned separate from the other two if he were not distinct from both. For the apostle does not speak of three *names* as bearing record, but three distinct *persons*, acting different ways and in different capacities. It is also hereby intimated that the evidence given is very full and convincing, no one of the witnesses being liable to any just objection: so that Christianity, the truth of which is so well attested, must necessarily have a firm foundation. Observe, reader, the witnesses brought forth and appealed to on this occasion, are the same that our Lord himself had mentioned as attesting his divine mission and Messiahship in the days of his flesh, as John v. 37, where he speaks of the Father *that sent him as bearing witness of him*; and John viii. 18, where he says that he bore witness of himself; and John xv. 26, where he mentions the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, as testifying of him. Accordingly we learn from the gospel history, 1st, That the Father bore witness to Jesus with an audible voice three sundry times; first, when he was baptized, Matt. iii. 16, 17;

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a second time when he was transfigured, Matt. xvii. 5; and a third time after he had raised Lazarus from the dead, when many flocked out of Jerusalem to meet and applaud him, John xii. 28; and the two former of those times, the testimony borne is the same with that here mentioned by St. John, verses 1, 5, namely, that Jesus is God's beloved Son, and therefore the true Messiah and Saviour of the world. 2d, The Word made flesh, the Lord Jesus himself, several times bore the same testimony; as, for instance, to the woman of Samaria, John iv. 26; to the Jews, John viii. 24, 58; x. 30, 36; and especially when adjured by the high-priest, in the name of the living God, to tell them whether he was *the Christ, the Son of God*, Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61. And he, in effect, bore the same testimony when he showed himself to dying Stephen, as standing at the right hand of God in all the splendour of the divine glory,—when he appeared to Paul on his way to Damascus, surrounded with a light above the brightness of the sun,—and when he manifested himself to John in the isle of Patmos, to give him the wonderful visions contained in the Apocalypse. And, 3d, The Holy Ghost in many ways bore the same testimony, as by his descending on Jesus immediately after his baptism, and in a glorious manner remaining on him, John i. 32, 33, and working miracles by the disciples sent out during his life: by coming down on the apostles in fiery tongues ten days after our Lord's ascension, thereby publicly declaring to all present, and to all to whom a well-attested account of that fact should come, that he really was the Son of God, exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high; a truth which these same apostles boldly testified from that day forward in Judea, and all the world over. Thus we see what the apostle means when he says, *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost witnessed in heaven*. Or, as the words may be rendered, *there are three in heaven that bear, or that bore witness*, (for *μαρτυροῦντες* is a participle of the imperfect as well as of the present tense,) distinguished from the other three witnesses mentioned in the next verse, that are on earth. The meaning is, not that they bear, or bore, witness to the angels and blessed spirits that are in heaven, but only that they speak from heaven, while the others speak on earth. They witness while they are in heaven, notwithstanding that they are so much above us, and so far distant from us: and therefore the testimony they bear is to be the more regarded, and we shall be the more inexorable if we do not acquiesce in it, and improve by it.

And these three are one—The word is not *eis*, one person, but *ev*, one thing, expressing evidently the unity of the three, and that not only as to their testimony, but also and especially with respect to their nature; it being evident, from a variety of other texts, that each of the three is truly and properly God, as has been abundantly proved in the course of these notes. If unity of testimony had only been intended, it is probable the expression would have been as in the close of the next verse, where the three witnesses on earth are spoken of: *these three eis to ev eiaiv, agree in one*.

A. M. 4094. 8 And there are three that bear
A. D. 90. witness in earth, the Spirit, and the
water, and the blood: and these three agree in
one.

• John viii. 17, 18.

Verse 8. *And there are three that bear witness on earth*—To the same important doctrine concerning Christ, the Son of God, and salvation through him; *the Spirit, the water, and the blood*—The Spirit here, distinguished from the Holy Ghost in the preceding verse, seems to mean, 1st, That influence of the Spirit, which, in a peculiar manner, attended the preaching of the gospel by the apostles and first ministers of the Word, in that early age of Christianity: together with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which remained with the church for a considerable time. 2d, The inspired writers of the apostles and the evangelists, bearing witness to the doctrine of Christ, when they were deceased; including the predictions uttered by *holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*, concerning the coming and character of the Messiah, which had been punctually fulfilled in him; and including also the predictions uttered by Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the calamities coming on the Jewish nation, with divers other predictions, particularly those concerning the coming of false Christs and false prophets, which were already in part accomplished when St. John wrote this epistle and the rest, he knew, soon would be accomplished. Certainly, the inspired Scriptures, including the predictions of the prophets, and of Christ and his apostles, sealed by their accomplishment, are one grand proof on earth of the truth of Christianity, and of the doctrine of salvation contained therein. *And the water*—Of baptism, emblematical of the washing of regeneration, and of that purity of life consequent thereon, to which we are obliged, and which we in effect promise when we devote ourselves to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in that ordinance: and which, when evidenced in our conduct, is a convincing proof of the truth of Christianity, and of our title to that eternal life which is revealed in it. *And the blood*—The Lord's supper, appointed as a memorial of, and testimony to, the sacrifice of the death of Christ, till his second coming; and which exhibits the atoning blood of Christ, from age to age, as the procuring cause of the pardon of sin, and all the spiritual blessings consequent thereon, bestowed on true believers. It may be proper to observe here, that there is also another respect in which these two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper may be considered as evidences of the truth of Christianity. It is certain that such ordinances are in use among Christians: now, how came this to be the case? When, and how were they introduced? What was their origin? The gospels inform us. If we admit the account they give, we must of necessity admit the truth of Christianity, with which that account is closely connected. If any do not admit that account, let them give another: but this they cannot do. That

9 If we receive ^{A. M. 4094.} the witness of men, ^{A. D. 90.} the witness of God is greater: ^{A. M. 4094.} for ^{A. D. 90.} this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

• Matt. iii. 16, 17; xvii. 5.

account therefore is just; and, of consequence, Christianity is not a forgery, but a divine institution. *As the blood* here implies the testimony which Christ bore to the truth of the gospel, especially of that most essential article of it, his being the *Son of God*, so it may also represent that testimony which is borne to the truth by the sufferings of those who, in different ages and nations, have sealed it with their blood; which is a strong proof of the conviction they had of its truth and importance, and of the virtue and excellence of that religion which enabled them so to do. *And these three agree in one*—In bearing one and the same testimony, namely, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah, the only Saviour of sinners; in and through whom alone the guilty, depraved, weak, and miserable children of men can obtain spiritual and eternal life; the testimony specified verses 11, 12.

Bengelius thinks there has been a transposition of these two verses, and that this latter, concerning the three that bear witness on earth, was placed by St. John before that which respects the witnesses in heaven; and that it must appear to every reasonable man how absolutely necessary the contested verse is. "St. John," says he, "could not think of the testimony of the Spirit, and water, and blood, and subjoin, *the testimony of God is greater*, without thinking also of the testimony of the Son and Holy Ghost; yea, and mentioning it in so solemn an enumeration. Nor can any possible reason be devised why, without *three testifying in heaven*, he should enumerate *three*, and no more, who *testify on earth*. The testimony of all is given on earth, and not in heaven; but they who testify are part on earth, part in heaven. The witnesses who are on earth, testify chiefly concerning his abode on earth, though not excluding his state of exaltation. The witnesses who are in heaven testify chiefly concerning his glory at God's right hand, though not excluding his state of humiliation. The former, therefore, concerning the witnesses on earth, with the 6th verse, contains a recapitulation of the whole economy of Christ, from his baptism to pentecost: that concerning the witnesses in heaven, contains the sum of the divine economy, from the time of his exaltation. Hence it further appears, that the position of the two verses, which places those who testify on earth before those who testify in heaven, is abundantly preferable to the other, and affords a gradation admirably suited to the subject."

Verse 9. *If we receive the testimony of men*—As we do continually, and must do, in a thousand instances, if we would not give over all business, and even refuse taking necessary nourishment. The testimony of two or three credible witnesses, according to the law of Moses, was deemed sufficient to prove

A. M. 4094. 10 He that believeth on the
A. D. 90. Son of God ^p hath the witness in
himself: he that believeth not God, ^q hath
made him a liar, because he believeth not

^p Rom. viii. 16; Gal. iv. 6.—^q John iii. 33; v. 38.

any matter of fact; and indeed human affairs in general, even the most important, are conducted and determined by depending on the testimony of men. Nay, and we not only receive the testimony of men, when they bear their testimony in a solemn manner, upon oath, before magistrates, but we rely on one another's word from time to time, and sometimes concerning things of great moment: *the testimony of God is greater*—More valid, of higher authority, and much more worthy to be received than the witness of men, be they ever so numerous, or ever so respectable for their understanding and their integrity; so that we may rely on it with the greatest assurance. *For this is the testimony of God*—Namely, this six-fold testimony, and especially that of the last three mentioned witnesses, of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: *which he hath testified of his Son*—As the true Messiah, the Saviour of the world, able to save, even to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him; and actually saving all that believe in him with *their heart unto righteousness*.

Verse 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God, with such a faith, hath the testimony in himself*—Namely, knows by experience, that what God hath testified concerning his Son, and salvation in and through him, is indeed true, being already saved by him from the guilt and power of sin, into the favour and image of God, and a state of communion with him. He knows by experience, that Jesus is the Son of God in such a sense as to be an all-sufficient Saviour, and that he came by cleansing water, and by atoning blood, having received justification through the latter, and sanctification through the former. Or, which is to the same purpose, he hath received the testimony mentioned verse 11. For, as in that verse, "*the witness*, by a usual metonymy, is put for the thing witnessed, and the thing witnessed being, *that God hath given us eternal life through his Son*, he who believeth on the Son of God, may justly be said to have eternal life, the thing witnessed, in himself; because, by his faith on the Son, being begotten of God, he hath, in the dispositions of God's children communicated to him, eternal life begun in him; which is both a pledge and a proof that God, in due time, will completely bestow on him eternal life through his Son."—Macknight. Add to the above, that eternal life is begun in him, and that God will, in due time, bestow on him the full enjoyment of it, he hath the testimony of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the Father having lifted up the light of his countenance upon him, and thereby put joy and gladness into his heart, Psa. iv. 6, 7; Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, and being precious to his soul, Eph. iii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 7; and the Holy Ghost, as a Spirit of adoption, *witnessing with his spirit that he is a child of God*, and pro-

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the record that God gave of his Son. A. M. 4094
11 ^r And this is the record, that ^s—
A. D. 90. God hath given to us eternal life: and ^t this
life is in his Son.

^r Chap. ii. 25.—^s John i. 4; Chap. iv. 9.

ducing in him *love, joy, and peace*, Rom. viii. 15, 16; Gal. v. 22. And he hath the witness of the Spirit in himself, mentioned verse 8, or of the inspired writings, which bear witness to the genuineness of his religion, and his title to eternal life, and which are the food of his soul, the sweetness of which he tastes, and is nourished thereby; *tastes the good word of God*, Heb. vi. 5. He hath the witness of the *water* in himself; having been baptized with water, and had the sign, and also the thing signified thereby, the regenerating grace of God; and the witness of the *blood*, having received the atonement, and pardon through it, and taking all opportunities of receiving the Lord's supper, when *the bread that he breaks is to him the communion of Christ's body*; and *the wine which he drinks, the communion of his blood*; and he feeds on Christ in his heart by faith, with thanksgiving. On the other hand, *he that believeth not God*—As to his testimony concerning Christ, when at his baptism, and on the mount of transfiguration, he declared him to be his Son by a voice from heaven; and when, after his death, he demonstrated him to be his Son by raising him from the dead; *hath made him a liar*—That is, by refusing to believe these testimonies, he hath acted as if he judged God to be a liar, or false witness. Some MSS. and ancient versions, particularly the Vulgate, instead of *He that believeth not God*, have, *He that believeth not the Son*; which Grotius and Bengelius think the true reading. But, like most of the various readings, this makes no alteration in the sense of the passage.

Verses 11, 12. *And this is the record*—*H μαρτυρία, the testimony*; the sum of God's testimony concerning his Son, and salvation through him: this is the thing testified by the six witnesses—the three in heaven, and the three on earth; *that God hath given to us*—Hath sincerely and freely offered to mankind in general, and hath actually conferred on true believers in particular; *eternal life*—Namely, a title to it, in their justification and adoption, Tit. iii. 7; Rom. viii. 17; a meetness for it, in their new creation or sanctification, Col. i. 12; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. iv. 22, 24; and a foretaste or earnest of it, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, Eph. i. 14; giving them to enjoy communion with the Father and the Son, 1 John i. 3; and through that, as it were, *to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, and have their *conversacion in heaven*, Eph. ii. 6; Phil. iii. 20. *And this life is in his Son*—Whose doctrine hath revealed it; whose merits have procured it; whose Spirit hath imparted the beginning of it; and whose example will conduct us to the complete possession of it. In other words, by whom it is purchased, and in whom it is treasured up; so that he has all the springs, and the fulness of it, in himself, to communi-

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A. M. 4094. 12 ¹ He that hath the Son, hath life;
 A. D. 90. *and* he that hath not the Son of God,
 hath not life.

13 ² These things have I written unto you that
 believe on the name of the Son of God; ³ that
 ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that
 ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

¹ John iii. 36; v. 24.—² John xx. 31.—³ Ch. i. 1, 2.

cate to his body, the church, first in grace and then in glory. "Though the apostle, in what goes before, has spoken particularly of the three in heaven, and of the three on earth, who bear witness continually, he deferred mentioning, till now, what it is they are witnessing; that by introducing it last of all, and after so much preparation, it might make the stronger impression on the minds of his readers." *He that hath the Son*—That hath the saving knowledge of him communicated by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, Eph. i. 17; Matt. xi. 27; that hath living faith in him, working by love, Gal. ii. 20; v. 6; and hereby hath a real interest in him, as a wife hath in her husband, Rom. vii. 4; and vital union with him, such as a branch hath with the tree in which it grows, John xv. 4; or such as a member of the human body has with the head thereof, 1 Cor. xii. 27; Rom. xii. 5; and who, in consequence of that interest in him, and union with him, hath a conformity to him; hath in him the mind that was in Christ, and walks as he walked, Phil. ii. 5; or he, to whom Christ is made of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; see on 1 Cor. i. 30; such a one in these respects having the Son, *hath life*—Hath spiritual life here, and is entitled to, made in a degree meet for, and has an earnest of, eternal life hereafter. *But he that hath not the Son of God*—Hath not that interest in his merits, that union with him through the Spirit, that conformity, more or less, to his image: he, whom Christ has not enlightened as his wisdom, justified as his righteousness, renewed as his sanctification; whatever he may profess, whatever orthodoxy of sentiment, regularity of conduct, or form of godliness; *hath not life*—Hath neither spiritual life here, being still alienated from the life of God, Eph. iv. 18; nor is in the way to eternal life hereafter. He hath no part or lot therein.

Verse 13. *These things have I written unto you*—The things contained in the former part of this chapter concerning the fruits of regenerating faith, and the water and the blood, and the witnesses in heaven and on earth, and especially concerning the things which they have witnessed, mentioned in the two last verses; *to you that believe on the name of the Son of God*—With a faith grounded on a saving knowledge of him, and productive of the fruits spoken of verses 1-4; *that ye may know*—On the testimony of all the evangelists and apostles, and of Christ himself; *that ye have eternal life*—That ye are heirs of it, notwithstanding your past sins and present infirmities, and the imperfection of your knowledge and holiness, and the various defects of

14 And this is the confidence that ¹ we have ² in him, that ³ if we ⁴ ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:
 A. M. 4094.
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15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

¹ Or, concerning him.—² Chapter iii. 22.

your love and obedience; *and that you may believe*—That is, may persevere in believing; *on the name of the Son of God*—May continue in the faith grounded and settled, and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel; knowing that *the just man shall live by faith*, but if he draw back, *God's soul will have no pleasure in him*. See John xv. 6, and Rom. xi. 22.

Verses 14, 15. *And this is the farther confidence*—*ἰσχυροῦς*, boldness; that we have in, or with, him, that if we ask any thing—See on Matt. vii. 7; according to his will—His revealed will, (for his word shows us what things we may lawfully ask,) he heareth us—Not only observes and takes notice of our petitions, but favourably regards them, and will assuredly grant them if he sees, and as far as he sees, that it will be for our present and eternal good to have them granted: see verse 15. Archbishop Tillotson supposes that this refers particularly to the apostles. "But so few of the apostles could be concerned in this advice of St. John, and there are so many promises of the answer of prayer scattered up and down in the Old and New Testaments, that I," says Dr. Doddridge, "would by no means thus confine the interpretation." The truth is, with regard to all spiritual blessings, such as illumination of mind, remission of sins, the divine favour, adoption into God's family, regeneration and sanctification through his Holy Spirit, grace to help us in time of need, and eternal life, we may be sure God will grant them, if we ask them sincerely, importunately, perseveringly, and in faith, complying, in the mean time, through his grace, with the conditions or terms, on our complying with which God hath suspended the accomplishment of his promises of these blessings, namely, repentance toward him, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the truths and promises of his gospel. But with respect to temporal blessings, as we do not know how far it would be good for us to receive them, we must ask them with entire submission to the divine will, persuaded that if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, other things, that he knows to be needful and useful, shall be added unto us; and that he who gives grace and glory, will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. And if we know that he heareth us, we know—Even before the event, (for faith anticipates the blessings,) that we have the petitions that we desired of him—And when they are received, we know they are given in answer to our prayers. The meaning of this is, that God's hearing is not in vain; but that, as he hears in general, so he will grant in

A. M. 4094. 16 If any man see his brother sin a
A. D. 90. sin which is not unto death, he shall
ask, and ^a he shall give him life for them that
sin not unto death. ^a There is a sin unto
death: ^b I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 ^c All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a
sin not unto death.

18 We know that ^d whosoever is born of God,
sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God,
^e keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth
him not.

^a Job xlii. 8; Jas. v. 14, 15.—^b Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10; Heb. vi. 4, 6; x. 26.—^c Jer. vii. 16; xiv. 11; John xvii. 9.—^d Chap. iii. 4.—^e 1 Peter i. 23; Chapter iii. 9.—^f James i. 27.

due time, and in his own way, those particular mercies which we ask of him.

Verses 16, 17. *If any man, &c.*—As if he had said, Yea, he hears us not only for ourselves, but others also; *see his brother*—That is, any child of man; *sin a sin which is not unto death*—That is, any sin but that which is marked out in the awful words of our Lord Jesus Christ as unpardonable, namely, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, of which see on Matt. xii. 31; Mark iii. 29. Or, which may rather be intended, the sin of total apostacy from both the power and form of godliness; *he shall ask, and God shall give him life*—Repentance unto life, and, in consequence thereof, pardon and salvation for that sinner. *There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it*—That is, let him not pray for it. *A sin unto death* may likewise mean one which God has determined to punish with temporal death. *All unrighteousness is sin*—Every deviation from perfect holiness is sin; but all sin is not unpardonable, nor does God determine to punish every sin with temporal death.

Verses 18, 19. *We know, &c.*—As if he had said, Yet this gives no encouragement to sin. On the contrary, it is an indisputable truth, *that whosoever is born of God*—That is, regenerated and made a new creature; see on chap. ii. 29; *sinneth not*—Doth not commit any known sin, so long as he lives by faith in the Son of God, and by that faith has union with Christ; *but he that is begotten of God*—By the word of truth, (James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23,) accompanied by the influence of the Divine Spirit; *keepeth himself*—By the aid of divine grace watching unto prayer, denying himself and taking up his cross daily; *and that wicked one*—Namely, the devil; *toucheth him not*—So as to overcome and lead him into known, wilful sin. *And we know*—By the testimony of the Holy Spirit and our own consciences; *that we*—Who believe in Christ, (verse 13,) and are born of God, and made partakers of the divine nature; *are of God*—Belong to him, as his children and his heirs; *and the whole world*—All the rest of

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19 *And we know that we are of* A. M. 4094.
God, and ^a the whole world lieth in ^a A. D. 90.
wickedness.

20 *And we know that the Son of God is come, and ^b hath given us an understanding, ^b that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. ^c This is the true God, ^d and eternal life.*

21 *Little children, ^e keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

^a Gal. i. 4.—^b Luke xxiv. 45.—^c John xvii. 3.—^d Isa. ix. 6; xlv. 6; liv. 5; John xx. 28; Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Titus ii. 13; Hebrews i. 8.—^e Verses 11–13. 1 Cor. x. 14.

mankind, that are not such, all who have not his Spirit, are not only *touch*ed by him, but very generally are guilty of idolatry, fraud, violence, lasciviousness, impiety, and all manner of vice; *lieth in wickedness*—Rather, *in the wicked one*, as *εν τω πονηρω* signifies. They are under his dominion: just as it is said of believers in the next verse, that they are *εν τω αληθινω*, *in the true one*. “The power of Satan in this lower world, and over its inhabitants, is often spoken of in Scripture. Thus Eph. ii. 2, he is called *the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience*: 2 Cor. iv. 4, he is termed *the god of this world*, and is said to *blind the minds of them that believe not*: 1 Pet. v. 8, he is called *our adversary*, and is said to be *going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*. Further, 2 Tim. ii. 26, wicked men are said to be *held in the snare of the devil*, who (Ephesians vi. 11) is said to *use wiles* for the destruction of mankind, and (2 Corinthians xi. 3) to have *beguiled Eve by his subtlety*.”

Verses 20, 21. *We know*—By all these infallible proofs; *that the Son of God is come*—Into the world; *and hath given us an understanding*—Hath enlightened our minds; *that we may know him that is true*—The living and true God, namely, the Father, of whom the apostle appears here to speak; *and we are in him that is true*—In his favour, and in a state of union and fellowship with him; *even*—This particle is not in the Greek; *in*—Or rather, *through*; *his Son Jesus Christ*—Through whose mediation alone we can have access to, or intercourse with, the Father. *This*—Ουτος, *he*, namely, Christ, the person last mentioned; *is the true God and eternal life*—He partakes with the Father in proper Deity, and our immortal life is supported by union with him. *Little*—Or *beloved*; *children, keep yourselves from idols*—From all false worship of images, or of any creature, and from every inward idol: from loving, desiring, fearing any thing more than God. Seek all help and defence from evil, all happiness, in the true God alone.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN.

“**SOME**,” says Bede, (in the beginning of the eighth century,) “have thought this and the following epistle not to have been written by John the evangelist, but by another, a presbyter of the same name, whose sepulchre is still seen at Ephesus, whom also Papias mentions in his writings. But now it is the general consent of the church, that John the apostle wrote also these two epistles, forasmuch as there is a great agreement of the doctrine and style between these and his first epistle, and there is also a like zeal against heretics.” Compare 2 Epistle verse 5, with 1 Epistle ii. 8;—verse 6, with 1 Epistle v. 3;—verse 7, with 1 Epistle iv. 3;—3 Epistle verse 12, with John xix. 35. Of John’s peculiar manner of expressing things, compare 2 Epistle verse 7, and 3 Epistle verse 11.—Of the second epistle, which contains only thirteen verses, eight may be found in the first, either in sense or in expression. It is true, Eusebius, in bearing testimony to the authenticity of the first epistle of John, hath insinuated that some ascribed the second and third epistles to another person of the name of John, called “the elder,” of whom he speaks, lib. iii. c. 39. And Jerome likewise hath mentioned this John in his catalogue. But the earliest and best Christian writers ascribe the second and third epistles, as well as the first, to the Apostle John. All the three were received as his by Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Jerome, and the council of Laodicea; as also by Ruffin, by the third council of Carthage, by Augustine, and by all those authors who received the same canon of the New Testament which we receive. All the three are in the Alexandrian MS. and in the catalogue of Gregory Nazianzen. The second epistle is cited twice by Irenæus as written by John the apostle, declaring, that “they who denied Jesus Christ to be ‘come in the flesh,’ were ‘seducers’ and ‘antichrists,’ verses 7, 8; and that they who ‘bid’ the heretic ‘God speed,’ were ‘partakers of his evil deeds;” which words are found in verses 10, 11. And Aurelius cites the 10th verse as the words of St. John the apostle.

As to the title of “elder,” taken by the writer of these two short epistles, we cannot infer from this that they were not written by the Apostle John; the word “elder” being, it seems, only intended to denote that the person so called was of long standing in the Christian faith. It was, therefore, an appellation of great dignity, and entitled the person, to whom it belonged, to the highest respect from all the disciples of Christ: for which reason it was assumed by the Apostle Peter. Or, as some think, the word “elder” might be used with a reference to John’s great age, and that he was as well known by the name of “elder” as by his proper name; the word signifying the same as if it had been said, “The aged apostle.” The circumstance, that the writer of these epistles hath not mentioned his own name, is agreeable to John’s manner; who neither hath mentioned his name in his gospel, nor in the first epistle, which are unquestionably his.

These epistles have very improperly been termed “general” or “catholic,” since each is inscribed to a single person, one to a woman of distinction, styled “the elect lady,” or, as some render the words, “the elect Kuria,” (taking the latter word for a proper name,) and the other to “Gaius;” probably the same person with Gaius of Corinth, who is styled by St. Paul “his host,” and is celebrated for his hospitality to the brethren; a character very agreeable to that which is here given of Gaius by the Apostle John.

There is no fixing the date of these two epistles with any certainty. It in a great measure depends on the date of the first epistle; soon after which, it is generally agreed, both these were written. And this indeed appears exceeding probable from that coincidence, both of sentiment and expression, which occurs in all these epistles, as mentioned above.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

(1.) *The Apostle John salutes a Christian matron and her children, 1-3.* (2.) *With great joy recommends further degrees of faith and love, 4-6.* (3.) *Cautions against seducers, particularly such as denied Christ's Incarnation, and dissuades from entertaining persons that erred from the truth, or wishing them success, 7-11.* (4.) *Refers some other matters to a personal intercourse, 12, 13.*

A. M. 4094. **T**HE elder unto the elect lady, and
A. D. 90. her children, ^awhom I love in the
truth; and not I only, but also all they that have
known ^bthe truth;

2 For the truth's sake which dwelleth in us,
and shall be with us for ever.

3 ^cGrace ¹be with you, mercy and peace

^a1 John iii. 18; 3 John 1; Verse 3.—^bJohn viii. 32; Gal. ii. 5, 14; iii. 1; v. 7; Col. i. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 4;

Verses 1, 2. *The elder*—An appellation suited to a familiar letter; for the import of it see the preface: *unto the elect*—That is, the Christian; *lady*—Or *Kuria*, rather, for the word seems to be a proper name, both here and in verse 5, it not being then usual to apply the title of *lady* to any but the Roman empress, neither would such a manner of speaking have been suitable to the simplicity and dignity of the apostle; and *her children*—There is no mention made by the apostle of this matron's husband, either because he was dead, or because he was not a Christian; *whom*—That is, both her and her children; *I love in the truth*—Or rather (as *αληθεια* is without the article) in truth. The meaning is, whom I love with unfeigned and holy love. The sincerity and purity of his love to this family, the apostle showed on the present occasion, by his earnestness to guard them against being deceived by the false teachers, who were then going about among the disciples of Christ. *And not I only love her and them, but also all love them that have known the truth*—As it is in Jesus, and have had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with them. *For the truth's sake*—Because you have embraced the same truth of the gospel which I myself, and other faithful Christians, have received; *which dwelleth in us*—As a living principle of faith and holiness; see Phil. i. 6; 1 John ii. 14; and *shall be with us for ever*—Which,

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from God the Father, and from the A. M. 4094.
Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the A. D. 90.
Father, ^din truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly, that I found of
thy children ^ewalking in truth, as we
have received a commandment from the
Father.

Heb. x. 26.—^c1 Timothy i. 2.—¹Gr. shall be.—^dVerse 1.
^e3 John 3.

I trust, God will enable us to believe and obey to the end of our lives.

Verse 3. *Grace be with you, &c.*—See on Rom. i. 7. Grace takes away the guilt and power of sin, and renews our fallen nature; mercy relieves our misery; peace implies our abiding in grace and mercy. It includes the testimony of God's Spirit and of our own conscience, both that we are his children, and that all our ways are acceptable to him. This is the very foretaste of heaven, where it is perfected: *in truth and love*—*Truth* embraced by a lively faith, and *love* to God, his children, and all mankind, flowing from discoveries of his favour.

Verse 4. *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children*—That is, some of thy children; *walking in truth*—In a manner agreeable to the gospel. It is probable that John speaks of such of her children as he had met with in the course of his travels, probably at their aunt's house, verse 13; and that having conversed with them, and observed their conduct, he had found reason to conclude that they were truly pious, and sound in the faith. After their return home, it seems, he inscribed this letter to them as well as to their mother, and by the commendation which he bestowed on them in it, he no doubt encouraged them much to persevere in the truth. By the joy which this circumstance gave the apostle, was manifested the disposition of a faithful minister

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A. M. 4094. 5 And now I beseech thee, lady, ^f not
A. D. 90. as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, ^g that we love one another.

6 And ^h this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, ⁱ as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

7 For ^k many deceivers are entered into the world, ^l who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. ^m This is a deceiver, and an antichrist.

^f 1 John ii. 7, 8; iii. 11.—^g John xiii. 84; xv. 12; Eph. v. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 8; 1 John iii. 23.—^h John xiv. 15, 21; xv. 10; 1 John ii. 5; v. 3.—ⁱ 1 John ii. 24.—^k 1 John iv. 1. ^l 1 John iv. 2, 3.—^m 1 John ii. 22; iv. 3.—ⁿ Mark xiii. 9.

of Christ; for such derive great happiness from the faith and holiness of their disciples.

Verse 5. *Now, I beseech thee*, Kuria—This sort of address suits a particular person much better than a whole church, consisting of many individuals, to which, in the opinion of some, this letter was directed; *not as though I wrote a new commandment*—A commandment which thou didst never hear before; *but that which we had from the beginning*—Of our Lord's ministry. Indeed it was in some sense from the beginning of the world; *that we love one another*—More abundantly. The apostle does not here speak of a new commandment in the sense in which our Lord used that phrase John xiii. 34; (see on 1 John ii. 7, 8;) but his meaning is, either that the commandment to love one another, which he gave to this family, was not a commandment which had never been delivered to the church before, or that it was not a commandment peculiar to the gospel. The first of these seems to be the apostle's meaning; as he tells this matron that the disciples of Christ had had this commandment delivered to them from the beginning. In inculcating mutual love among the disciples of Christ so frequently and so earnestly in all his writings, John showed himself to be, not only a faithful apostle of Christ, but a person of a most amiable and benevolent disposition; his own heart being full of love to all mankind, and particularly to the followers of Jesus, he wished to promote that holy and happy temper in all true Christians.

Verses 6, 7. *And this is love*—The principal proof of true love, first to God, and then to his people; *that we walk after his commandments*—That we be obedient to his will in all things. *This love is the great commandment*, which ye have heard from the beginning—Of our preaching; *that ye should walk in it*—Should persevere in love. *For many deceivers, &c.*—See on 1 John iv. 1: as if he had said, Carefully keep what you have heard from the beginning; for many seducers are come; *who confess not that Jesus Christ is come*—Or came, as *ερχομενον* (considered as the participle of the imperfect) may be rendered; for Jesus Christ was not on earth in the flesh when John wrote this; as the translation

8 ⁿ Look to yourselves, ^o that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 ^p Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, ^q neither bid him God speed;

11 For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.

^o Gal. iii. 4; Heb. x. 32, 35.—^p Or, *gained*. Some copies read, *which ye have gained*, but *that ye receive*, &c.—^q 1 John ii. 23.—^r Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 11; xvi. 22; Gal. i. 8, 9; 2 Tim. iii. 5; Tit. iii. 10.

in our Bible, *is come*, imports. He had come in the flesh, but was gone. So that no translation of this clause, which represents Jesus Christ as then present, can be just. The apostle alludes to the rise of those heretics, who affirmed that Christ came only in appearance; and who, of course, denied his priestly, if not also his prophetic and kingly office. *This*—Every one who does this, who does not acknowledge that Christ came in the flesh; *is a deceiver*—A seducer from God; *and antichrist*—An enemy to Christ.

Verses 8, 9. *Look to yourselves*—Take heed, lest you grow remiss or negligent in the course of your obedience. *That we lose not, &c.*—Lest you lose the reward of what you have already done, which every apostate does; *but that we receive*—Which every one that is faithful unto death shall do; *a full reward*—That, having fully employed all our talents to the glory of him that gave them, we may receive the whole portion of felicity which God has promised to diligent, persevering Christians. *Receive this as a certain rule*; *whosoever transgresseth*—Any law of God; *and abideth not*—Does not persevere; *in his belief of, and obedience to, the doctrine of Christ, hath not God*—For his Father and his God. *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ*—Believing and obeying it; *hath both the Father and the Son*—Who have confirmed that doctrine in the most ample manner.

Verses 10, 11. *If there come any unto you*—Either as a teacher or a brother; *and bring not this doctrine*—Of Christ, namely, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did come in the flesh to save mankind; or advance any thing contrary to it, or any other branch of Christ's doctrine; *receive him not into your house*—Either as a teacher or a brother; *neither bid him God speed*—Give him no encouragement therein; *for he that biddeth him God speed*—That gives him any encouragement; *is partaker of*—Is accessory to; *his evil deeds*—We may infer, from what the apostle here says, 1st, That when those who professed to be the disciples of Christ came to any place where they were not known to the brethren who resided there, nor were recommended to them by

A. M. 4094. 12 'Having many things to write unto
A. D. 90. you, I would not *write* with paper and
ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak

' 3 John 13.—' Gr. *mouth to mouth*.

some with whom they were acquainted, they made themselves known to them as the real disciples of Christ, by declaring their faith. This shows the propriety of the apostle's advice to this pious matron and her children. 2d, That as the Christians in those days exercised hospitality to their stranger brethren, who were employed in spreading the gospel; so the Christian sister to whom the apostle wrote this letter, being probably rich, and of a benevolent disposition, thought herself under an obligation to supply the wants of those strangers who went about preaching. Wherefore, to prevent her from being deceived by impostors, the apostle here directs her to require such teachers to give an account of the doctrines which they taught; and if she found that they did not hold the true Christian doctrine, he advised her not to receive them into her house, nor to give them any countenance. And this advice of the apostle was certainly perfectly proper, because they who entertained, or otherwise showed respect to, false teachers, enabled them the more effectually to spread their erroneous doctrine, to the seduction and ruin of those whom they deceived.

Verses 12, 13. *Having many things to write*—Concerning these and other subjects; *I would not*—Ὁκ ἐβλήθη, *I was not minded*, to communicate them by *paper and ink*—Probably the apostle meant that he had many things to say concerning the characters and actions of the false teachers; perhaps

³ face to face, *that ⁴ our joy may be full. A. M. 4094.
13 'The children of thy elect sister ⁵ greet thee. Amen. A. D. 90.

* John xvii. 13; 1 John i. 4.—' Or, *your*.—' 1 Pet. v. 13.

also he wished to mention to her the names of those that he had principally in view. But these things he did not think it proper to write in a letter; especially as he proposed to visit this matron and her children soon, and to converse with them personally. *The children of thy elect*—Or *Christian sister, greet thee*—It seems she was absent, if not dead, when the apostle wrote this. It is justly observed by Macknight, that "the word *elect* here, as in verse 1, doth not signify *chosen from eternity to salvation*. For the apostle could not know that the matron's sister was so elected, unless the matter had been made known to him by a particular revelation, which is not alleged to have been the case by any who so interpret election." But it signifies, as the same expression generally does, in other passages of Scripture, a true believer in Christ, who, as such, is in a state of acceptance with God, and one of his chosen people. See on Eph. i. 3-7. It is proper to observe here also, that the salutations which the Christians in the first age gave to each other, were not of the same kind with the salutations of unbelievers, which were wishes of temporal health and felicity only; but they were prayers for the health and happiness of their souls, and expressions of the most sincere love. See 3 John, verse 2. The apostle sent this matron the salutation of the children of her sister, to intimate to her that they were all Christians, and that they persevered in the true doctrine of the gospel.

THE THIRD EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

The apostle, in this short epistle to Gaius, (1.) Expresses his concern for his prosperity, and his joy in the honourable character he maintained for Christian candour, hospitality, and zeal, 1-8. (2.) He cautions him against the ambitious and turbulent practices of Diotrophes, but recommends Demetrius to his friendship, as a man of an excellent character, 9-12. (3.) He refers what he had further to say to a personal interview, 13, 14.

A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90.

THE elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, ^a whom I love ¹ in the truth.

² Beloved, I ² wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

^a 2 John 1.—¹ Or, truly.—² Or, pray.—² John 4.

Verse 1. *The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius*—Gaius, or, according to the Latin orthography, *Caius*, was a common name among the Romans. In the history of the Acts and in the epistles we meet with five persons of this name. 1st, One mentioned Acts xix. 29, called a man of Macedonia, and Paul's companion in travel. 2d, A Gaius of Derbe, a city of Lycaonia, mentioned Acts xx. 4. 3d, A Gaius with whom St. Paul lodged at Corinth, and called his *host*, Acts xvi. 23. 4th, One of that name, whom the apostle had baptized at Corinth, mentioned 1 Cor. i. 14, who probably was the same person with the Gaius last mentioned. 5th, A Gaius to whom John wrote this epistle, thought by Estius and Heuman to be a different person from all those above mentioned; because the apostle hath intimated, verse 4, that he was his convert, which they suppose he could not say of any of the Gaiuses mentioned above. Lardner supposes he was an eminent Christian, who lived in some city of Asia, not far from Ephesus, where St. John chiefly resided after his leaving Judea. For, verse 14, the apostle speaks of shortly coming to him, which he could not well have done if Gaius had lived at Corinth, or any other remote place. This Gaius being neither a bishop nor a deacon, but a private member of some church, (as appears by the contents of the epistle,) his hospitality to the brethren, who came to him, is a proof that he possessed some substance, and that he was of a very benevolent disposition. The design of St. John, in writing to him, was not to guard him against the attempts of the heretical teachers, who were gone abroad, or to condemn the errors which they were at great pains to propagate; but only, 1st, To praise Gaius for having showed kindness to some

³ For I rejoiced greatly, when the ^{A. M. 4094.} brethren came and testified of the ^{A. D. 90.} truth that is in thee, even as ^b thou walkest in the truth.

⁴ I have no greater joy than to hear that ^c my children walk in truth.

^c 1 Cor. iv. 15; Philem. 10.

Christian strangers, who, in journeying among the Gentiles, had come to the place where Gaius resided; and to encourage him to show them the like kindness, when they should call upon him again, in the course of their second journey. 2d, For the purpose of rebuking and restraining one Diotrophes, who had arrogantly assumed to himself the chief direction of the affairs of the church, of which Gaius was a member, and who had both refused to assist the brethren above mentioned, and had even hindered those from receiving and entertaining them who were desirous to do it. 3d, The apostle wrote this letter to commend an excellent person named Demetrius, who, in disposition and behaviour, being the reverse of Diotrophes, the apostle proposed him as a pattern, whom Gaius and the rest were to imitate.

Verses 2-4. *Beloved, I wish*—Or, *I pray*, as *ευχομαι* is translated by Beza, Estius, Erasmus, Schmidius, Doddridge, and others. *Above all things*—Or, *with respect to all things*, as *περι παντων* rather signifies; *that thou mayest prosper and be in health*—Namely, of body; *even as, I doubt not, thy soul prospereth*—In faith, love, and every virtue. *For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren*—Who went to the church, of which thou art a member; *came back and testified of the truth that is in thee*—Thy faith, love, and other Christian graces; *even as thou walkest in the truth*—Adornest the gospel by an exemplary conduct, and all good works. The apostle emphatically terms Gaius's joining works of charity with faith in the doctrines of the gospel, *the truth that was in him*. For there is no true faith without good works: it always produces good works: neither are any works good but such as proceed from faith. These two joined constitute the truth of religion. For ^b

A. M. 4094. 5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully what-
A. D. 90. soever thou doest to the brethren, and

to strangers;

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey^s after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth,^d taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we

^a Gr. worthy of God.

have, &c.—That is, nothing gives me greater joy, than to hear that my children walk in the truth—Such is the spirit of every true Christian pastor. It seems probable by this, as has been intimated above, that Gaius was converted by St. John. Hence, in speaking to him, he uses the tender style of paternal love, and his calling him one of his children, when writing under the character of the elder, has peculiar beauty and propriety.

Verses 5-8. *Beloved, thou doest faithfully*—Uprightly and sincerely; or, as *πιστον ποιεις* is more accurately rendered, *thou dost a faithful thing*; or a thing becoming a faithful person, or one who is a real believer; *whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers*—To thy fellow-Christians, known to thee, and to those with whom thou hast had no acquaintance. *Who have borne witness of thy charity before the church*—The congregation with whom I now reside; *whom*—Which brethren or Christian strangers; *if thou bring forward on their journey*—Supplied with what is needful; *after a godly sort*—In a manner worthy of God, or from a principle of divine love, and correspondent to the relation in which you and they stand to him; *thou shalt do well*—How tenderly does the apostle enjoin this! *Because that for his name's sake*—Out of zeal for his honour and interest; *they went forth*—To preach the gospel, abandoning their habitations, possessions, and callings; *taking nothing of the Gentiles*—Among whom they laboured, toward their support, that they might take off all suspicion of their being influenced by mercenary motives. *We, therefore*—Who do not undertake expensive journeys for the sake of preaching the gospel, and who have any habitation of our own; *ought to receive such*—Hospitably and respectfully; *that*—If Divine Providence do not give us opportunities of laying ourselves out, as they do, in the exercise of the ministerial office; *we might*—Though in a lower degree; *be fellow-helpers to the truth*—Which they preach, and may be entitled, through divine grace, to a share in their reward.

Verses 9-11. *I wrote*—Or *have written*; *to the church*—Probably that to which they came; *but Diotrephes, &c.*—As if he had said, But I fear lest my letter should not produce the desired effect; for Diotrephes, perhaps the pastor of it, *who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them*—To govern all things according to his own will; *receiveth us not*

might be fellow-helpers to the truth. A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90. 9 I wrote unto the church: but Dio-

trepthes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.

^d 1 Cor. ix. 12, 15.

—Neither them nor me; or, does not acknowledge my authority as an apostle of Christ. So did the mystery of iniquity already begin to work! As six or seven MSS. read here, *εγραψα αυ*, a reading which is followed by the Vulgate, the Syriac, and the Coptic versions, Macknight, supposing it to be the genuine reading, renders the clause, *I would have written*; remarking, that the letters which the apostles wrote to the churches, were all sent to the bishops and elders in those churches, to be by them read to the people in their public assemblies. So that "if Diotrephes was a bishop or elder of the church to which St. John would have written, the apostle might suspect that that imperious, arrogant man, would have suppressed his letter; consequently, to have written to a church of which he had usurped the sole government, would have answered no good purpose." *Wherefore, if I come*—As I hope I quickly shall; *I will remember*—Or, as *απομνησω* more properly signifies, *I will bring to remembrance*; *his deeds which he practiseth, prating against us*—Both them and me; *with malicious words*—As if I were not an apostle, but had assumed that office. "In thus speaking, the writer of this epistle showed himself to be Diotrephes's superior. It is therefore highly probable that the writer of it was not the person called by the ancients *John the presbyter*, but *John the apostle*. Heuman and Lardner are of opinion the apostle only meant that he would put Diotrephes in mind of his evil deeds, and endeavour to persuade him to repent of them by mild admonitions. But there is no occasion to give a mild sense to the apostle's words: for, allowing that John threatened to punish Diotrephes for his insolence, in prating against him with malicious words, and for his uncharitableness in refusing to entertain and assist the brethren and the strangers, his threatenings did not proceed from resentment, but from zeal for the interests of religion, in which he is to be commended; because, as Whitby remarks on this verse, 'private offences against ourselves must be forgiven and forgotten; but when the offence is an impediment to the faith, and very prejudicial to the church, it is to be opposed and publicly reprov'd.'"—Macknight. *Neither doth he himself receive the brethren*—Though he knows they come from us; *and forbiddeth them that would*—Receive them, to do it; *and casteth them*—Who entertain them contrary to his

A. M. 4094. 11 Beloved, * follow not that which
A. D. 90. is evil, but that which is good. 'He
that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth
evil hath not seen God.

12 Demetrius * hath good report of all *men*,
and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear
record; ^b and ye know that our record is true.

* Psa. xxxvii. 27; Isa. i. 16, 17; 1 Pet. iii. 11.—^c 1 John ii.
29; iii. 6, 9.

orders; *out of the church*. But as for thee, *beloved*,
follow—Or imitate; *not that which is evil*—In Dio-
trophes, or any one; *but that which thou seest to be*
good in those with whom thou art acquainted; that
is, behold such a conduct as that of Diotrophes with
a just abhorrence, and act according to that model
of humility and condescension which you have seen
in others. *He that doeth good*—From a proper prin-
ciple, namely, from love to God, in obedience to his
will, and with a view to his glory; *is of God*—He
knows God, and, as one of his people, imitates him;
but he that doeth evil—That harbours unkind tem-
pers in his heart, and acts in an unfriendly manner
toward the servants of Christ, in their wants and
necessities, whatever high notions he may entertain
of himself, *hath not seen* or known *God*—But is evi-
dently ignorant of his perfections and of his will,
and even an enemy to him.

Verse 12. *Demetrius*, on the contrary, *hath good*
report—Hath a good testimony from all that know
him; *and of the truth*—The gospel; *itself*—His tem-
per and conduct being conformable to its precepts,
and he having exerted himself greatly to propagate
it. *Yea, and we also bear record*—I, and they that
are with me; *and ye know that our record is true*—
That every commendation I give is well founded.

Ver. 13, 14. *I had many other things to write*—To
communicate to thee concerning the affairs of your

13 ^d I had many things to write, but ^e I will not with ink and pen write unto
A. M. 4094. thee :
A. D. 90.

14 But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and
we shall speak ^f face to face. Peace *be* to thee.
Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by
name.

^g 1 Tim. iii. 7.—^h John xxi. 24.—ⁱ 2 John 12.—^j Gr.
mouth to mouth.

church, and concerning Diotrophes; *but I will not*—
I am not minded; *to write unto thee with ink and*
pen—Meaning, probably, lest this letter should fall
into hands who might make an improper use of it.
But I trust I shall shortly see thee—Lardner con-
jectures that John did actually visit Gaius; and adds, I
please myself with the supposition that his journey
was not in vain, but that Diotrophes submitted and
acquiesced in the advices and admonitions of the
apostle. *Peace be to thee*—And every desirable
blessing, from God our Father, and Christ Jesus our
Lord. *Our friends salute thee*—Our translators
have inserted the word *our* in this clause without
any authority. The apostle's words are *οι φίλοι*, *the*
friends, an expression nowhere else found in Scrip-
ture; but it applies excellently to the primitive
Christians, as it denotes, in the strongest manner,
the love which, in the first ages, subsisted among
the true disciples of Christ. *Greet the friends by*
name—That is, in the same manner as if I had
named them one by one. The apostle, by sending
a salutation to the faithful disciples of Christ, who
were in the church of which Gaius was a member,
and who were living together in great love, showed
his paternal and affectionate regard for them, and
encouraged them to be steadfast in their adherence
to the truth and grace of the gospel, and to walk
worthy of it.

PREFACE

TO THE

GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE.

WE learn from the inscription of this epistle, that the writer of it was Judas, the "brother of James;" not of James the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, but of James the son of Alphaeus, the author of the epistle that bears his name. Jude was therefore an apostle. Indeed we find his name mentioned in two catalogues of the apostles given us by St. Luke; namely, Luke vi. 14-16; Acts i. 13. In the catalogue, however, given Matt. x. 3, in the place of Judas, we find "Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;" and in Mark iii. 18, "Thaddeus," simply. But as all the evangelists agree that there were only twelve apostles, we must suppose that Judas, the brother of James, was surnamed Lebbeus and Thaddeus. The reason why he is styled "brother of James" probably was, because James was the elder brother, and because, after our Lord's ascension, James became a person of considerable note among the apostles, and was highly esteemed by the Jewish believers. This Judas, being the brother of James, was, consequently, the brother, or kinsman, of Christ: see preface to the epistle of James. Accordingly, we find James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, expressly called the brethren of Jesus, Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3. Of his election to the apostleship, see Luke vi. 13.

As it is certain, then, that Judas was an apostle, no other proof is wanted of the divine inspiration and authority of his epistle. Accordingly, we find the matters contained in it, in every respect, suitable to the character of an inspired apostle of Christ. For the writer's design in it was, evidently, to characterize and condemn the heretical teachers, who in that age endeavoured, by a variety of base arts, to make disciples; to reprobate the impious doctrines which they taught for the sake of advantage, and to enforce the practice of holiness on all who professed the gospel. In short, there is no error taught, nor evil practice enjoined, for the sake of which any impostor could be moved to impose a forgery of this kind on the world. Hence, although the authenticity of this epistle was doubted of by some in the early ages, yet, as soon as it was understood that its author was Judas, the brother of James, mentioned in the catalogues of the apostles, it was generally received as an apostolical inspired writing, and read publicly in the churches as such. The evidence of these important facts is stated and proved at large by Lardner, in his "Credibility of the Gospel History;" to which the reader, who desires full satisfaction on the subject, is referred.

The inscription of this epistle leads us to believe that it was written to all, without distinction, who had embraced the gospel; and, from its contents, we plainly see that the design of the apostle was, "by describing the character of the false teachers, and pointing out the divine judgments which persons of such a character had reason to expect, to caution Christians against listening to their suggestions, and being thereby perverted from the faith and purity of the gospel." Indeed, Jude's design seems to have been the same with that of Peter in writing his second letter, between the second chapter of which, and this epistle of Jude, there is a remarkable similarity; which, as was observed in the preface to that epistle, was probably owing to this circumstance, that both the apostles drew their character of the false teachers, against whom they cautioned their readers, from the character given of the false prophets, in some ancient Jewish author. Or, as Bishop Sherlock observes, Jude might have the second epistle of Peter before him when he wrote; a circumstance which, if admitted as probable, will give us light as to the date of this epistle. That of Peter was written but a very little while before his death; whence we may gather, that Jude lived some time after that event; and saw that grievous declension in the church which Peter had foretold. But he passes over some things mentioned by Peter, repeats some, in different expressions, and with a different view, and adds others; clearly evidencing thereby the wisdom of God which rested upon him.

PREFACE TO THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE.

Thus St. Peter cites and confirms St. Paul's writings, and is himself cited and confirmed by St. Jude.

Mill hath fixed the date of this epistle to A. D. 90; but Dodwell, who is followed by Cave, supposes, with a greater appearance of probability, that it was written soon after the destruction of Jerusalem; namely, about A. D. 70 or 71. L'Enfant and Beausobre also thought it was written about the same time; namely, between the years 70 and 75. There are various other opinions respecting its date, among the learned. But, upon the whole, though the precise date of it cannot be determined, it is highly probable that it was written in the latter part of the apostolic age, and not long before Jude's death.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

J U D E.

(1.) After a general salutation, Jude exhorts the Christians to whom he wrote, to contend earnestly for, and steadily to adhere to, the common Christian faith, against those false teachers who attempted to undermine it; reminding them of the destruction which came on God's professing people, yea, on the apostate angels, for their sins; as well as on the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, 1-7. (2.) He gives an awful representation of the character of the seducers to whom he refers, and of their miserable end foretold by Enoch, 8-16. (3.) Cautions them against being surprised at the rise of impostors, and admonishes to fortify themselves against their seductions by firmness in the faith, ardency of love to God and each other, fervent prayer, and prudent care one of another, 17-23. (4.) Concludes with a solemn ascription of praise to God, 24, 25.

A. M. 4070. **JUDE**,^a the servant of Jesus Christ,
A. D. 66. and ^a brother of James, to them
that are sanctified by God the Father, and ^b preserved in Jesus Christ, and ^c called :

^a St. Simon and St. Jude, epistle, verse 1 to verse 9.—^a Luke vi. 16; Acts i. 13.

Verses 1, 2. *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ*—The highest glory which any, either man or angel, can aspire to. The word *servant*, under the old covenant, was adapted to the spirit of fear and bondage, which cleaved to that dispensation. But when the time appointed of the Father was come for the sending of his Son, to *redeem them that were under the law*, the word *servant* (used by the apostles concerning themselves and all the children of God) signified one that, having the Spirit of adoption, was made free by the Son of God. His being a servant is the fruit and perfection of his being a Son. And whenever the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the New Jerusalem, then it will be indeed that *his servants shall serve him*, Rev. xxii. 3. *And brother of James*—So well known by his distinguished services in the cause of Christ and of his gospel. St. James was the more eminent, namely, *James the Less*, usually stiled the brother of the Lord; and Jude, being his brother, might also have been called the *brother of Christ*, rather than the *brother of James*. But he avoided that designation in the inscription of a letter, which he wrote in the character of an apostle, to show, that whatever respect as a man he might deserve on account of his relation to Christ, he derived no authority from it as an apostle, nor indeed claimed any. *To them that are sanctified by God the Father*—Devoted to his service, set apart for him and made holy, through the influence of his grace; *and preserved in Jesus Christ*—In the

b

2 Mercy unto you, and ^d peace, and ^e love, be multiplied. A. M. 4070.
A. D. 66.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you ^e of the common salvation, it was need-

^b John xvii. 11, 12, 15; 1 Pet. i. 5.—^c Rom. i. 7.—^d 1 Pet. i. 2; 2 Pet. i. 2.—^e Tit. i. 4.

faith and profession of Christ, and union with him, and by his power. In other words, brought into the fellowship of his religion, and guarded by his grace in the midst of a thousand snares, which might have tempted them to have made shipwreck of their faith. *And called*—By the preaching of the word, by the dispensations of divine providence, and by the drawings of divine grace; called to receive the whole gospel blessing in time and in eternity. These things are premised, lest any of them should be discouraged by the terrible things which are afterward mentioned. *Mercy and peace, &c.*—A holy and truly apostolical blessing, says Estius; observing, that from this, and the benedictions in the two epistles of Peter, we learn that the benedictions in Paul's epistles are to be completed by adding the word *multiplied*.

Verse 3. *When I gave all diligence*—Or *made all haste*, as *πασαν σπουδην ποιημενος* literally signifies, Jude being informed of the assiduity, and perhaps the success, with which the false teachers were spreading their pernicious errors, found it necessary to write this letter to the faithful without delay. *To write to you of the common salvation*—The salvation from the guilt and power of sin, into the favour and image of God here, and from all the consequences of sin into eternal felicity and glory hereafter; a salvation called *common*, because it belongs equally to all who believe; to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews; to men of all nations and conditions; designed for all, and enjoyed in part by all believers. For the

685

A. M. 4070. ful for me to write unto you, and ex-
A. D. 66. hort you, that ye should earnestly
contend for the faith which was once delivered
unto the saints.

4 ^aFor there are certain men crept in un-

^a Phil. i. 27; 1 Tim. i. 18; vi. 12; 2 Tim. i. 13; iv. 7.—^b Gal. ii. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 1.—^c Rom. ix. 21, 22; 1 Pet. ii. 8.

same reason Paul terms the faith of the gospel, *the common faith*, (Tit. i, 4,) because an opportunity of believing is afforded to all. Here the design of the epistle is expressed, the end of which exactly answers the beginning. *It was needful for me to exhort you that ye should earnestly contend*—Yet humbly, meekly, and lovingly, otherwise your contending will only hurt your cause, if not destroy your souls; *for the faith*—All the fundamental truths of the gospel. “In the circumstances in which the faithful were when Jude wrote this letter, an exhortation to hold fast and maintain the true doctrine of the gospel against the false teachers, was more necessary and profitable for the disciples, than explications of the particular doctrines of the gospel. By *strenuously contending for the faith*, the apostle did not mean contending for it with fire and sword, but their endeavouring, in the spirit of meekness and love, to establish the true doctrines of the gospel, by arguments drawn, not only from the Jewish Scriptures, but especially from the writings of the evangelists and apostles, which were all, or most of them, published when Jude wrote this letter. In the same manner they were strongly to oppose and confute the errors of the false teachers. The word *παρωλεσθαι* properly signifies, to strive as in the Olympic games, that is, with their whole force.” *Once delivered to the saints*—By *απαξ*, once, Macknight understands *formerly*, the word being used in that sense, verse 5. But Estius and Beza adopt the common translation, supposing the meaning of the clause to be, that the faith spoken of was delivered to the saints once for all, and is never to be changed; nothing is to be added to it, and nothing taken from it. By the *saints* Jude first means the holy apostles and prophets of Christ, (in which sense the word *saints* is used, Col. iii. 26, compared with Eph. iii. 5,) to whom the Lord Jesus delivered the doctrine of the gospel in all its parts, including the truths which men were to believe, and the precepts they were to perform, together with the promises of present and eternal salvation made to the believing and obedient, and the threatenings denounced against the unbelieving and disobedient. This doctrine the apostles and evangelists delivered to their hearers in their various discourses, and consigned it to writing for the instruction of future ages. “Hence it is evident that the faith for which Christians are to contend strenuously, is that alone which is contained in the writings of the evangelists, apostles, and Jewish prophets. Now as they have expressed the things which were revealed to them in words dictated by the Spirit, (1 Cor. ii. 13,) we are to contend, not only for the things contained in their writings, but also for

wares, ^b who were before of old or- A. M. 4070.
dained to this condemnation, ungodly A. D. 66.
men, ^cturning ^kthe grace of our God into lasciv-
iousness, and ^ldenying the only Lord God, and
our Lord Jesus Christ.

^d 2 Pet. ii. 10.—^e Titus ii. 11; Heb. xii. 15.—^f Titus i. 16;
2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 John ii. 22.

that form of words in which they have expressed these things, lest by contending for forms invented and established by human authority, as better fitted to express the truth than the words of inspiration, we fall into error. See 2 Tim. i. 13. Jude's exhortation ought in a particular manner to be attended to by the ministers of the gospel, whose duty more especially it is to preserve the people from error, both in opinion and practice.”—Macknight.

Verse 4. *For there are certain men* (see the margin) *crept in unawares*—Insinuating themselves into people's affections by their plausible pretences, and leavening them by degrees with their errors. The ungodly teachers here described seem to have been the Nicolaitans, mentioned Rev. ii. 6, whose doctrine Christ himself declared to be hateful to him. Perhaps the Gnostics and Carpocratians, the successors of the Nicolaitans, were also meant. The Nicolaitans are said to have maintained that marriage was a human invention, not binding on Christians; on which account they had women in common, and practised unnatural lusts, as is plain from Jude's account of them. And they hardened themselves against the fear of punishment in a future state for these crimes, by extolling the goodness and mercy of God, which they thus perverted to lasciviousness. *Who were of old ordained*—Or rather, as the original expression, *προγεγραμμενοι εις τωτο το κριμα*, literally signifies, *written, or described, ofore to this condemnation*—Even as early as Enoch, by whom it was foretold, that by their wilful sins they would incur this condemnation. “Jude means, that these wicked teachers had their punishment *before written*, that is, foretold, in what is written concerning the wicked Sodomites and rebellious Israelites, whose crimes were the same with theirs; and whose punishment was not only a *proof of God's* resolution to punish sinners, but an example of the punishment which he would inflict on them. Others think that in the word *προγεγραμμενοι*, *written before*, there is an allusion to the ancient custom of writing laws on tables, which were hung up in public places, that the people might know the punishment annexed to the breaking of the laws. If this is the allusion, the apostle's meaning will be, that the wicked teachers, of whom he is speaking, were, by the divine law, condemned to severe punishment from the beginning. *Turning the grace of our God*—Revealed in the gospel; *into lasciviousness*—Into an occasion of more abandoned wickedness, even to countenance their lewd and filthy practices. It seems these ungodly men interpreted the doctrine of justification by faith, in such a manner as to free believers from all obligation to obey the

A. M. 4070. 5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that ^m the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward ⁿ destroyed them that believed not.

6 And ^o the angels which kept not their ¹ first estate, but left their own habitation, ^p he hath reserved

^m 1 Cor. x. 9.—ⁿ Num. xiv. 29, 37; xxvi. 64; Psa. cvi. 26; Heb. iii. 17, 19.—^o John viii. 44.—¹ Or, *principality*.

law of God, and taught that they might commit the worst actions without being liable to punishment, if they possessed faith; by which they meant the mere speculative belief and outward profession of the gospel. *Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*—See on 2 Pet. ii. 1. The original words, *και τον μονον δεσποτην Θεου και κυριον ημων Ιησυν Χριστον αρνημενοι*, “may be translated various ways, all equally literal: 1st, *And denying the only Lord God, even our Lord Jesus Christ*. According to this translation, one person only is spoken of here, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is called *the only Lord God*. 2d, *Denying both the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. According to this translation, two persons are distinctly spoken of, namely, *the one Lord God*, or God the Father, and *our Lord Jesus Christ* his Son. 3d, *And denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. This, which is the translation in our English Bible, and which, in sense, is not different from the second rendering, I have adopted,” says Macknight, “not only because, according to it, two persons are spoken of as denied, namely, *the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*, but because it represents Jude’s sentiment as precisely the same with John’s 1st epist. ii. 22, *He is the antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son*. By declaring that those ungodly teachers denied both the Father and the Son, the apostle showed to what a pitch of impiety they had proceeded.

Verse 5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, &c.*—I will remind you of some examples of God’s judgments against such persons. Eusebius observes, that “by proposing the following examples of the destruction of sinners from the Old Testament history, the apostle designed to show, that the God of the Old Testament is the same with the God of the New, in opposition to the Manicheans, who denied this; also to prove that the goodness of God will not hinder him from punishing the wicked under the new dispensation, any more than it hindered him from punishing them under the old.” In this passage Jude has mentioned two of the instances of the divine vengeance against atrocious sinners, which Peter took notice of, 2 epist. ii. 4, 5, (where see the notes,) and in place of the third instance, the destruction of the old world, he hath introduced the destruction of the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness. *Though ye once knew this*—Were informed of it, and received it as a truth; *that the Lord, having saved the people out of Egypt*—By a train of wonderful miracles; *afterward de-*

in everlasting chains under darkness ^{A. M. 4070}
^{A. D. 66.} ¹ unto the judgment of the great day.

7 Even as ^r Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after ² strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

^p 2 Pet. ii. 4.—^q Rev. xx. 10.—^r Gen. xix. 24; Deut. xxix. 23; 2 Pet. ii. 6.—^s Gr. *other*

stroyed them that believed not—That is, destroyed the far greater part of that very people, whom he had once saved in a very extraordinary manner. Let no one, therefore, presume upon past mercies, as if he were now out of danger. Jude does not mention the various sins committed by the Israelites in the wilderness, such as their worshipping the golden calf, refusing to go into Canaan, when commanded of God, their fornication with the Midianitish women, their frequent murmurings, &c., but he sums up the whole in their *unbelief*; because it was the source of all their sins.

Verse 6. *And the angels which kept not their first estate*—Or, as the clause may be rendered, *their first dignity, or principality*, (see on 2 Pet. ii. 4,) namely, the dignity or principality assigned them; *but left their own habitation*—Properly *their own* by the free gift of God. The apostle’s manner of speaking insinuates that they attempted to raise themselves to a higher station than that which God had allotted to them; consequently, that the sin for which they were and are to be punished, was pride and rebellion. *He hath reserved*—Delivered to be kept; *in everlasting chains under darkness*—O how unlike their own habitation! *Everlasting chains* is a metaphorical expression, which denotes a perpetual confinement, from which it is no more in their power to escape, than a man, who is strongly bound with iron chains, can break them. *Unto the judgment of the great day*—Elsewhere called *the day of the Lord*, and emphatically *that day*. In our Lord’s description of the general judgment, he tells us that the wicked are to *depart into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*; which implies that these wicked spirits are to be punished with the wicked of mankind. Observe, reader, when these fallen angels came out of the hands of God, they were holy, (else God made that which was *evil*,) and being holy they were beloved of God, (else he hated the image of his own spotless purity.) But now he loves them no more, they are doomed to endless destruction; (for if he loved them still, he would love what is sinful;) and both his former love, and his present righteous and eternal displeasure, toward the same work of his own hands, are *because he changeth not*; because he invariably loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity.

Verses 7, 8. *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha*—See on 2 Pet. ii. 6–9; *and the cities about them*—These were Admah and Zeboim. The four are mentioned Deut. xxix. 23; Zoar, the fifth city in the

A. M. 4070. 8 * Likewise also these *filthy dream-*
 A. D. 66. ers defile the flesh, despise dominion,
 and 'speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet ^a Michael the archangel, when contend-

* 2 Pet. ii. 10.—† Exod. xxii. 23.—‡ Dan. x. 13;

plain of Sodom, was spared, at the request of Lot, for a place of refuge to him and his family. *In like manner*—Τὸν ὁμοίον τοῖς τρόποις, *in a manner like to these*; that is, either like to these wicked teachers, or like to the inhabitants of these wicked cities, Sodom and Gomorrah; *giving themselves over to fornication*—The word is applicable to any sort of uncleanness; *and going after strange flesh*—Giving themselves up to unnatural lusts; *are set forth for an example*—To other presumptuous sinners; *suffering the vengeance of eternal fire*—Having their lovely and fruitful country turned into a kind of hell upon earth. The meaning is, The vengeance which they suffered is an example, or type, of eternal fire. *Likewise*—Ὁμοίως μὲν τοῖς, *in like manner, indeed*; *these filthy dreamers*—So our translators render the word *εὐπνιάζοντες*, an epithet which the persons described undoubtedly deserved. The word, however, only signifies *dreamers*; or rather, persons cast into a deep sleep, namely, into a state of ignorance and insensibility, of negligence and sloth, with respect to spiritual and eternal things; sleeping and dreaming all their lives. *Defile the flesh*—Their own bodies, which ought to be sacred, together with their spirits, to the service of God. *Despise dominion*—Those that are invested with it by Christ, and made by him the overseers of his flock; or, he may mean that they despised their civil rulers; *and speak evil of dignities*—Of persons in the most honourable stations. The Jews, fancying it sinful to obey the heathen magistrates, despised both them and their office. The ungodly teachers, of whom Jude speaks, carried the matter still further; they reviled all magistrates whatever, as enemies to the natural liberty of mankind.

Verse 9. *Yet Michael, &c.*—It does not appear whether St. Jude learned this by any revelation, or from an ancient tradition. It suffices that these things were not only true, but acknowledged to be so by them to whom he wrote. Michael is mentioned Dan. x. 13, 21; xii. 1, as standing up in defence of Daniel's people. "Because the book of Daniel is the first sacred writing in which proper names are given to particular angels, some have fancied that, during the Babylonish captivity, the Jews invented these names, or learned them from the Chaldeans. But this seems an unfounded conjecture. For the angel who appeared to Zacharias, (Luke i. 19,) called himself *Gabriel*, which shows that that name was not of Chaldean invention." *The archangel*—This word occurs but once more in the sacred writings, namely, 1 Thess. iv. 16. So that, whether there be one archangel only, or more, it is not possible for us to determine. Michael is called *one of the chief princes*, Dan. x. 13, and the *great prince*, xii. 1; (on which passages see the

ing with the devil, he disputed about A. M. 4070
 the body of Moses, *durst not bring A. D. 66.
 against him a railing accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke thee.

xii. 1; Rev. xii. 7.—† 2 Pet. ii. 11.—‡ Zech. iii. 2.

notes.) And, because it is said, (Rev. xii. 7,) that Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels, Estius conjectures that Michael is the chief or prince of all the angels. But this argument is not conclusive. *When contending with the devil, he disputed* (at what time we know not) concerning *the body of Moses*—Beza, Estius, Tillotson, and other good writers, think this passage is illustrated by Deut xxxiv. 6, where it is said the Lord buried Moses in a valley, in the land of Moab, and that no one knew of his sepulchre. They suppose that, had the devil been able to discover to the Jews the place where Moses was interred, they would afterward have paid an idolatrous honour to his remains; and it would have gratified his malice exceedingly, to have made him an occasion of idolatry, after his death, who had been so great an enemy to it in his life. To prevent this, he thinks, Michael buried his body secretly. This proves, by the way, that *good angels* are sometimes concerned in limiting the power of the devils, which must, no doubt, be a great vexation to those malignant spirits. But Mr. Baxter suggests it as a doubt, whether it were about the dead body of Moses, or Moses exposed on the water, when an infant, that there was this contention. Baxter suggests also another interpretation, in his note on this verse. Because the apostle here seems to allude to Zech. iii. 1, where we read of Joshua the high-priest, (representing the Jewish people,) standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him; and the Lord, namely, by his angel, saying unto Satan, *The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee*: and inasmuch as the subject of that contention, between the angel and Satan, was the restoration of the Jewish Church and state, Baxter thinks that by the body of Moses here may be meant the Jewish constitution, civil and religious, which Moses had established. An interpretation which Macknight seems to countenance; "Michael is spoken of as one of the chief angels, who took care of the Israelites as a nation. He may therefore have been the angel of the Lord, before whom Joshua, the high-priest, is said, (Zech. iii. 1) to have stood, *Satan being at his right hand to resist him*, namely, in his design of restoring the Jewish Church and state, called by Jude, *the body of Moses*, just as the Christian Church is called by Paul, *the body of Christ*." And this interpretation, however apparently improbable, receives some countenance from the consideration, that, among the Hebrews, the *body* of a thing is often used for the thing itself. Thus, Rom. vii. 24, *the body of sin* signifies *sin* itself. So the body of Moses may signify Moses himself, who is sometimes put in the New Testament for his law, as 2 Cor. iii. 15, *When Moses is read, &c.*; Acts xv.

A. M. 4070. 10 ^a But these speak evil of those
A. D. 66. things which they know not: but
what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in
those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Wo unto them! for they have gone
in the way ^a of Cain, and ^b ran greedily
after the error of Balaam for reward, and

^a 2 Pet. ii. 12.—^b Gen. iv. 5; 1 John iii. 12.—^c Num. xxiii.
7, 21; 2 Pet. ii. 15.—^d Num. xvi. 1, &c.

21, *Moses hath in every city them that preach
him.*

*Durst not bring against him a railing accusa-
tion*—But so revered the divine presence as to speak
with moderation and gentleness, even to that great
enemy of God and men. Michael's duty, says Arch-
bishop Tillotson, "restrained him, and probably his
discretion too. As he durst not offend God in doing
a thing so much beneath the dignity and perfection
of his nature, so he could not but think that the devil
would have been too hard for him at railing; a
thing to which, as the angels have no disposition, so
I believe they have no talent, no faculty at it; the
cool consideration whereof should make all men,
particularly those who call themselves *divines*, and
especially in controversies about religion, ashamed
and afraid of this manner of disputing." *But simply
said*—So great was his modesty! *The Lord
rebuke thee*—I leave thee to the Judge of all. The
argument of the apostle certainly does not lie in any
regard shown by the angel to the devil, as a *dignitary*,
and one who exercises dominion over subordi-
nate evil spirits; for to be the leader of a band
of such inexcusable rebels could entitle him to
no respect; but it arises from the detestable char-
acter of the devil; as if the apostle had said, If the
angel did not rail even against the devil, how much
less ought we against *men in authority*, even suppos-
ing them in some things to behave amiss? To do it,
therefore, when they behave well, must be a wick-
edness yet much more aggravated.—Doddridge.

Verses 10, 11. *But these*—Without any shame;
speak evil of those things which they know not—
Namely, the things of God; of whose nature and
excellence, truth and importance, they are entirely
ignorant. See on 1 Cor. ii. 14. *But what they know
naturally as brute beasts*—By instinct, as animals
void of reason; *in those things they corrupt them-
selves*—They make them occasions of sin: or, they
are corrupted by the gross and scandalous abuse of
them, to the dishonour of God, and their own infamy
and destruction. Thus the apostle signifies that,
notwithstanding their high pretensions to knowl-
edge, they had no knowledge even concerning the
use of their own bodies, but what they derived from
natural instinct as brute animals; and that, instead
of using that knowledge rightly, they thereby des-
troyed both their souls and bodies. Thus, in this
passage, he condemned the lascivious practices of
the Nicolaitans, and of all the ungodly teachers, who
defended the promiscuous use of women, and con-
futed the argument taken from natural appetite, by

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perished ^a in the gainsaying of Core. A. M. 4070.
12 ^d These are spots in your ^e feasts A. D. 66.

of charity, when they feast with you, feeding
themselves without fear: ^f clouds *they are*
without water, ^g carried about of winds; trees
whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead,
^h plucked up by the roots;

^a 2 Pet. ii. 13.—^b 1 Cor. xi. 21.—^c Prov. xxv. 14.—^d Eph.
iv. 14.—^e Matt. xv. 13.

which they vindicated their common whoredoms.
Wo unto them—Of all the apostles, Jude alone, and
that in this single passage, denounces a wo. St. Pe-
ter, to the same effect, pronounces them *curse*
children. Macknight, who renders the clause, *wo is to
them*, considers it as only a declaration of the mis-
ery which was to come on them: in which sense only
the phrase is used by our Lord, Matt. xxiv. 19; *Wo
unto them that are with child, &c.*, for certainly this
was no wish of punishment, since to be *with child*,
and to *give suck in those days*, was no crime. But
it was a declaration of the misery which was coming
on persons in that helpless condition. *For they have
gone in the way of Cain*—The murderer; *and ran
greedily*—Greek, *εξευθνοσεν*, have been poured out,
like a torrent without banks; *after the error of Ba-
laam*—The covetous false prophet, being strongly
actuated, like him, by a passion for riches, and there-
fore drawing money from their disciples by allow-
ing them to indulge their lusts without restraint.
See on 2 Pet. ii. 15. *And perished in the gainsay-
ing of Core*—Having opposed God's messengers, as
Korah did, like him and his company, vengeance
will overtake them, as it did him. Here, as in many
passages of Scripture, a thing is said to have hap-
pened which was only to happen. This manner of
speaking was used to show the absolute certainty of
the thing spoken of. *The gainsaying*, here mention-
ed, implies *rebellion*; for when princes and magistrates
are contradicted, it is rebellion. By declaring that the
ungodly teachers would perish in the rebellion of
Korah, Jude insinuated that these men, by opposing
the apostles of Christ, were guilty of a rebellion sim-
ilar to that of Korah and his companions, who op-
posed Moses and Aaron, on pretence that they were
no more commissioned by God, the one to be a
prince, the other a priest, than the rest of the con-
gregation, who, they said, were *all holy*, Num. xvi.
3, 13. By comparing these false and wicked teach-
ers to Cain, Balaam, and Korah, Jude has represent-
ed them as guilty of murder, covetousness, and am-
bition.

Verse 12. *These*—Ungodly teachers; *are spots*—
Blemishes; *in your feasts of charity*—Or *love-feasts*,
as *αγαπαις* is rendered by many interpreters. Com-
mentators, however, are not agreed what sort of
feasts they were. Some think they were those sup-
pers which the first Christians ate previous to their
eating the Lord's supper, of which St. Paul is sup-
posed to have spoken 1 Cor. xi. 21; but which, in
consequence of the abuse of them by persons of a
character like those here described, were soon laid

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A. M. 4070. 13 ¹ Raging waves of the sea, ¹ foam-
A. D. 66. ing out their own shame; wandering
stars, ¹ to whom is reserved the blackness of
darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, ^m the seventh from Adam,
prophesied of these, saying, Behold, ⁿ the Lord

¹ Isa. lvii. 20. — ¹ Phil. iii. 19. — ² Pet. ii. 17. — ^m Gen.
v. 18. — ⁿ Deut. xxxii. 2; Dan. vii. 10; Zech. xiv. 5; Matt.

aside. Others think Jude is speaking of the ancient *love-suppers*, which Tertullian hath described, (*Apol.*, chap. 39,) and which do not seem to have been accompanied with the eucharist. These were continued in the church to the middle of the fourth century, when they were prohibited to be kept in the churches. Dr. Benson observes, "they were called *love-feasts*, or suppers, because the richer Christians brought in a variety of provisions to feed the poor, the fatherless, the widows, and strangers, and ate with them to show their love to them." *When they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear*—Abandoning themselves to gluttony and excess, without any fear of God, or jealousy over themselves, and so bringing a great reproach on the gospel, and the religion of Christ. *Clouds without water*—Promising fertilizing showers of instruction and edification, but yielding none, or making a show of what they have not; see on 2 Pet. ii. 17; *carried about of winds*—Of temptation hither and thither, without any command of themselves, into various sorts of wickedness. *Trees without fruit*—The original expression, *δενδρα φθινοπωρινα*, is rendered by Macknight, *withered autumnal trees*; the latter word being derived from *φθινοπωρον*, which, according to Scapula, signifies, *The decline of autumn drawing toward winter*. Or, according to Phavorinus, it signifies *a disease in trees which withers their fruit*; a sense of the word which Beza has adopted in his translation. The translation of the Vulgate, *arbores autumnales infructuosæ*, gives the same sense with that of Macknight, and suggests, he thinks, a beautiful idea. For, "in the eastern countries, the finest fruits being produced in autumn, by calling the corrupt teachers *autumnal trees*, Jude intimated the just expectation which was entertained of their being fruitful in good doctrine: but by adding *ακαρπα, without fruit*, he marked their uselessness, and the disappointment of their disciples." *Twice dead*—First in the stock, and afterward in the graft; first by nature, and afterward by apostacy. Or dead under the Mosaic dispensation, (those ungodly teachers being mostly of the Jewish nation,) and though at first apparently quickened on their reception of the gospel, yet, through the abuse of its doctrines and privileges, dead and barren a second time: *plucked up by the roots*—As hopeless and irrecoverable. "There is a striking climax in this description of the false teachers: they were trees stripped of their leaves, and withering; they had no fruit, being barren that season: they were twice dead, having borne no fruit formerly: lastly, they were rooted out, as utterly barren."

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cometh with ten thousand of his saints, A. M. 4070
A. D. 66. 15 To execute judgment upon all,
and to convince all that are ungodly among them
of all their ungodly deeds which they have un-
godly committed, and of all their ^o hard speeches
which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

xxv. 31; 2 Thess. i. 7. — ^o 1 Sam. ii. 3; Psa. xxxi. 18; xciv. 4;
Mal. iii. 13.

Verse 13. *Raging waves of the sea*—Unstable in their doctrine, and turbulent and furious in their temper and manners, having no command of their irascible passions. *Foaming out their own shame*—By their wicked and outrageous behaviour, even among their disciples, showing their own filthiness to their great disgrace. The apostle seems here to have alluded to Isa. lvii. 20, *The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt*. *Wandering stars*—*πλανηται*, literally, *planets*, which shine for a time, but have no light in themselves. The Jews called their teachers *stars*, and Christian teachers are represented under the emblem of stars, Rev. i. 20; ii. 1. And as the planets seem to have a very irregular motion, being sometimes stationary and sometimes retrograde, they are very proper emblems of persons unsettled in their principles, and irregular in their behaviour, such as these men were. *To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness, &c.* Who will soon be driven to an eternal distance from the great original of light and happiness, to which they shall never return. Thus the apostle illustrates their desperate wickedness, by comparisons drawn from the air, earth, sea, and heavens.

Ver. 14, 15. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam*—Thus described to distinguish him from Enoch the son of Cain, (Gen. iv. 17,) who was only the third from Adam; so early was the prophecy delivered, referred to verse 4: *prophesied of these*—As well as of the antediluvian sinners. The first coming of Christ was revealed to Adam, his second and glorious coming to Enoch, who foretold the things which will conclude the last age of the world. St. Jude might know this either from some ancient book or tradition, or from immediate revelation. In whatever way he knew it, a precious fragment of antediluvian history is thus preserved to us by the special providence of God, who taught the Apostle Jude to distinguish between what was genuine and what was spurious in ancient story. "Though Moses has said nothing concerning Enoch's prophesying, yet by telling us that he was a person of such piety, as to be translated to heaven in the body without dying, he hath warranted us to believe Jude's account of him; namely, that God employed him, as he did Noah, in reforming the wicked of the age in which he lived, and that he inspired him to deliver the prophecy of which Jude speaks. *Saying, Behold*, (as if it were already done!) *The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints*—Or *holy ones*, namely, angels, with legions of whom his descent for the purpose here mentioned will be attended; *to execute*

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A. M. 4070. 16 These are murmurers, complain-
A. D. 66. ers, walking after their own lusts;
and ^p their mouth speaketh great swelling
words, ^q having men's persons in admiration
because of advantage.

17 ^r But, beloved, remember ye the words
which were spoken before of the apostles of our
Lord Jesus Christ;

^p 2 Peter ii. 18.—^q Proverbs xxviii. 21; James ii. 1, 9.
^r 2 Pet. iii. 2.—^s 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1; iv. 3; 2 Pet.
ii. 1; iii. 3.

judgment—Or to pass sentence, as ποιῆσαι κρίσιν may be rendered; upon all—According to their respective works. Herein Enoch looked beyond the flood: and to convince—Or convict rather, as ἐπέλεγεσθαι more properly signifies, by witnesses that cannot be confronted; all that are ungodly among them—Among those judged, and upon whom sentence is passed. Of all their ungodly deeds—Their wicked actions; which they have ungodly—Impiously; committed—Being destitute of the fear as well as love of God, and in defiance of his justice and wrath: and of all their hard—Their impious, atheistical, scoffing speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him—Namely, against Christ, as if he were an impostor, who was justly punished with an ignominious death; and against his people, representing them, although the excellent of the earth, of whom the world was not worthy, (Heb. xi. 38,) as the vilest of men.

Verse 16. *These are murmurers*—Against God and men, never contented with the allotments of Providence, or with the conduct of any about them; *complainers*—Μεμφιμοιοί, literally, *complainers of their fate*. Some think that the two expressions, *murmurers* and *complainers*, are synonymous terms to express the same thought with more strength and emphasis. If there be any difference in their signification, the former may imply their murmuring in general, the other the subject of their murmuring; they complained of their lot and condition in the world, and of the course of Providence. Jude, in writing this, seems to have had his eye upon the murmurings and complainings of the Israelites in the wilderness, which were highly displeasing to God, 1 Cor. x. 10. And writing, if not chiefly, yet at least in part, to such Christians as had been Jews, he might partly refer to the complaining temper prevalent among the Jews about this time, as Josephus testifies, in which the Judaizing Christians very much resemble them. *Walking after their own lusts*—Their own foolish and mischievous desires; the source this of their murmuring and complaining. For the plan of the divine government is in favour of piety and virtue, and vice cannot always prosper, or even hope to end well, in such a constitution of things; and *their mouth speaketh great swelling words*—In praise of themselves, as the only teachers who free men from the shackles of superstition. Or perhaps the apostle means that the false teachers spake in an insolent manner against the Roman magistrates for punishing them, and against the laws for prohibiting

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18 How that they told you ^t there ^u should be mockers in the last time, ^v who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they ^w who separate themselves, ^x sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, ^y building up yourselves on your most holy faith, ^z praying in the Holy Ghost,

^t Prov. xviii. 1; Ezek. xiv. 7; Hos. iv. 14; ix. 10; Heb. x. 25.
^u 1 Cor. ii. 14; James iii. 15.—^v Col. ii. 7; 1 Tim. i. 4.
^w Rom. viii. 26; Eph. vi. 18.

the vices in which they delighted. For they are said (verse 8) to despise government, and to revile dignities. And this they might do on pretence of maintaining the cause of the people of God, against the tyranny and oppression of the Romans; *having men's persons in admiration because of advantage*—Admiring and commending them only for what they can get.

Verse 17. *But, beloved*—To prevent you from giving heed to the vain speeches of these deceivers; *remember the words which were spoken before*—Or spoken prophetically; *by the apostles*—Who have preached the gospel to you in all its purity. He does not exempt himself from the number of apostles; for in the next verse he says, they told you, not us. The resemblance, as Doddridge justly observes, between this text and Peter iii. 2, is very remarkable. It is such as would incline one to think that Jude had the text in Peter before him, and omitted what had a peculiar reference to the former part of St. Peter's epistle, and to which there was nothing in his own to answer. Though Jude only cites the words spoken by Peter in particular concerning the coming of scoffers in the last time, yet his exhortation being general, it comprehends the words spoken by the other apostles concerning the coming of false teachers, such as Paul's, 1 Tim. iv. 1-5; 2 Tim. iii. 4. Nay, it comprehends the words spoken by Jude himself in the preceding part of this epistle.

Verse 19. *These be they who separate themselves*—Namely, from the communion of the church and from other Christians, under pretence of their greater illumination; *sensual*—Ψυχικοί, *animal*; *not having the Spirit*—Having a natural understanding and natural senses, but not the Spirit of God, either as Spirit of truth or grace, and therefore addicted to the low gratifications of their animal life; otherwise they would not separate themselves from the Church of Christ. For that it is a sin, and a very heinous one, to separate from it, is out of all question. But then it should be observed, 1st, That by the Church of Christ is meant a body of living Christians, who are a habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii 20, 21. And, 2d, That by separating is understood renouncing all religious intercourse with them, no longer joining with them in solemn prayer, or the other public offices of religion.

Verses 20, 21. *But ye, beloved*—Not separating yourselves from your Christian brethren, but *building up*—Or edifying one another in knowledge and

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A. M. 4070. 21 Keep yourselves in the love of
A. D. 66. God, ^a looking for the mercy of our
Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a
difference :

23 And others ^a save with fear, ^b pull-
ing *them* out of the fire ; hating even

^a Titus ii. 13 ; 2 Peter iii. 12.—^b Rom. xi. 14 ; 1 Tim. iv. 16.
^b Amos iv. 11 ; 1 Cor. iii. 15 ; Zech. iii. 2.

grace ; *on, or in, your most holy faith*—The true Christian faith, having for its object all the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the gospel ; a faith, than which none can be more holy in itself, or more conducive to the most refined and exalted holiness ; *praying in, or through, the Holy Ghost*—By a principle of grace derived from him, and by his enlightening, quickening, sanctifying, and comforting influences, showing you what blessings you may and ought to pray for, inspiring you with sincere and fervent desires after those blessings, and enabling you to offer these desires to God in faith, with gratitude for the blessings which you have already received. And by these means, and through divine grace communicated therein, *keep yourselves in the love of God*—That is, in love to God, arising from a sense of his love to you ; *looking for the mercy, &c.*—Continually possessing a confident expectation of that eternal life, which is purchased for you and conferred upon you through the mere mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 22, 23. *And of some*—Who are perverted by these seducers, erring only through infirmity, and in lesser points ; *have compassion*—Treat with lenity, and endeavour to reclaim, in a mild and gentle way, by the winning method of persuasion ; *making a difference*—Between them and others that are more guilty and stubborn. *And others*—Who sin presumptuously and openly ; *save with fear*—Endeavour to rouse their fears, setting before them a future judgment and its awful consequences in all their terrors. And if they continue unmoved, use the censures of the church as the last remedy. Or, as some think, he may mean with a jealous fear for yourselves, lest you should be infected with the disease you endeavour to cure ; *pulling them out of the fire*—Of temptation, sin, and divine wrath, into which they are fallen, or are just ready to fall. As if he had said, And if you desire that your efforts in either of these cases should be successful, you must take great care to preserve your own purity ; and while you love the sinners, to retain the utmost abhorrence of their sins, and of every the least degree of approach to them ; *hating even the garment spotted by the flesh*—Lest by the touch of it you

^c the garment spotted by the flesh. A. M. 4070.

24 ^d Now unto him that is able to keep ^e you from falling, and ^e to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,
25 ^f To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

^c Zech. iii. 4, 5 ; Rev. iii. 4.—^d Rom. xvi. 25 ; Eph. iii. 20.
^e Col. i. 22.—^f Rom. xvi. 27 ; 1 Tim. i. 17 ; ii. 3.

yourself should be polluted. This clause, which is a caution addressed to “those who snatch others out of the fire, implies that in doing them that compassionate office, they are to avoid all familiarity with them, even as they would avoid touching a garment spotted by the flesh of one who had died of the plague, lest they should be infected by their vicious conversation.”

Verses 24, 25. *Now unto him who alone is able to keep you from falling*—Into any of these errors or sins, or *from stumbling*, as ἀπαισος literally signifies, rugged and dangerous as the ways of life are, and feeble as you know yourselves to be ; and at length *to present you faultless*—Fully sanctified and conformed to the image of God’s Son ; see on Col. i. 22 ; *before the presence of his glory*—That is, in his own presence, when he shall be revealed in all his glory ; *with exceeding joy*—With joy, great and unutterable. *To the only wise God, now become our Saviour*—That is, our Deliverer from the guilt and power of sin and its consequences, our Restorer to the enjoyment of the blessings lost by the fall, and our Preserver to eternal life. Or, as Macknight reads the clause, *To the wise God alone*. See on Rom. xvi. 27. *Be glory, &c.*—That is, the glory of infinite perfection ; and *the majesty*—Of empire absolutely universal ; *dominion*—Or *strength*, as κρατος may be properly rendered, namely, to govern that empire ; and *power*—Εξουσια, authority, or right to do whatever seemeth to himself good ; *both now and ever*—Εἰς παντα τας αιωνας, throughout all ages, or both now and throughout all eternity. “From the appellation here used, *our Saviour*, it is argued by some that this doxology is addressed to the Lord Jesus, whose proper title is *our Saviour*, and who is called God in other passages of Scripture, particularly Rom. ix. 5, where he is styled, *God blessed for ever*. Nevertheless, as in some passages of Scripture, particularly Luke i. 47 ; 1 Tim. i. 1 ; Tit. i. 3, the Father is styled *our Saviour*, this argument is doubtful. They who contend that the doxology in this passage belongs to the Father, observe that the same doxology is unambiguously addressed to God the Father, Rom. xvi. 27,” to which passage we have just referred the reader.

PREFACE

TO THE

REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

THIS book of the Revelation has, for very good reasons, been received as one of the sacred books of the New Testament. The chief of these reasons have been mentioned by many authors, and are represented with great evidence and strength by Sir Isaac Newton, who observes, he does not find any other book of the New Testament so strongly attested, or commented upon so early, as this. And Dr. Lardner has collected with great care and faithfulness the testimonies of the most early Christian writers to the books of the New Testament, in his Treatise on the Credibility of the Gospel History. The testimony of some of the most eminent to the authority of this book is as follows:—

1. Justin Martyr, a person of great name, about the year of Christ 140, and so about fifty or sixty years after the writing of this book, expressly calls it a prophecy, and ascribes it to John the apostle, saying, “A man from among us, by name John, one of the apostles of Christ, in the Revelation to him, has prophesied,” &c.
2. Mileto, bishop of Sardis, one of the seven churches mentioned in the second and third chapters, wrote a book on the Revelation by St. John, which some think was an entire commentary; but whether or not, it shows he esteemed it a book of canonical authority.
3. Irenæus, who wrote about A. D. 178, within seventy or eighty years of St. John, expressly ascribes the Revelation to him, calling him the disciple of the Lord. His testimony to this book, as Lardner observes, “is so strong and full, that, considering the age of Irenæus, it seems to put it beyond all question that it was the work of St. John the apostle and evangelist.”
4. A little later, Theophilus of Antioch, in a book of his against the heresy of Hermogenes, makes use of testimonies from St. John’s Apocalypse.
5. Clement of Alexandria quotes these revelations as St. John’s, saying, “As John testifies in the Revelation.” And he refers to them as the words of an apostle, or as having the authority of apostolic writings.
6. Tertullian, who wrote about the year of Christ 200, and so somewhat about a hundred years after the time in which this book was written, observes, “John, in his Apocalypse, is commanded to correct those who ate things sacrificed to idols, and committed fornication.” And again: “We have churches, disciples of John; for, though Marcion rejects his Revelation, the succession of bishops, traced to the original, will assure us that John is the author of it.” We cannot wonder that Marcion should reject the Revelation, since he rejected all the Old Testament, and of the New received only the gospel of St. Luke, and ten epistles of St. Paul, which also he had corrupted and altered.

But this book of the Revelation, though never rejected by the ancient church, and as fully authenticated as any part of the canon of the New Testament, yet from the obscurity of the prophecies contained in it before their completion, was less known and less studied than the gospels, Acts, and epistles. Perhaps, says Dr. Apthorp, it was purposely concealed from being publicly read in the congregations of the early Christians, on principles of prudence and loyalty, as it distinctly foretold the subversion of the Roman empire, and the erecting other dynasties on its ruins. It was, however, universally received by the Latin Church, most interested in its predictions; and Eusebius and the Greek Church concurred with the Latins in venerating its authority as an essential part of the sacred canon. Indeed, the churches in general, nearest the times of the writing of this book, received it with so full consent, that, in a very few years, as Dr. Mill observes, it was acknowledged and placed in the number of apostolical writings, not only by the churches of Asia, but by the neighbouring churches of Syria and Samaria, by the more distant churches of Africa and Egypt, by Rome, and the other churches of Europe. Such reasons there are to receive this as one of the books of the Holy Scrip-

PREFACE TO THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

tures of the New Testament, that hardly any one book has more early, full, or authentic attestations given to it.

Now all who thus receive it must acknowledge that it proceeds from the Spirit of prophecy; and that Spirit itself declares, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear, the words of this prophecy," &c., chap. i. 3. If we acknowledge this to be a true testimony respecting this book, as we must if we own it to be a book of Holy Scripture, we must acknowledge, also, that, how obscure soever the words of this prophecy may be, they are yet sufficiently intelligible to be very useful. Considering, however, the nature and design of prophecy, and the style and manner of expression generally used in it, we are not to expect that prophecies should be as easily understood as doctrines or precepts delivered in plain language, and the common familiar forms of speech. The nature and intention of prophecy were not to gratify our curiosity, by giving us to know future events, or, as it were, enabling us to tell the fortunes of the church and world; but to answer wise and good purposes; to confirm our faith, patience, and constancy; to encourage our hope and trust in God, and give us assurance of his protecting the cause of truth and righteousness, that is, of true religion: and especially to answer these good ends when we might be tempted to forsake true religion, by the power of prevailing error and reigning corruption, or might be greatly dejected and despair of success, when opposition to the truth is so powerful and violent as hardly to leave a reasonable prospect of bearing up against it. In such a state of things, which often has happened, it has been the use of prophecy to support the confidence and courage of good men, with lively and affecting representations of the majesty, power, and goodness of God; of his care to protect his cause and people, and of the power of his providence to superintend and order all things in the world in that way which shall most promote his own glory and the salvation of mankind. And, finally, the design of prophecy is to represent these things in such a manner as shall fix men's attention, and confirm their faith in the truth of the Scriptures in which such prophecies are contained, and in his faithfulness certainly to accomplish his word in all things.

When such events of future time are foretold as shall, in their accomplishment, confirm our faith in the goodness, power, and faithfulness of God, and by such strong and lively representations thereof as shall make deep impressions on our minds, they answer a very wise and important design, and are of greater use than plainer precepts, enjoining constancy and perseverance, or plain promises of encouragement and reward, delivered in expressions more easy to be understood. In the first ages of Christianity, as well as in after times, good men were wont to be greatly discouraged with the afflictive state of the church, and the powerful opposition that was made to the gospel. For they hardly knew how to reconcile such a state of things with what they thought the Scriptures had given them reason to expect in the kingdom of the Messiah. It was, therefore, wise and proper, by a prophecy in the Christian Church, to support the minds of good men under these afflictions with assurances of Christ's second coming, in its proper season, and of the watchful providence of God over his cause and people in the mean time. Thus the prophecies of this book are to us in the Christian Church of the like use that the prophecies of Christ's first appearance were of to his ancient church.

That this is, properly speaking, a book of prophecy of things to come, as well as a description of the then present state and condition of the churches in Asia, Christ himself declares, chap. i. 19, saying, "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;" and, chap. iv. 1, John heard a voice, which said, "Come up hither, and I will show thee the things that must be hereafter." Some of these predictions, indeed, related to events not far distant from the time when the vision and prophecy were given, and, therefore, were soon to be accomplished. Thus the book is termed, chap. i. 1, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, &c., to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;" and, chap. i. 3, "Blessed is he that readeth, &c., for the time is at hand." But from these and such like expressions we cannot infer, as some have done, that the whole prophecy was to be accomplished in a few years after the vision. They only show that the things foretold were soon to begin to be accomplished; not that their accomplishment was soon to end; the time included in these predictions evidently extending from the period when John had these visions to the day of final judgment.

At the time when John received the discoveries contained in this book, he was in banishment for "the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus;" and the church was under persecution so long

PREFACE TO THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

as the Roman empire continued heathen. Severe persecutions were almost perpetually renewed; and, a little before the time of Constantine, they were so severe, that they seemed to threaten the utter destruction of all who could not be forced to renounce the Christian faith, and fall in with the idolatrous worship established in the empire. The last persecution, under Diocletian, destroyed such incredible numbers, that the persecutors boasted they had effaced the name and superstition of the Christians, and had restored and propagated the worship of the gods. Yet the divine providence, after several great revolutions, made way for the authority of Constantine the Great, who put an end to the long persecution of ten years, gave freedom to the churches, and finally gave all protection and countenance to the Christian Church, and all assistance to promote the Christian faith and worship. So that the same power which before persecuted now protected the religion of Christ. The first period of prophecy, then, seems naturally to point out this period of history, which in general answers to it with great propriety and exactness, and will direct us to look for the fulfilment of the several parts of it, in some of the events of providence, which took place between the time of the vision, and the year of Christ about 323, when the opposition of the idolatrous power of Rome gave way to the protection and favour of Christian emperors.

The second period of prophecy points out the period of history between the year of Christ 323 to about 750, in which compass of time we seem to be directed to look for the accomplishment of the several particular predictions contained in this period; namely, when the Roman empire beginning to lose its power, and becoming unable to protect the church, a swarm of idolatrous nations from the northern countries, under several names, broke in upon that empire, and divided the western part of it into several separate and independent governments, or kingdoms; so that the Christian faith and worship were in as much danger from the idolatry of the northern nations, who had divided the empire among them, as they were before in danger from the idolatry of the empire itself. It pleased God, also, to permit that impostor, Mohammed, and his successors, to gain so much ground, and to spread that imposture so far and so fast, that it threatened the ruin of the Christian name and religion in the East. Yet the idolatrous northern nations were soon themselves brought to embrace Christianity, and to use all their power and authority to protect and promote it. And though the Saracens made great inroads for some time, yet was their progress stopped both in the east and west, as shall be shown in the proper place.

The third period seems also to be determined to the time of its beginning and ending by the prophecy itself, including the time of the beast, of the woman's being in the wilderness, and of the treading down of the holy city; which times are variously expressed, but plainly in such a manner as to intend the same duration. It is said to be for "forty-two months;" (chap. xi. 2; xiii. 5;) "for a time, times, and half a time;" (chap. xii. 14;) which ways of numbering are explained by another; namely, twelve hundred and sixty days, chap. xi. 3. The difficulty then of assigning the exact historical time of this period lies chiefly in fixing when these twelve hundred and sixty days are to begin; or, which will be the same, at what period in history we are to fix the beginning of the power of the beast, of the flying of the woman into the wilderness, and of treading the holy city under foot; for these are the calamities of this period.

When the last-mentioned period shall have continued the time specified in the above-mentioned numbers, namely, forty-two months, a time, times, and half a time, or twelve hundred and sixty days, according to the style of prophecy, the beast shall be destroyed, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, shall be bound a thousand years, during which time the church shall be in a happy and peaceful state, which will be the fourth remarkable period, described chap. xix. 20; xx. 2.

When these thousand years shall be expired, Satan again shall be loosed out of his prison for a short time; and this will make a fifth period, chap. xx. 7. This shall occasion a new and the last attempt of error and wickedness against truth and righteousness; but this attempt shall end in the final ruin of all the enemies of religion, which shall be the sixth period, chap. xx. 9, 10.

The seventh period, set forth in chap. xxi., xxii., respects the everlasting happiness of the righteous and faithful servants of God and Christ in a state of glorious immortality, and an endless sabbath. This order of the prophecies given by Lowman appears very natural and intelligible, and more agreeable to the important facts of history than perhaps any other system; and yet it is the truth of history which alone can show us what has been the providence of God toward the church and world from the time of this vision of St. John to our own days.

PREFACE TO THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

It is evident such a plan of prophecy and order of history are well calculated to answer the important designs of revelation in general, to prepare the church to expect opposition and sufferings in this present world, to support good men under all the trials of their faith and patience, to give encouragement to persevere in true religion, whatever dangers may attend our so doing, to assure us that God will attend to and protect his own cause, so that no opposition shall finally prevail against it; that God will assuredly judge and punish the enemies of truth and righteousness, and that their opposition thereto shall certainly end in their own destruction, when the faithful perseverance of the true followers of Christ shall be crowned with a glorious state of immortal life and happiness.

The great truths concerning the majesty of God, the wisdom and care of his providence, the dignity, authority, and power of Christ, the protection of the church, the restraint and punishment of its enemies, and the final happiness of all who shall faithfully persevere in true faith, piety, and virtue, are here delivered in such an awful manner, such animated language, and striking representations, as must greatly affect the spirits of genuine Christians. A regard to this book of Revelation, as predicting events by a Spirit of prophecy, which, therefore, will surely come to pass, serves to raise us above the fear of men, by a lively faith and assured confidence in God. To look upon the promises and threatenings of this book as infallible predictions, which shall certainly be accomplished, must animate every well-disposed and considerate person to resist all temptations of error and sin with faithfulness, constancy, and zeal. The lake of fire, and the terrors of the second death, the portion of the fearful and unbelieving; and, on the other hand, the glory and felicity of the New Jerusalem, and a right to the tree of life, the portion of all the faithful, are represented by such strong and lively images, as are calculated, not only to fix men's attention, but to touch their hearts and affections, and engage them with zeal and diligence to follow the wise directions of truth and righteousness. And an exact conformity between these prophetic descriptions and the real state of the church and the world, for a series of some hundreds of years, gives continually new and increasing evidence of the truth and importance of the Christian revelation, and the authenticity and authority of the books of the New Testament; and it greatly confirms our faith in God's promises and threatenings, and thereby gives them their full force and influence upon us. Such is the improvement which the Holy Spirit of prophecy designed should arise from the perusal of this book of Revelation; and doubtless it has had, and still will have, this effect upon thousands that seriously read and weigh its contents. For one of its prophetic declarations is, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear, the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein."

It must be observed, however, that in the interpretations and applications of these prophecies we are not to expect demonstrations, or such proofs as shall be liable to no manner of objection; or that some weak and ill-informed persons may not wrest these prophecies, as they do the other scriptures, and may do any principles whatsoever, to extravagant expectations, designs, and actions. It should be sufficient to satisfy us, if we find a proper and probable sense of these prophetic expressions and descriptions, suited to the manifest and wise design of the whole prophecy. And if these interpretations are supported by an application of events in history, that are justly applicable, both to the prophetic descriptions, and to the series and order of the predictions; if they are events worthy a spirit of prophecy to reveal, and agreeable to the spirit and intention of this prophecy in particular, we may, without exposing ourselves to the charge of being over credulous, reasonably rest satisfied with them. Then we may represent these prophecies to ourselves in that noble and useful view in which a great author (Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, Explication of the Revelation, Preface) has placed them: "In the gospel of St. John we read the life of Christ on earth; a man conversing with men, humble, poor, weak, and suffering; we behold a sacrifice ready to be offered, and a man appointed to sorrows and death; but in the Revelation we have the gospel of Christ now raised from the dead. He speaks and acts as having conquered the grave, and triumphed over death and hell, as entered into the place of his glory; angels, principalities, and powers being made subject to him; and exercising the supreme universal power he has received from the Father over all things in heaven and earth, as our Saviour, for the protection of his church, and for the sure happiness of his faithful servants in the end."

Nothing, says Dr. Apthorp, who pursues the same line of interpretation with Lowman, in the Jewish prophecies themselves, exceeds the sublimity of the exordium of the Apocalypse; "the vision of Jesus Christ, the monarch of his church, and the divine instructions to the Asian churches, and in them to the churches of all succeeding times, chap. i. 1-8; iii.; iv. In the second vision heaven

PREFACE TO THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

opens, the throne of God is surrounded by his saints, and the Lamb opens the seven seals amidst the acclamations of the angelic hosts, chap. v.—viii. In the third vision the angels sound the seven trumpets, viii.—xi. In the fourth vision the dragon persecutes the church, the two beasts rise from the earth and sea, and are defeated by the Lamb, chap. xi. 15; xiv. In the fifth vision the angels pour the vials of the wrath of God on the kingdom and throne of antichrist, chap. xv.—xix. In the sixth vision Satan is bound for a thousand years, chap. xx. The seventh vision reveals the destined glories of the true religion, emblemized by the new heavens and new earth, and the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven, chap. xxi., xxii.”

Respecting the style of this book we may rely on the testimony of Blackwall. “The Revelation,” says he, in his *Sacred Classics*, “is writ in much the same style with the gospel and epistles, and entertains and instructs the reader with variety of Christian morals and sublime mysteries. From this noble book may be drawn resistless proofs of our Saviour’s eternal existence; the incommunicable attributes of eternity and infinite power are there plainly and directly applied to Jesus, the Son of God. It is in vain to look for more lofty descriptions or majestic images than you find in this sacred book. Could the acclamations and hallelujahs of God’s household be expressed with more propriety and magnificence than by the shouts of vast multitudes, the roaring of many waters, and the dreadful sound of the loudest and strongest thunders? And how transporting an entertainment must it be to the blessed to have all the strength of sound, tempered with all its sweetness and harmony, perfectly suited to their celestial ear and most exalted taste! The description of the Son of God in the nineteenth chapter, verses 11–17, is in all the pomp and grandeur of language. We have every circumstance and particular that is most proper to express power and justice, majesty and goodness; to raise admiration and high pleasure, corrected with awe.”

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THE REVELATION

OF

SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE.

CHAPTER I.

This chapter contains, (1.) A preface, showing the divine original, the design, and importance of the book, 1-3. (2.) John's salutation of the seven churches of Asia, wishing them grace and peace from all the three Divine Persons in their distinct economical characters, 4-8. (3.) An account when, where, and how he received his revelations, 9-12. (4.) A vision of Christ, with an affecting display of his divine glory, encouraging and animating to true believers, but terrible to backsliders and apostates, 13-20.

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ,
which God gave unto him, to
show unto his servants things which must

shortly come to pass; and he sent
and signified it by his angel unto his
servant John:

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

^a John iii. 22; viii. 26; xii. 49.

^b Chap. iv. 1; Verse 3.—^c Chap. xxii. 16.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. The book opens with the title or inscription of the book itself, and an account of the scope and design of it, namely, to foretel things which should shortly begin to be fulfilled, and should succeed in their due season and order till all were accomplished. *The Revelation*—Properly so called; for things covered before, are here *revealed*, or unveiled. No prophecy in the Old Testament has this title; it was reserved for this alone in the New. It is, as it were, a manifesto, wherein the Heir of all things declares, that all power is given him in heaven and earth; and that he will, in the end, gloriously exercise that power, maugre all the opposition of all his enemies. *Of Jesus Christ*—Not of *John the divine*, a title added in latter ages. Certain it is, that appellation, *the divine*, was not brought into the church, much less was it affixed to John the apostle, till long after the apostolic age. It was St. John indeed who wrote this book; but the Author of it is Jesus Christ. *Which God gave unto him*—According to his holy, glorified humanity, as the great Prophet of the church. God gave the revelation to Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ made it known to his servants. *To show*—This word recurs chap. xxii. 6. And in many places the parts of this book refer to each other. Indeed, the whole structure of it breathes the art of God; comprising, in the most finished compendium, things to come; many, various; near, intermediate, remote; the greatest, the least; terrible, comfortable; old, new; long, short; and these interwoven together, opposite, composite;

relative to each other, at a small, at a great distance; and therefore, sometimes, as it were, disappearing, broken off, suspended, and afterward unexpectedly, and most seasonably, appearing again. In all its parts it has an admirable variety, with the most exact harmony, beautifully illustrated by those very digressions which seem to interrupt it; in this manner does it display the manifold wisdom of God, shining, in the economy of the church, through so many ages. *His servants*—Much is comprehended in this appellation. It is a great thing to be a servant of Jesus Christ. This book is dedicated particularly to the servants of Christ in the seven churches in Asia; but not exclusive of all his other servants, in all nations and ages. It is one single revelation, and yet sufficient for them all, from the time it was written to the end of the world. Serve thou the Lord Jesus Christ in truth. So shalt thou learn his secret in this book. Yea, and thou shalt feel in thy heart, whether this book be divine or not. *The things which must shortly come to pass*—The things contained in this prophecy did begin to be accomplished shortly after it was given; and the whole might be said to *come to pass shortly*, in the same sense as St. Peter says, *The end of all things is at hand*; and our Lord himself, *Behold I come quickly*. There is in this book a rich treasure of all the doctrines pertaining to faith and holiness. But these are also delivered in other parts of Holy Writ; so that *the Revelation* need not to have been given for the sake of these. The peculiar design of this is, *To show the things which must come to pass*. And

A. M. 4100. 2^d Who bare record of the word
A. D. 96. of God, and of the testimony of
Jesus Christ, and of all things * that he
saw.

* 1 Cor. i. 6; Chap. vi. 9; xii. 17; Verse 9.—† 1 John i. 1.

this we are especially to have before our eyes, whenever we read or hear it.

It is said afterward, *Write what thou seest*; and again, *Write what thou hast seen, and what is, and what shall be hereafter*; but here, where the scope of the book is shown, it is only said, *the things which must come to pass*. Accordingly, the *showing things to come*, is the great point in view throughout the whole. And St. John writes *what he has seen, and what is*, only as it has an influence on, or gives light to, *what shall be*. And he—Jesus Christ; *sent and signified them*—*Showed them by signs or emblems*; (so the Greek word properly means;) *by his angel*—*Peculiarly called in the sequel, The angel of God, and particularly mentioned chap. xvii. 1; xxi. 9; xxii. 6, 16; to his servant John*—A title given to no other single person throughout the book.

Verses 2, 3. *Who bare record of, or testified, the word of God*—That is, who, being honoured with so important a message, did not fail faithfully to declare it; *and the testimony of Jesus*—That which Jesus, as the faithful and true Witness, appointed to be declared; *and all things that he saw*—Was made acquainted with in such a manner as was attended with the fullest and most satisfactory evidences of their truth and importance. *Blessed*—*Μακάριος, happy*; *is he that readeth*—Some have miserably handled this book. Hence others are afraid to touch it. And while they desire to know all things else, reject only the knowledge of those which God hath shown. They inquire after any thing rather than this; as if it were written, *Happy is he that doth not read this prophecy*. Nay, but *happy is he that readeth, and they that hear and keep the words thereof*—Especially at this time, when so considerable a part of them is on the point of being fulfilled. Nor are helps wanting, whereby any sincere and diligent inquirer may understand what he reads therein. The book itself is written in the most accurate manner possible; it distinguishes the several things whereof he treats by seven epistles, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, each of which sevens is divided into four and three. Many things the book itself explains, as the seven stars, the seven candlesticks, the lamb, his seven horns and seven eyes, the incense, the dragon, the heads and horns of the beasts, the fine linen, the testimony of Jesus. And much light arises from comparing it with the ancient prophecies, and the predictions in the other books of the New Testament. In this book our Lord has comprised what was wanting in those prophecies, touching the time which followed his ascension, and the end of the Jewish polity. Accordingly, it reaches from the Old Jerusalem to the New, reducing all things into one sum in the exactest order, and with a near resemblance to the ancient prophets. The

3^d Blessed is he that readeth, and A. M. 4100.
they that hear the words of this pro- A. D. 96.
phesy, and keep those things which are writ-
ten therein: for † the time is at hand.

† Luke xi. 28; Chap. xxii. 7.—‡ Rom. xiii. 11; James v. 8.

introduction and conclusion agree with Daniel; the description of the man-child, and the promises to Sion, with Isaiah; the judgment of Babylon, with Jeremiah; again, the determination of times, with Daniel; the architecture of the holy city, with Ezekiel; the emblems of the horses, candlesticks, &c., with Zechariah. Many things, largely described by the prophets, are here summarily repeated, and frequently in the same words. To them we may, then, usefully have recourse. Yet the Revelation suffices for the explaining itself, even if we do not yet understand those prophecies; yea, it casts much light upon them. Frequently, likewise, where there is a resemblance between them, there is a difference also; the Revelation, as it were, taking a stock from one of the old prophets, and inserting a new graft into it. Thus Zechariah speaks of two olive-trees; and so does St. John, but with a different meaning. Daniel has a beast with ten horns; so has St. John. And here the difference of words, emblems, things, times, ought studiously to be observed. Our Lord foretold many things before his passion; but not all things, for it was not yet seasonable. Many things, likewise, his Spirit foretold, in the writings of the apostles, so far as the necessities of those times required; now he comprises them all in one short book, therein presupposing all the other prophecies, and at the same time explaining, continuing, and perfecting them in one thread. It is right, therefore, to compare them; but not to measure the fulness of these by the scantiness of those preceding. Christ, when on earth, foretold what would come to pass in a short time; adding a brief description of the last things. Here he foretels the intermediate things; so that both put together constitute one complete chain of prophecy. This book is therefore not only the sum and the key of all the prophecies which preceded, but likewise a supplement to all, the seals being closed before; of consequence, it contains many particulars not revealed in any other part of Scripture. They have, therefore, little gratitude to God for such a Revelation, reserved for the exaltation of Christ, who boldly reject whatever they find here, which was not revealed, or not so clearly, in other parts of Scripture. *He that readeth and they that hear*—The distinction here made of him that readeth and of them that hear, is remarkable; for books, being then in manuscript, were in few hands, and it was a much readier way to publish a prophecy, or any thing, by public reading, than by transcribing copies. It was also the custom of that age to read all the apostolical writings in the congregations of the faithful. And perhaps John sent this book by a single person into Asia, who read it in the churches, while many heard. But this likewise, in a secondary sense, re-

A. M. 4100. 4 JOHN to the seven churches
A. D. 96. which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him^b which is, andⁱ which was, and which is to come; ^k and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

5 And from Jesus Christ, ^l who is the faithful Witness, and the ^m First-begotten of the dead, and ⁿ the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto

^b Exod. iii. 14; Verse 8.—^c John i. 1.—^d Zech. iii. 9; iv. 10; Chap. iii. 1; iv. 5; v. 6.—^e John viii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 13.—^f 1 Cor. xv. 20; Col. i. 18.—^g Eph. i. 20; Chap. vii. 14.—^h John xiii. 34; xv. 9; Gal. ii. 20.

fers to all that shall duly read or hear it in all ages. *The words of this prophecy*—It is a revelation with regard to Christ, who gives it; a prophecy with regard to John, who delivers it to the churches. *And keep the things which are written therein*—In such a manner as the nature of them requires; namely, with repentance, faith, patience, prayer, obedience, watchfulness, constancy. It behooves every Christian, at all opportunities, to read what is written in the oracles of God; and to read this precious book, in particular, frequently, reverently, and attentively. *For the time*—Of its beginning to be accomplished; *is near*—Even when St. John wrote. How much nearer to us is even the full accomplishment of this weighty prophecy!

Verses 4-6. *John*—The dedication of this book is contained in the 4th, 5th, and 6th verses; but the whole Revelation is a kind of letter. *To the seven churches which are in Asia*—That part of the Lesser Asia, which was then a Roman province. There had been several other churches planted here; but it seems these were now the most eminent. And it was among these that St. John had laboured most during his abode in Asia. In these cities there were many Jews. Such of them as believed, in each, were joined with the Gentile believers in one church. *Grace be unto you, and peace*—The favour of God, with all temporal and eternal blessings; *from him who is, and who was, and who cometh, or, who is to come*—A wonderful translation of the great name, **ГЕОУАН**: *He was of old, he is now, he cometh*; that is, will be for ever. *And from the seven Spirits which are before his throne*—Christ is he who hath the seven Spirits of God. *The seven lamps which burn before his throne are the seven Spirits of God. The Lamb hath seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God. Seven is a sacred number in the Jewish Church. But it did not always imply a precise number. It sometimes is to be taken figuratively, to denote completeness, or perfection. By these seven Spirits, not seven created angels, but the Holy Ghost, is to be understood; the angels are never termed Spirits in this book; and when all the angels stand up, while the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, worship him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb, the seven Spirits neither stand up nor worship. To these seven Spirits of God, the seven churches, to whom the Spirit speaks so many things, are subordinate; as are also their angels, yea,*

him^o that loved us, ^p and washed us
A. M. 4100
A. D. 96. from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath ^q made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; ^r to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 ^s Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and ^t they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

^u Hebrews ix. 14; 1 John i. 7.—^v 1 Peter ii. 5, 9; Chapter v. 10; xx. 6.—^w 1 Timothy vi. 16; Hebrews xiii. 21. ^x Daniel vii. 13; Matthew xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64.—^y Zechariah xii. 10; John xix. 37.

and the seven angels which stand before God. He is called, *The seven Spirits*, not with regard to his essence, which is one, but with regard to his manifold operations. *And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the First-begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth*—Three glorious appellations are here given him, and in their proper order. He was the faithful Witness of the whole will of God before his death, and in death, and remains such in glory. He rose from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that slept; and now hath all power both in heaven and earth. He is here styled a Prince. But by and by, he bears his title of King; yea, King of kings, and Lord of lords. This phrase, *the kings of the earth*, signifies their power and multitude, and also the nature of their kingdom. It became the Divine Majesty to call them kings with a limitation; especially in this manifesto from his heavenly kingdom. For no creature, much less a sinful man, can bear the title of king in an absolute sense, before the eyes of God. *To him that loved us, and*—Out of that free, abundant love, hath washed us from the guilt and power of our sins with his own blood; *And hath made us kings*—Partakers of his present, and heirs of his eternal kingdom; *and priests unto God and his Father*—To whom we continually offer ourselves, a holy, living sacrifice; *to him be the glory*—For his love and redemption; *and the might*—Whereby he governs all things.

Verse 7. *Behold*—In this and the next verse are the proposition and the summary of the whole book. *He cometh*—Jesus Christ. Throughout this book, whenever it is said *He cometh*, it means his glorious coming. The preparation for this began at the destruction of Jerusalem, and more particularly at the time of writing this book, and goes on without any interruption, till that grand event is accomplished. Therefore it is never said in this book, *He will come*, but, *He cometh*. And yet it is not said, *He cometh again*. For when he came before, it was not like himself, but in the form of a servant. But his appearing in glory is, properly, his coming; namely, in a manner worthy of the Son of God. *And every eye*—Of the Jews in particular; *shall see him*—But with what different emotions, according as they had received or rejected him! *And they who have pierced him*—They, above all, who pierced his hands, or feet, or side. Thomas saw the prints of

A. M. 4100. 8 ^a I am Alpha and Omega, the
A. D. 96. beginning and the ending, saith the
Lord, ^x which is, and which was, and which
is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and

^a Isa. xli. 4; xlv. 6; xlviii. 12; Verse 17; Chap. ii. 8; xxi. 6;
xxii. 13.—^x Verse 4; Chap. iv. 8; xi. 11; xvi. 5.

these wounds, even after his resurrection. And the same, undoubtedly, will be seen by all, when he cometh in the clouds of heaven; and they that condemned him shall be arraigned at his tribunal. *And all the tribes of the earth*—The word *tribes*, in the Revelation, generally means the *Israelites*; but where another word, such as *nations*, or *people*, is joined with it, it implies likewise, (as here,) all the rest of mankind. *Shall wail because of him*—For terror and pain, if they did not wail before by true repentance; even all who have rejected his government and opposed his interest, shall lament the fatal opposition, by which, instead of prevailing in the least against him, they have only effected their own destruction. In this verse is prefixed the great moral, which the whole book is designed to illustrate; namely, that though there should be great opposition made against the cause and kingdom of Christ, yet it should be utterly in vain, and his kingdom should triumph in the most illustrious manner, so that all who opposed it should have the greatest reason to mourn. And as this series of divine prophecy begins, so it ends with this sentiment, and with the joyful consent of his faithful servants to this glorious truth, which should fill the enemies of Christ with both terror and dismay. *Yea, amen*—This refers to, *every eye shall see him*. He that cometh saith, *Yea*; he that testifies it, *Amen*. The word translated *yea* is Greek, *amen* is Hebrew; for what is here spoken respects both Jew and Gentile.

Verse 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord*—*Alpha* is the first, *Omega* the last letter in the Greek alphabet. Let his enemies boast and rage ever so much in the intermediate time, yet he is both the *Alpha*, or beginning, and the *Omega*, or end, of all things. Grotius and Bengelius read, *λεγει Κυριος ο θεος, saith the Lord God* a reading with which the Vulgate accords, having, it seems, understood the verse as spoken by the Father. Accordingly Bengelius's note is, "God is the *beginning*, as he is the Author and Creator of all things, and as he proposes, declares, and promises such great things. He is the *end*, as he brings all the things which are here revealed to a complete and glorious conclusion. Again, *the beginning and end of a thing* is, in Scripture, styled the whole thing. Therefore, God is the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the beginning and the end; that is, one who is all things, and always the same." See Wesley. It will, however, as Doddridge observes, be difficult to give sufficient proof that the words of this verse were spoken by the Father. "Most of the phrases which are here used concerning this glorious Person, are afterward used concerning our Lord Jesus Christ; and *παντοκρατωρ, almighty,*

^y companion in tribulation, and ^z in A. M. 4100.
the kingdom and patience of Jesus A. D. 96.
Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos,
^a for the word of God, and for the testimony of
Jesus Christ.

^y Phil. i. 7; iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 8.—^z Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii.
12.—^a Chap. vi. 9; Verse 2.

though in ecclesiastical writers of the earliest ages it is generally appropriated to the Father, may, according to the Syriac version, be rendered, *He who holds*; that is, superintends, supports, and governs *all*; and then it is applied to Christ, Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3. But if, after all, the words should be understood as spoken by the Father, our Lord's applying so many of these titles afterward to himself, plainly proves his partaking with the Father in the glory peculiar to the divine nature, and incommunicable to any creature." See Bishop Pearson on the Creed, p. 175.

Verse 9. *I John*—The instruction and preparation of the apostle for the work are described from the 9th to the 20th verse: *your brother*—In the common faith: *and companion in tribulation*—For the same book peculiarly belongs to those who are under the cross. It was given to a banished man; and men in affliction understand and relish it most. Accordingly, it was little esteemed by the Asiatic churches after the time of Constantine; but highly valued by all the African churches; as it has been since by all the persecuted children of God. *In the tribulation, and kingdom, and patience of Jesus Christ*—The kingdom stands in the midst. It is chiefly under various afflictions that faith obtains its part in the kingdom. And whosoever is partaker of this kingdom, is not afraid to suffer for Jesus, 2 Tim. ii. 12. *I was in the isle that is called Patmos*—A desolate island in the Archipelago, now called Palmosa, mountainous, but moderately fruitful, especially in wheat and pulse, though defective in other commodities. The whole circumference of the island is about thirty miles; and on one of its mountains stands a town of the same name, having on the top of it a monastery of Greek monks; and on the north side of the town the inhabitants, by tradition, show a house in which the Apocalypse was written, and, not far off, the cave where it was revealed; both places of great esteem and veneration with the Greeks and Latins. To this island, after he had come unhurt out of a caldron of boiling oil, he was banished *for the word of God*—Namely, for preaching it; *and for the testimony of Jesus*—For testifying that he is the Christ: in other words, he was banished for the confession of the gospel. This, according to the testimony of Irenæus, who was the disciple of Polycarp, who had been the disciple of St. John, was in the reign of the Emperor Domitian; and, if we may credit ecclesiastical history, he was here employed in digging in a mine. But the historical evidence produced for this is very uncertain. One thing, however, is certain, that it was in this island he received the wonderful discoveries which make the subjects of this book. There he saw and

A. M. 4100. 10^b I. was in the Spirit on^c the
A. D. 96. Lord's day, and heard behind me

^d a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, 'the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and

^b Acts x. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 2; Chap. iv. 2; xvii. 3; xxi. 10.
^c John xx. 26; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2.—^d Chap. iv. 1; x. 8.
^e Verse 8.

wrote all that follows. And it was a place peculiarly proper for these visions. He had over against him, at a small distance, Asia and the seven churches; going on eastward, Jerusalem and the land of Canaan; and beyond this, Antioch, yea, the whole continent of Asia. To the west he had Rome, Italy, and all Europe, swimming as it were in the sea; to the south Alexandria and the Nile, with its outlets; Egypt and all Africa; and to the north, what was afterward called Constantinople, on the straits between Europe and Asia. So he had all the three parts of the world which were then known, with Christendom, as it were before his eyes: a large theatre, for all the various scenes which were to pass before him: as if this island had been made principally for this end, to serve as an observatory for the apostle.

Verses 10, 11. *I was in the Spirit*—That is, in a trance, a prophetic vision; so overwhelmed with the power, and filled with the light of the Holy Spirit, as to be insensible of outward things, and wholly taken up with spiritual and divine. What follows is one single, connected vision, which St. John saw in one day: and therefore he that would understand it should carry his thoughts straight on through the whole, without interruption. The other prophetic books are collections of distinct prophecies, given upon various occasions. But here is one single treatise, whereof all the parts exactly depend on each other. Chap. iv. 1, is connected with chap. i. 19. And what is delivered in the 4th chapter goes on directly to the 22d. *On the Lord's day*—On this our Lord rose from the dead. On this the ancients believed he would come to judgment. It was therefore with the utmost propriety that St. John on this day both saw and described his coming. *And I heard behind me*—St. John had his face to the east: our Lord likewise, in this appearance, looked eastward toward Asia, whither the apostle was to write: *a great voice as of a trumpet*—Which was peculiarly proper to proclaim the coming of the great King, and his victory over all his enemies. *I am Alpha and Omega, &c.*—That these titles should be repeated so soon, in a connection which demonstrates they are given to Christ, will appear very remarkable, whatever sense be given to the 8th verse. The argument drawn in the preceding note upon it would have been strong, wherever such a passage as this had been found; but its immediate

unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodi- A. M. 4100.
cea. A. D. 96.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, "I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13^b And in the midst of the seven candlesticks^c *one* like unto the Son of man, ^k clothed with a garment down to the foot, and ^l girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

^f Verse 17.—^g Verse 20; Exod. xxv. 37; Zech. iv. 2.
^h Chap. ii. 1.—ⁱ Ezek. i. 26; Dan. vii. 13; x. 16.—^k Dan. x. 5.—^l Chap. xv. 6.

connection with this greatly strengthens it. "And I," says Doddridge, "cannot forbear recording it, that this text has done more than any other in the Bible toward preventing me from giving into that scheme which would make our Lord Jesus Christ no more than a *deified creature*." *And, What thou seest, and hearest, write*—He both saw and heard. This command extends to the whole book. All the books of the New Testament were written by the will of God: but none were so expressly commanded to be written; *in a book*—So all the revelation is but one book: nor did the letter to the angel of each church belong to him or his church only, but the whole book was sent to them all: *and send it unto the seven churches*—Hereafter named; and through them to all churches, in all ages and nations. *To Ephesus*—Mr. Thomas Smith, who, in the year 1671, travelled through all these cities, observes, that from Ephesus to Smyrna is forty-six English miles; from Smyrna to Pergamos, sixty-four; from Pergamos to Thyatira, forty-eight; from Thyatira to Sardis, thirty-three; from Sardis to Philadelphia, twenty-seven; and from Philadelphia to Laodicea, about forty-two miles.

Verses 12–16. *And I turned to see the voice*—That is, to see him whose voice it was; *and being turned, I saw*—It seems the vision presented itself gradually. First, he heard a voice, and upon looking behind him he saw the *golden candlesticks*, and then, *in the midst of the candlesticks*, which were placed in a circle, he saw *one like the Son of man*—That is, one in a human form. As a man, likewise, our Lord doubtless appears in heaven; though not exactly in this symbolical manner, wherein he presents himself as the Head of his church. He next observed that our Lord was *clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle*—Such the Jewish high-priests wore. But both of them are here marks of royal dignity likewise; *girt about the breast*—He that is on a journey girds his loins. Girding the breast was an emblem of solemn rest. It seems that the apostle, having seen all this, looked up to behold the face of our Lord; but was beat back by the appearance of his *flaming eyes*, which occasioned his more particularly observing his feet. Receiving strength to raise his eyes again, he saw the stars in his right hand, and the sword coming out of his mouth: but upon beholding the brightness of his glorious countenance, (which

A. M. 4100. 14 His head and ^m his hairs were
A. D. 96. white like wool, as white as snow;
and ⁿ his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 ^o And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they
burned in a furnace; and ^p his voice as the
sound of many waters.

16 ^q And he had in his right hand seven
stars: and ^r out of his mouth went a sharp two-
edged sword: ^s and his countenance was as the
sun shineth in his strength.

^m Dan. vii. 9.—ⁿ Dan. x. 6; Chap. ii. 18; xix. 12.—^o Ezek. i. 7; Dan. x. 6; Chap. ii. 18.—^p Ezek. xliii. 2; Dan. x. 6; Chap. xiv. 2; xix. 6.—^q Verse 20; Chap. ii. 1; iii. 1.—^r Isa. xlix. 2; Eph. vi. 17; Heb. iv. 12.—^s Acts xxvii. 13; Chap. x. 1.

probably was much increased since the first glance the apostle had of it,) he fell at his feet as dead. During the time that St. John was discovering these several particulars, our Lord seems to have been speaking. And doubtless even his voice, at the very first, bespoke the God; though not so insupportably as his glorious appearance. *His head and his hairs*—That is, the *hairs* of his head, not his whole head; *were white* as white *wool*—Like the Ancient of Days, represented in Daniel's vision, chap. vii. 9. *Wool* is commonly supposed to be an emblem of eternity; *as snow*—Betokening his spotless purity; *and his eyes as a flame of fire*—Piercing through all things: a token of his omniscience. *And his feet like fine brass*—Denoting his stability and strength; *as if they burned in a furnace*—As if, having been melted and refined, they were still red hot; *and his voice*—To the comfort of his friends, and the terror of his enemies; *as the voice of many waters*—Roaring aloud, and bearing down all before them. *And he had in his right hand seven stars*—In token of his favour and powerful protection. *And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword*—Signifying his justice and righteous anger, continually pointed against his enemies as a sword, *sharp*, to stab; *two-edged*, to hew. *And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength*—Without any mist or cloud.

Verses 17, 18. *And when I saw him*—In this awful, this glorious, and resplendent form, I was perfectly overwhelmed with the majesty of his appearance, so that *I fell at his feet as dead*—Human nature not being able to sustain so glorious an appearance. Thus was he prepared, (like Daniel of old, whom he particularly resembles,) for receiving so weighty a prophecy. A great sinking of nature usually precedes a large communication of heavenly things. St. John, before our Lord suffered, was so intimate with him as to lean on his breast, to lie in his bosom. Yet now, near seventy years after, the aged apostle is by one glance struck to the ground. What a glory must this be! Ye sinners, be afraid. Cleanse your hands. Purify your hearts. Ye saints, be humble. Prepare. Rejoice. But rejoice unto him with reverence. An increase of reverence toward this awful Majesty can be no prejudice to your faith. Let all petulancy, with all vain curiosity, be far away, while you are thinking or reading of these

17 And ^t when I saw him, I fell at A. M. 4100.
his feet as dead. And ^u he laid his A. D. 96.
right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not;
^v I am the first and the last:

18 ^w *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and
behold, ^x I am alive for evermore, Amen; and
^y have the keys of hell and of death.

19 Write ^b the things which thou hast seen,
^c and the things which are, ^d and the things
which shall be hereafter;

^t Ezek. i. 28.—^u Dan. viii. 18; x. 10.—^v Isa. xli. 4; xlv. 6; xlviii. 12; Chap. ii. 8; xxii. 13; Verse 11.—^w Rom. vi. 9. ^x Chap. iv. 9; v. 14.—^y Psa. lxxviii. 29; Chap. xx. 1.—^b Verse 12, &c.—^c Chap. ii. 1, &c.—^d Chap. iv. 1, &c.

things. *And he laid his right hand upon me*—The same wherein he held the seven stars. What did St. John then feel in himself? *Saying, Fear not*—His look terrifies, his speech strengthens. He does not call John by name, (as the angel did Zachariah and others,) but spoke as his well-known Master. What follows is also spoken to strengthen and encourage him. *I am*—When in his state of humiliation he spoke of his glory, he frequently spoke in the third person, as Matt. xxvi. 64, but he now speaks of his own glory without any veil, in plain and direct terms. *The first and the last*—That is, the eternal God, who is from everlasting to everlasting, Isa. xli. 4. *I am he that liveth*—Another peculiar title of God; and *I have the keys of death and of hell*—Or *hades*, that is, the invisible world; in the intermediate state the body abides in death, the soul in *hades*. Christ hath the keys of, that is, the power over both, killing or quickening of the body, and disposing of the soul as it pleaseth him. He gave St. Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but not the keys of *death* or of *hades*. How comes then his supposed successor at Rome by the keys of purgatory? It must be allowed that *adēs*, *hades*, sometimes signifies *the grave*; but, as Mr. Howe has largely proved in his excellent discourse on this text, the interpretation here given is most reasonable. That which would refer it to *hell*, as the seat of the damned, limits the sense in a manner very derogatory from the honour of our Lord, as he there shows unanswerably. According to Grotius, (in his note on Matt. xvi. 18,) the word *adēs* always denotes either death, or the state after death. Our English, or rather Saxon word, *hell*, in its original signification, (though it is now understood in a more limited sense,) exactly answers to the Greek word *adēs*, and denotes a *concealed* or *unseen* place, and this sense of the word is still retained in the eastern, and especially in the western counties of England; for to *helle* over a thing, is to *cover* it. From the preceding description mostly are taken the titles given to Christ in the following letters, particularly the first four.

Verses 19, 20. *Write the things which thou hast seen*—Contained in this chapter, which accordingly are written, chap. i. 11–18: *and the things which are*—The instructions relating to the present

A. M. 4100. 20 The mystery ^a of the seven stars
A. D. 96. which thou sawest in my right hand,
^f and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven

^a Verse 16.—^f Verse 12.—^g Mal. ii. 7; Chap. ii. 1, &c.

state of the seven churches; these are written chap. ii. 1-29; iii. 1-22; and which shall be hereafter—The future events which begin to be exhibited in the fourth chapter, where (verse 1) it is said, *Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter*, namely, to the end of the world. *The mystery*—The mysterious meaning; of the seven stars—St. John knew better than we do, in how many respects these stars were a proper emblem of those angels; how nearly they resembled each other, and how far they differed in magnitude, brightness, and other circumstances. *The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches*—Mentioned in the eleventh verse. In each church there was one pastor or ruling minister, to whom all the rest were

stars are ^a the angels of the seven A. M. 4100.
churches: and ^b the seven candle- A. D. 96.
sticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

^b Zech. iv. 2; Matt. v. 15; Phil. ii. 15.

subordinate. This pastor, bishop, or overseer, had the peculiar care over that flock: on him the prosperity of that congregation in a great measure depended; and he was to answer for all those souls at the judgment-seat of Christ. *And the seven candlesticks are seven churches*—How significant an emblem is this! For a candlestick, though of gold, has no light of itself; neither has any church, or child of man. But they receive from Christ the light of truth, holiness, comfort, that it may shine to all around them. As soon as this was spoken, St. John wrote it down, even all that is contained in this first chapter. Afterward, what was contained in the second and third chapters, was dictated to him in like manner.

CHAPTER II.

In this and the following chapter, the state of the seven churches in Asia, at the time of the vision, is described, as to what was commendable and deserved encouragement, and what was faulty and called for reproof and reformation. This part of the prophecy, which is designed to show the constant care of Christ over his church, is contained in seven letters, entitled by Christ, and written by John, to the pastors of the Asian churches, that they might transmit them to their people,—commending, reproving, warning, and encouraging them, as their present state required; and intimating what mercies or judgments they might expect, according to their future conduct. Four of those letters are contained in this chapter, namely, one to each of the following churches; to that at Ephesus, 1-7; that at Smyrna, 8-11; that at Pergamos, 12-17; and that at Thyatira, 18-29.

A. M. 4100. **U**NTO the angel of the church of
A. D. 96. Ephesus write: These things saith

^a Chap. i. 16, 20.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Of the following letters to the angels of the seven churches it may be necessary to speak first in general, and then particularly. In general we may observe, when the Israelites were to receive the law at mount Sinai, they were first to be purified. And when the kingdom of God was at hand, John the Baptist prepared men for it by repentance. In like manner these letters were designed to prepare these churches for the worthy reception of this glorious revelation. By following the directions given therein, by expelling incorrigibly wicked men, and putting away all wickedness, they were prepared to receive the precious depositum. And whatever church or individual person, in any age or nation, would profitably read or hear the contents of this book, must observe the same admonitions. These letters are a kind of seven-fold preface to the book. Christ now appears in the form of a man, (not yet under the emblem of a lamb,) and speaks mostly in proper, not in figurative words. It is not till chap. iv. 1, that St. John enters upon that grand vision which takes up the residue of the book.

There is in each of these letters, 1st, A command

^a he that holdeth the seven stars in A. M. 4100.
his right hand, ^b who walketh in the A. D. 96.

^b Chap. i. 13.

to write to the angel of the church. 2d, Some character and attribute of the speaker, taken from the vision in the first chapter, and appropriated to the matter of each epistle. 3d, An address to the angel of the church, containing a testimony of his good, bad, or mixed state; commendations or reproofs, with suitable promises or threatenings, and an exhortation to repentance or steadfastness: and then in all the same conclusion, *He that hath an ear, &c.* The address in each letter is expressed in plain words, the promises in figurative. In the address our Lord speaks to the angel of each church which then was, and to the members thereof, directly; whereas in the promise he speaks of all that should overcome, in whatever church or age, and deals out to them one of the precious promises (by way of anticipation) from the last chapters of the book.

“These seven churches,” says Bishop Newton, “are addressed particularly, because they were under John’s immediate inspection; he constituted bishops or pastors over them; he was, as it were, their metropolitan, and resided much at Ephesus, which is therefore named the first of the seven. Many contend, and among them such learned men

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A. M. 4100. midst of the seven golden candlesticks ;
A. D. 96. 2 ° I know thy works, and thy la-

bour, and thy patience, and how thou
canst not bear them which are evil ;

A. M. 4094.
A. D. 90.

° Psa i. 6 ; Verses 9, 13,

19 ; Chap. iii. 1, 8, 15.

as More and Vitranga, that the seven epistles are prophetic of so many successive periods and states of the church, from the beginning to the conclusion of all. But there are in these epistles several innate characters, which are peculiar to the church of that age, and cannot be so well applied to the church of any other age. Besides other arguments, there is also this plain reason ; the last state of the church is described in this very book as the most glorious of all, but in the last state in these epistles, that of Laodicea, the church is represented as *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*. But though these epistles have rather a literal than a mystical meaning, yet they contain excellent precepts and exhortations, commendations and reproofs, promises and threatenings, which may be of use and instruction to the church in all ages. And indeed, what the Spirit saith to one church, he saith, in some measure, to all the churches." For there can be no state, either of any pastor, church, or single person, which has not here suitable instructions. All, whether ministers or hearers, together with their secret or open enemies, in all places and all ages, may draw hence necessary self-knowledge, reproof, commendation, warning, or confirmation. Whether any be as dead as the angel of Sardis, or as much alive as the angel at Philadelphia, this book is sent to him, and the Lord Jesus hath something to say to him therein. For the seven churches, with their angels, represent the whole Christian Church dispersed throughout the whole world as it subsists, not in one age after another, but in every age. This is a point of deep importance, and always necessary to be remembered ; that these seven churches are, as it were, a sample of the whole church of Christ as it was then, as it is now, and as it will be, more or less, in all ages.

Verse 1. *Unto the angel*—That is, to the pastor, presiding elder, or bishop, called an *angel* because he was God's messenger (as the word angel signifies) to the people, or his minister appointed to serve them. "That there was one pastor," says Doddridge, "who presided in each of these churches, is indeed evident from the expression here used ; but that he was a diocesan bishop, or had several congregations of Christians under his care, can by no means be proved. Nor is there the least hint of it in any of these epistles." *Of the church of Ephesus*—Concerning Ephesus, see note on Acts xix. 1, and the preface of the epistle to the Ephesians. The first letter is addressed to the church in this city, as it was the metropolis of the Lydian Asia, and the place of St. John's principal residence. According to Strabo, it was one of the best and most glorious cities, and the greatest emporium of the Proper Asia. It was called by Pliny one of the eyes of Asia, Smyrna being the other ; but now, as eye-witnesses have related, it is venerable for nothing but the ruins of palaces, temples, and amphitheatres. It is called

by the Turks Ajasaluk, or the temple of the moon, from the magnificent structure formerly dedicated to Diana. The church of St. Paul is wholly destroyed. The little which remains of that of St. Mark is nodding to ruin. The only church remaining is that dedicated to St. John, which is now converted into a Turkish mosque. The whole town is nothing but a habitation for herdsmen and farmers, living in low and humble cottages of mud, sheltered from the extremities of weather by mighty masses of ruinous walls, the pride and ostentation of former days, and the emblem in these of the frailty of the world, and the transient vanity of human glory. The Rev. H. Lindsay, Chaplain to the Embassy of Constantinople, in a letter to the British and Foreign Bible Society, relative to the present state of the Apocalyptic churches, dated Jan. 10, 1816, says, "The town consists of about fifteen poor cottages. I found there but three Christians, two brothers, who keep a small shop, and a gardener. They are all three Greeks, and their ignorance is lamentable indeed. In that place, which was blessed so long with an apostle's labours, and those of his zealous assistants, are Christians who have not so much as heard of that apostle, or seem only to recognise the name of Paul as one in their calendar of saints. One of them I found able to read a little, and left with him the New Testament in ancient and modern Greek, which he expressed a strong desire to read, and promised me he would not only study it himself, but lend it to his friends in the neighbouring villages:" so strikingly hath the denunciation been fulfilled, that their candlestick should be removed out of its place. *Write*—So Christ dictated to him every word. *These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand*—To signify that he is the great support of his ministering servants, and directs their several situations and motions in the churches. Such is his favour to them, and care over them, that they may indeed shine as stars, both by purity of doctrine and holiness of life. *Who walketh*—According to his promise, *I am with you always, even to the end of the world ; in the midst of the golden candlesticks*—Beholding all their works and thoughts, and ready to remove the candlestick out of its place, if any, being warned, will not repent. Perhaps here is likewise an allusion to the office of the priests in dressing the lamps, which was to keep them always burning before the Lord.

Verses 2, 3. *I know*—Jesus knows all the good and all the evil which his servants and his enemies suffer and do. Weighty words, *I know!* How dreadful will it one day sound to the wicked, how sweet to the righteous ! The churches and their angels must have been astonished to find their several states so exactly described, even in the absence of the apostle, and could not but acknowledge the all-seeing eye of Christ and of his Spirit. With regard to us, to every one of us also he saith, *I know*

A. M. 4100. and ^d thou hast tried them ^e which
A. D. 96. say they are apostles, and are not ;
and hast found them liars :

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for
my name's sake hast laboured, and hast ^f not
fainted.

4 Nevertheless, I have *somewhat* against

^d 1 John iv. 1.—^e 2 Cor. xi. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 1.

thy works! Happy is he that conceives less good
of himself, than Christ knows concerning him! The
good works, which are the proper and necessary
fruits of faith, are here intended. See on 1 Thess.
i. 3; James ii. 14–26. *And thy labour*—Of love, thy
endeavours to promote the glory of God, and the
present and everlasting good of mankind; *and thy
patience*—In bearing persecution, opposition, and
the various trials to which thou hast been exposed.
And how thou hast such zeal for the honour of my
gospel, and the establishment of my kingdom, that
thou canst not bear them who are evil—Canst not
suffer them to go uncensured, but proceedest against
all those by the exercise of a proper discipline,
whose principles or practices are contrary to the
gospel, and are stumbling-blocks in the way of others.
And thou hast tried them—By my word; (see on
1 John iv. 1;) *who say they are apostles, and are not*
—Who make false pretensions to a divine mission,
and inspiration, and have endeavoured to impose
their errors on others, on the pretence of apostolical
authority; *and hast found them liars*—Or deceivers,
and accordingly hast rejected their pretensions with
a becoming disdain. *And hast borne*—Endured the
contradiction of false apostles, and much opposition
from men and devils, and still art not wearied out,
but *hast patience*, and perseverest, *and for my name's
sake*—That is, out of love to me, and with a view to
my glory; *hast laboured*—In opposing error and
sin, and promoting the progress of truth and grace;
and hast not fainted—Hitherto, under any diffi-
culties or dangers, trials or troubles, which thou
hast had to encounter.

Verse 4. *Nevertheless, I have somewhat* to allege
against thee—Exemplary as thou art in many re-
spects; or, as *somewhat* is not in the original, the
verse may be properly read, *I have against thee
that thou hast left thy first love*—Namely, the zeal
and fervour of it, which thou didst manifest to me
and my cause; that love for which the church at
Ephesus was so eminent when St. Paul wrote his
epistle to them. Neither they nor their pastors need
to have left this; they might have retained it entire
to the end. And they did retain it in part, otherwise
there could not have remained so much of what is
commendable in them. But they had not kept, as
they might have done, the first tender, affectionate
love in its vigour and warmth. Reader, has the
love of God, of Christ, and of his people, been shed
abroad in thy heart? And hast thou retained it in
all its fervour and efficacy? If not, the following
exhortation is addressed to thee. "It is very plain,"
says Doddridge, "that these epistles, though in-

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thee, because thou hast left thy first
love. A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

5 Remember, therefore, from whence thou art
fallen, and repent, and do the first works; ^e or
else I will come unto thee quickly, and will re-
move thy candlestick out of his place, except
thou repent.

^e Gal. vi. 9; Heb. xii. 3, 5.—^f Matt. xxi. 41, 43.

scribed to the angels or pastors of the churches, are
directed to the churches themselves, as represented
by them. Just as the Jewish Church was repre-
sented by Joshua their high-priest, Zech. iii. 1. But
it is not improbable that where some of the churches
are blamed, there might be in their ministers some
faults correspondent to those charged on the society;
and particularly that the zeal of this minister of
Ephesus might be declining. There is, I think, no
reason to be anxious with regard to Timothy's
character on this account; for it can never be proved
that he was a stated pastor of the church of Ephesus,
though such confident things have been said con-
cerning it on very slender foundations."

Verse 5. *Remember therefore, &c.*—It is not pos-
sible for any church, or individual Christian, whether
public teacher or private member, that has lost the
first love, to recover it, but by taking the three steps
here spoken of. 1st, *Remember*; 2d, *Repent*; 3d,
Do the first works. *Remember from whence thou
art fallen*—From what degree of faith, love, holi-
ness, though perhaps insensibly; *and repent*—Have
a deep and lively conviction of thy fall, be humbled
and truly sorry for it before God, earnestly desiring
to be pardoned and renewed, and bringing forth
fruits worthy of repentance in all respects; *do the
first works*—Outwardly and inwardly, otherwise
thou canst never regain the first love; *or else* thou
must expect that *I will come unto thee quickly*—In
some awful dispensations of providence. By this
word is the warning sharpened to those five churches
which are called to repent, this admonition belong-
ing equally to them; (for if Ephesus was threatened,
how much more shall Sardis and Laodicea be afraid!)
and according as they obey the call or not, there is
a promise or a threatening, chap. ii. 5, 16, 22; iii. 3, 20.
But even in the threatening the promise is implied
in the case of true repentance. *And will remove thy
candlestick out of its place*—This threatening, con-
sidered as addressed to the angel or pastor of the
church, meant, Unless thou repent, I will remove
the flock now under thy care to another place, and
put it under the care of another pastor, where it shall
be better taken care of. Considered as addressed to
the church, it implies that it should no longer con-
tinue to be a church, if the members of it did not
endeavour to recover their lost ground, and to shine
at least with their former lustre; but that the hedge
of discipline should be broken down, and the light of
the gospel removed from them. From the flourish-
ing state of the church, however, at Ephesus, for a
time after this, there is reason to believe that both
the pastor and his flock did repent, although, not

(45*)

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A. M. 4100. 6 But this thou hast, that thou
A. D. 96. hatest the deeds of ^h the Nicolaitanes,
which I also hate.

7 ⁱ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the
Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that
overcometh will I give ^k to eat of ^l the tree of life,

^h Verse 15.—^l Matt. xi. 15; xiii. 9, 43; Verses 11, 17, 20;
Chap. iii. 6, 13, 22; xiii. 9.

long after, they declined again, and fell lower than ever; and this church, with the other churches addressed in these letters, was ruined and overthrown by heresies and divisions from within, and by the arms of the Saracens from without. So that Mohammedanism prevails and prospers in all those countries which were once the glory of Christendom, their churches being turned into mosques, and their worship into superstitions; even Ephesus, which was once so magnificent and glorious a city, being become, as is observed on verse 1, a mean, sordid village, with scarcely a single family of Christians dwelling in it.

Verse 6. *But*—Or nevertheless; *this thou hast*—This honour and praise remaining; divine grace seeks whatever may help him that is fallen to recover his standing; *that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes*—A sect so called, it is thought, from Nicolas, one of the seven deacons mentioned Acts vi. 5; according to ancient writers, their doctrine and their lives were equally corrupt. They allowed the practice of the most abominable lewdness and adulteries, as well as sacrificing to idols; all which they placed among things indifferent, and pleaded for as branches of Christian liberty.

Verse 7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*—Every man, whoever can hear at all, ought carefully to hear this; *what the Spirit saith*—In these great and awful threatenings, and in these encouraging and precious promises; *to the churches*—And in them to all in a similar state, in every age and nation. *To him that overcometh*—His spiritual enemies, visible and invisible, that resists the devil, overcomes the world, crucifies the flesh, and conquers every besetting sin, and the fear of death; that goes on from faith to faith, and by faith to full victory over all opposing power; *will I give to eat of the tree of life*—This first thing promised in these letters is the last and highest in the accomplishment, chap. xxii. 2, 14, 19; *which is in the midst of the paradise of God*—Namely, the paradise above, and the fruit of which tree gives immortality; so that he who resides within its reach, is possessed of such felicities and delights as are far superior to those which Adam enjoyed in an earthly paradise, though in a state of uncorrupted and perfect innocence. The *tree of life* and *water of life* go together, chap. xxii. 1, 2, both implying the living with God eternally. In these seven letters twelve promises are contained, which are an extract of all the promises of God. Some of them are expressly mentioned again in this book, as the *hidden manna*, the inscription of the name of the *New Jerusalem*, the *sitting upon the*

which is in the midst of the paradise A. M. 4100.
of God. A. D. 96.

8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, write; These things saith ^m the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

^k Chapter xxii. 2, 14.—^l Genesis ii. 9.—^m Chapter i. 8, 17, 18.

throne. Some resemble what is afterward mentioned, as the *hidden name*, (chap. xix. 12,) the *ruled nations*, (chap. xix. 15,) the *morning star*, chap. xxii. 16. And some are expressly mentioned, as the *tree of life*, (chap. xxii. 2,) freedom from the *second death*, (chap. xx. 6,) the name in the *book of life*, (chap. xx. 12, xxi. 27,) the remaining in the *temple of God*, (chap. vii. 15,) the inscription of the name of God and of the Lamb, chap. xiv. 1; xxii. 4. In these promises, sometimes the enjoyment of the highest good, sometimes deliverance from the greatest evils, is intended. And each implies the other, so that where either part is expressed, the whole is to be understood. That part is expressed which has most resemblance to the virtues or works of him that was spoken to in the letter preceding.

Verses 8, 9. *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna*—“Smyrna was the nearest city to Ephesus, and for that reason probably was addressed in the second place. It is situated on lower ground than the ancient city, and lieth about forty-five miles northward of Ephesus. It is called Esmir by the Turks, and is celebrated, not so much for the splendour and pomp of the buildings, (for they are rather mean and ruinous,) as for the number, and wealth, and commerce of the inhabitants. The Turks have here fifteen mosques, and the Jews several synagogues. Among these enemies of the Christian name the Christian religion also flourishes in some degree. Smyrna still retains the dignity of metropolis, although there are only two churches of the Greeks. But besides them, here is a great number of Christians of all nations, sects, and languages. The Latn church hath a monastery of Franciscans. The Armenians have one church. But the English, who are the most considerable number, next to the Greeks and Armenians, have only a chapel in the consul's house, which is a shame, says Wheler, considering the great wealth they heap up here, beyond all the rest; yet they commonly excel them in their pastor. Frequent plagues and earthquakes are the great calamities of the place; but the Christians are here more considerable, and in a far better condition, than in any other of the seven churches; as if the promise was still in some measure made good to Smyrna, *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer, be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*”—Newton. “From the conversation,” says Mr. Lindsay, “which I had with the Greek bishop and his clergy, as well as various well-informed individuals, I am led to suppose, that if the population of Smyrna be estimated at one hundred

A. M. 4100. 9 ^a I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art ^c rich,) and I know the blasphemy of ^b them which say they are Jews, and are not, ^a but are the synagogue of Satan.

10 ^r Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. ^s Be thou faithful unto

^a Verse 2.—^b Luke xii. 21; 1 Tim. vi. 18; Jam. ii. 5.—^c Rom. ii. 17, 28, 29; ix. 6.—^d Chap. iii. 9.—^e Matt. x. 22.

and forty thousand inhabitants, there are from fifteen to twenty thousand Greeks, six thousand Armenians, five thousand Catholics, one hundred and forty Protestants, and eleven thousand Jews." *These things saith the First and the Last*—Even that glorious and Divine Person, who, having assumed the human nature into union with his Deity, is able to say he *was dead and is alive*; and who therefore demands, by all considerations of reverence, gratitude, and love, thy most attentive and obedient regards. How directly does this description of the person of Christ tend to confirm the pastor of this church, and all the members of it, against the fear of death! See verses 10, 11. Even with the comfort wherewith St. John himself was comforted, (chap. i. 17, 18,) would the angel of this church, and the people under his care, be comforted. *I know thy works*—To have been, in many respects, extraordinary; and *thy tribulation and poverty*—A poor prerogative in the eyes of the world! The angel at Philadelphia likewise and his flock had in their own sight but a little strength. And yet these two were the most honourable of all in the eyes of the Lord. *But thou art rich*—In faith and love, of more value than all the kingdoms of the earth. *And the blasphemy of them who say they are Jews*—God's own people; and *are not*—They are not Jews inwardly; not circumcised in heart; but *a synagogue of Satan*—Who, like them, is a liar and murderer from the beginning, and whose temper they breathe in their opposition to my gospel and to my people, being engaged in promoting error, superstition, and wickedness, the very things wherein the kingdom of Satan consists.

Verses 10, 11. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer*—Probably by means of the false Jews. *Behold*—This intimates the nearness of the affliction; *the devil*—Who sets all persecutors to work, and those more particularly who persecute the followers of Christ, to imprisonment, torture, and death; *shall cast some of you*—Christians at Smyrna, where, in the first ages, the blood of many martyrs was shed; *into prison, that ye may be tried*—Which God will permit, for the trial of your faith and patience, to your unspeakable advantage, 1 Peter iv. 12, 14. *And ye shall have tribulation*—Either in your own persons, or by sympathizing with your brethren; *ten days*—That is, a considerable time: for, as Lowman observes, It is not to be understood

death, and I will give thee ^t a crown of ^u life. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

11 ^v He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of ^w the second death.

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith ^x he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

^v Matt. xxiv. 13.—^w James i. 12; Chap. iii. 11.—^x Verse 7: Chap. xiii. 9.—^y Chap. xx. 14; xxi. 8.—^z Chap. i. 16.

literally, which would have been a short time of affliction indeed, and hardly agreeable to such a description of that tribulation as this prophecy seems to have been intended to prepare the church for. Bishop Newton supposes that these *ten days* mean *ten years*, according to the usual style of prophecy; and that the persecution of Dioclesian is referred to, which lasted that time, and was the greatest persecution that the primitive church ever endured, most grievously afflicting all the Asian, and indeed all the eastern churches. This persecution, he thinks, and none of the other general persecutions, answers the character here given, none of the others lasting so long as ten years. *Be thou faithful*—Our Lord does not say, *till I come*, as in the other letters, but *unto death*—Signifying that the angel of the church should quickly after seal his testimony with his blood, fifty years before the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, for whom some have mistaken him. *And I will give thee a crown of life*—The peculiar reward of them who are faithful unto death. *He that overcometh*—That is victorious unto the end; *shall not be hurt of the second death*—Though he may encounter the first death in this world for my sake, he shall not be injured by the second, namely, the lake of fire, the portion of the fearful, who do not overcome, chap. xxi. 8; but he shall rest in everlasting security and peace, while those who desert the cause of Christ, and renounce their duty, for the preservation of this transitory life, shall be consigned to that state of misery where they shall seek death, but it shall for ever flee from them.

Verses 12, 13. *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write*—"Pergamos, formerly the metropolis of the Hellespontic Mysia, and the seat of the Attalic kings, is by the Turks, with some little variation, still called Bergamo, and hath its situation about sixty-four miles to the north of Smyrna. Here are some good buildings, but more ruins. All the city, almost, is occupied by the Turks, very few families of Christians being left, whose state is very sad and deplorable. Here is only one church remaining, dedicated to St. Theodorus; and that the name of Christ is not wholly lost and forgotten in Pergamos, is owing to the care of the metropolitan of Smyrna, who continually sends hither a priest to perform the sacred offices. The cathedral church of St. John is buried in its own ruins; their angel or bishop removed; and its fair pillars adorn the graves and rot

A. M. 4100. 13 ^a I know thy works, and where
A. D. 96. thou dwellest, *even* ^a where Satan's
seat is: and thou holdest fast my name,
and hast not denied my faith, even in those
days wherein Antipas was my faithful mar-
tyr, who was slain among you, where Satan
dwelleth.

14 But I have a few things against thee, be-
cause thou hast there them that hold the doc-
trine of ^b Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a
stumbling-block before the children of Israel,

^a Ver. 2.—^b Ver. 9.—^c Num. xxiv. 14; xxv. 1; xxxi. 16;
2 Pet. ii. 15; Jude 11.—^d Ver. 20; Acts xv. 29; 1 Cor. viii. 9,

ten carcasses of its destroyers, the Turks, who are esteemed about two or three thousand in number. Its other fine church, called Santa Sophia, is turned into a mosque, and daily profaned with the blasphemies of the false prophet. There are not in the whole town above a dozen or fifteen families of miserable Christians, who till the ground to gain their bread, and live in the most abject and sordid servitude." There is the less reason to wonder at the wretched condition of this church, when we consider what Christ here testifies concerning the corruptions which now prevailed in it, and the threatening denounced against it, if they did not repent, and purge out the destructive leaven.

These things saith he which hath the sharp sword—Coming out of his mouth, *with two edges*—To wound and pierce the unbelieving and disobedient, and bring them to the footstool of divine mercy for pardon and salvation; and to cut off the impenitent, and especially the persecuting enemies of his church; even that Word, which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword: *I know thy works*—I observe them exactly; so as to reward or punish as the case requires: the ministers are commended for what is good, or blamed for what is amiss in their respective churches, because the state thereof depends much upon them, and they will be made accountable, in some measure, for it. *And where thou dwellest*—What thy situation is, and the circumstances in which thou art placed; *even where Satan's seat is*—Fixed in the midst of idolatry, superstition, and persecution, by the union of which the kingdom of darkness is supported. Pergamos was above measure given to idolatry. *And thou holdest fast my name*—Openly and resolutely confessing me before men; *and hast not denied my faith*—Any great truth of my gospel; *even in those days wherein Antipas*—Put to death under Domitian; *was my faithful martyr*—Laying down his life in attestation of the truth. Happy is he to whom Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, giveth such a testimony! *Slain among you, where Satan dwelleth*—Seems to take up his residence, as may be inferred from the enormities which are continually practised there.

Verses 14, 15. *But I have a few things against thee*—Things that deserve reproof, and require re-

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^c to eat things sacrificed unto idols, A. M. 4100.
^d and to commit fornication. A. D. 96.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine ^e of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and ^f will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 ^g He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in

10; x. 19, 20.—^d 1 Cor. vi. 13, &c.—^e Verse 6.—^f Isa. xi. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Chap. i. 16; xix. 15, 21.—^g Verses 7, 11.

formation; *because thou hast there*—Those whom thou oughtest to have immediately cast out from the flock, *that hold the doctrine of Balaam*—Doctrine nearly resembling his: *who taught Balak*—And the rest of the Moabites; *to cast a stumbling-block before the children*—Rather, *the sons*, as τῶν υἱῶν signifies; *of Israel*—So named in opposition to *the daughters of Moab*, by whom Balaam enticed them to the commission of gross sin; *to eat things sacrificed to idols*—Which, in so idolatrous a city as Pergamos, was, in the highest degree, hurtful to Christianity: *and to commit fornication*—Which was constantly joined with the idol-worship of the heathen. *So hast thou also*—As well as the angel at Ephesus; *them that hold the doctrine, &c.*—Who go so far as to justify their bad conduct by receiving the principles of the Nicolaitanes; *which thing I hate*—Condemn and detest as most inconsistent with the purity of the Christian faith and religion; and these thou sufferest to remain in the flock. "It seems not improbable," Doddridge thinks, "that the doctrine of Balaam and that of the Nicolaitanes might be the same; or the latter might be more strenuous in justifying and propagating their doctrine, and acting upon it; and that this doctrine might be like that of some modern seducers, namely, that it is lawful to dissemble the Christian faith, and to conform to the established superstition, to prevent persecution: a fatal error, which tends most effectually to overthrow Christianity, the existence of which, in these later ages, is owing to the contrary doctrine and practice."

Verses 16, 17. *Repent, therefore, of these irregularities; or else I will come unto thee quickly*—In the way of chastisement; *and will fight against them*—Those corrupt members; *with the sword of my mouth*—With my word, pronouncing terrible calamities against them, and executing what I have threatened. The word of God is the great engine wherewith Christ fights against, wounds, and overcomes all antichristian powers. *He that hath an ear*—That is disposed to receive useful instruction; *let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*—Let him carefully regard the arguments and warnings given by the Spirit of prophecy. *To him that overcometh, and eateth not of these sacrifices, will I give to eat of the hidden manna*—He shall be

A. M. 4100. the stone ^ha new name written, which
A. D. 96. no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.

18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, ⁱwho hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass;

19 ^kI know thy works, and charity, and ser-

^h Chapter iii. 12; xix. 12.—ⁱ Chapter i. 14, 15.—^k Verse 2.
^l 1 Kings xvi. 31; xxi. 25; 2 Kings ix. 7.

made a partaker of those sacred pleasures which God's sanctuary above affords, and of which the manna that fell in the wilderness, and was laid up in a golden vessel before the Lord, was only an imperfect type; even the full, glorious, everlasting fruition of God, and those comforts which flow from him. *And will give him a white stone*—The ancients, on many occasions, gave their votes in judgment by small stones; by black they condemned, by white ones they acquitted. Sometimes also they wrote on small smooth stones. Here may be an allusion to both customs; and the thing principally intended by the *white stone* is complete victory, and full public absolution. *And in the stone a new name written*—Eminent honour following thereon. So Jacob, after his victory, gained the name of Israel. Wouldest thou know what thy *new name* will be? The way to this is plain: *overcome*. Till then, all thy inquiries are vain. But then thou wilt read it on the white stone.

Verse 18. *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write*—“Next to Pergamos is Thyatira situated, at the distance of about forty-eight miles to the south-east. At present the city is called by the Turks Akhisar, or *The White Castle*, from the great quantities of white marble there abounding. Only one ancient edifice is left standing: the rest, even the churches, are so destroyed, that no vestiges of them are to be found. The principal inhabitants are Turks, who have here eight mosques. So terribly have the divine judgments, denounced in this letter, been poured upon this church!” “Akhizar, the ancient Thyatira,” observes the Rev. H. Lindsay, “is said to contain about thirty thousand inhabitants; of whom three thousand are Christians, all Greeks, except about two hundred Armenians. There is, however, but one Greek church and one Armenian. The superior of the Greek church, to whom I presented the Romaic Testament, esteemed it so great a treasure that he earnestly pressed me, if possible, to spare another, that one might be secured to the church, and be free from accidents, while the other went round among the people for their private reading. I have, therefore, since my return hither, sent him four copies.” *Write; These things saith the Son of God*—See how great he is who appeared like a *Son of man*, chap. i. 13; *who hath eyes bright and penetrating, like unto a flame of fire*—*Searching the reins and the heart*, verse 23; *and his feet like fine brass*—Denoting his immense strength. Job com-

vice, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be more* than the first: A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

20 Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman ^lJezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants ^mto commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

ⁿ Exodus xxxiv. 15; Acts xv. 20, 29; 1 Corinthians x. 19, 20; Verse 14.

prises both these particulars, namely, his wisdom to discern whatever is amiss, and his power to avenge it, in one sentence, (chap. xlii. 2.) saying, *No thought is hidden from him, and he can do all things*. Or the latter emblem, *his feet being like fine brass*, may signify that all his ways are gloriously just and holy.

Verse 19. *I know thy works*—Of piety and mercy; *and charity*—Or *love*, rather. How different a character is this from that of the angel of the church at Ephesus! The latter could *not bear the wicked, and hated the works of the Nicolaitanes; but he had left his first love* and first works. The former retained his first love, and had more and more works, but bore with the *wicked*; did not withstand them with becoming vehemence. Mixed characters both; yet the latter, not the former, is reproved for his fall, and commanded to repent. *And service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works*—*Love* is shown, exercised, and improved, by *servicing* God and our neighbour: so is faith by patience and good works. *And the last to be more than the first*—Greater and better. Very far art thou from that declining state of religion of which I have had reason elsewhere to complain.

Verses 20, 21. *Notwithstanding, I have a few things, &c.*—Yet, observe, there are some things in thy conduct I take notice of, which deserve blame, and call for reformation, namely, *thou sufferest that woman Jezebel*—Thou givest too much countenance to some evil persons, who, like that wicked woman Jezebel, of old, who defiled Israel with her idolatrous and lewd practices, set themselves to *teach, and, on wicked pretences of prophecy and revelation, to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols*—Both which are contrary to the truth and purity of the doctrine and worship of my gospel. When the description of the imitators or followers of Jezebel in this verse is compared with what was before said of the Nicolaitanes, verses 14, 15, “the resemblance,” says Doddridge, “appears so great, that I am induced to believe it is the same heresy which is represented under both these views; namely, the doctrine of those who taught it was lawful to dissemble our religious principles, and occasionally to conform to superstition and idolatry, in order to avoid persecution. And as Jezebel was so infamous an idolatress, and so great a mistress of seducing arts, there was an evident propriety in such a representation, 1 Kings xvi. 31; xxi. 25.” Some

A. M. 4100. 21 And I gave her space ^a to repent
A. D. 96 of her fornication, and she repented not.

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that ^o I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and ^p I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine,

and which have not known the depths ^{A. M. 4100}
of Satan, as they speak; ^{A. D. 96} ^q I will put
upon you none other burden:

25 But ^r that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I come.

26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth ^s my works unto the end, ^t to him will I give power over the nations:

27 (^uAnd he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers:;) even as I received of my Father.

^a Rom. ii. 4; Chap. ix. 20.—^o 1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Chr. xxviii. 9; xxix. 17; 2 Chron. vi. 30; Psa. vii. 9; Jer. xi. 20; xvii. 10; xx. 12; John ii. 24, 25; Acts i. 24; Rom. viii. 27.—^p Psa. lxii. 12; Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; xiv. 12; 2 Cor. v. 10; Gal.

vi. 5; Chapter xx. 12.—^q Acts xv. 28.—^r Chapter iii. 11. ^s John vi. 29; 1 John iii. 23.—^t Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29, 30; 1 Cor. vi. 3; Chap. iii. 21; xx. 4.—^u Psa. ii. 8, 9; xlix. 14; Dan. vii. 22; Chap. xii. 5; xix. 15.

have fancied this was some female heretic. *And I gave her space to repent, &c.*—Though I have granted these persons a long time to consider the sinfulness of their conduct, and to reform it, yet they are so sunk in depravity and wickedness, that they still remain impenitent and obstinate, and afford no signs or hopes of amendment. So, though repentance is the gift of God, man may refuse it: God will not compel.

Ver. 22, 23. *Behold*—I will at length execute judgment upon her, and let the process of my righteous vengeance be observed. *I will cast her into a bed*—Not of pleasure, but of *great tribulation*—I will severely punish these seducers for their evil principles and practices; and this punishment shall reach all who have been partakers in such acts of wickedness: and this threatening shall be accomplished as surely as the punishment was which the Prophet Elijah denounced in the name of the Lord against Jezebel, 1 Kings xxi. 23. *Except they repent, &c.*—Except they be humbled for, and forsake their vile practices. *And I will kill her children*—I will slay those that presume to follow her in her wickedness; *with death*—An expression which denotes death by the plague, or by some manifest stroke of God's hand. Probably the remarkable vengeance taken on these was the token of the certainty of all the rest. *And all the churches*—To which thou now writest; *shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins*—The desires; *and hearts*—Thoughts; and that though I am very long-suffering with respect to many sinners, and am unwilling immediately to come to extremities; yet I am not to be mocked and trifled with; and therefore they will learn to respect and honour the administration of my government; who, as I know the secrets of men's hearts, so *I will at length give unto every one of you according to your works*—And according to those principles from which I know they have proceeded; and thus I will approve the perfect justice of my treatment of you all. It is observable, the angel of the church at Thyatira was only blamed for *suffering* such deceivers to seduce Christ's servants. This fault ceased when God took vengeance on these se-

ducers. Therefore he is not expressly exhorted to repent, though that is implied.

Verses 24, 25. *But unto you I say, who have not this doctrine*—Of Jezebel; *and to the rest*—Who have kept themselves from being led astray by these delusions; *and have not known*—O happy ignorance! *the depths of Satan*—The deep arts of deceit and error practised in his kingdom, to bring in all sorts of corruption, by teaching men to account things as indifferent and innocent that are wicked and abominable; *as they speak*—It seems they were continually boasting of the deep things which they taught. Our Lord owns they were *deep*, even deep as hell; for they were the very *depths of Satan*. *I will put upon you none other burden*—Than that you have already suffered from Jezebel and her adherents. Or, I will lay no new restraints or injunctions upon you; but will only confirm the laws of truth, righteousness, and goodness, given to make you free from the dominion of sin, the truest and most important liberty. *But that which ye*—Both the pastor and the church; *have already received* through my gospel, as essential to true religion, and necessary in order to your pleasing God, *hold fast*—In principle and practice, in faith, love, and obedience; *till I come*—To put an end to your time of trial, and receive you to the heavenly paradise.

Verses 26–29. *And he that overcometh*—That holds fast faith and a good conscience, notwithstanding the efforts of the enemies of my gospel to wrest them from him; *and keepeth my works*—Those which I have commanded to be done; *unto the end*—Of his time and trials; *to him will I give power over the nations*—That is, I will give him to share with me in that glorious victory which the Father hath promised me over all the nations which as yet resist me, Psa. ii. 8, 9. This, says Doddridge, appears to be intended of that “final triumph of Christ over his enemies in the last day, when he shall crush them all to utter and irrecoverable ruin, and when all his saints, raised from the dead, and clothed with robes of glory, shall sit down with them on his throne, and constitute that illustrious body which in and with

A. M. 4100. 28 And I will give him ^a the morn-
A. D. 96. ing-star.

^a 2 Pet. i. 19; Chap. xxii. 16.

their exalted Head, shall subdue every opposing power." *And he shall rule them*—That is, shall share with me when I do this; *with a rod of iron*—With irresistible power, employed on those only who will not otherwise submit; who will hereby be dashed in pieces, totally conquered. *And I will give him the morning-star*—Thou, O Jesus, art the Morning-Star! O give thyself to me! Then will I

29 ^b He that hath an ear, let him hear A. M. 4100.
what the Spirit saith unto the churches. A. D. 96.

^b Verse 7.

desire no sun, only thee, who art the sun also. He whom this Star enlightens, has always morning and no evening. The duties and promises here answer each other: the valiant conqueror has power over the stubborn nations. And he that, after having conquered his enemies, keeps the words of Christ to the end, shall have the morning-star—an unspeakable brightness and peaceable dominion in him.

CHAPTER III.

This chapter contains the three remaining epistles, with warnings, threatenings, exhortations, encouragements, and promises, suited to the state of the church at Sardis, 1-6; at Philadelphia, 7-13; at Laodicea, 14-22.

A. M. 4100. **AND** unto the angel of the church
A. D. 96. in Sardis write; These things
saith he ^a that hath the seven Spirits of God,
and the seven stars; ^b I know thy works, that

^a Chap. i. 4, 16; iv. 5; v. 6.—^b Chap. ii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *To the angel of the church in Sardis write*—This city, "once the renowned capital of Croesus and the rich Lydian kings, is now no longer worthy of the name of a city. It lies about thirty-three miles to the south of Thyatira, and is called by the Turks, *Sart*, or *Sard*, with little variation from the original name. It is a most sad spectacle; nor can one forbear weeping over the ruins of so great a city: for now it is no more than an ignoble village, with low and wretched cottages of clay; nor hath it any other inhabitants besides shepherds and herdsmen, who feed their flocks and cattle in the neighbouring plains. Yet the great extent and grandeur of the ruins abundantly show how large and splendid a city it was formerly. The Turks themselves have only one mosque, a beautiful one indeed, perverted to that use from a Christian church. Very few Christians are here to be found; and they, with great patience, sustain a miserable servitude; and, what is far more miserable, are without a church, without a priest among them. Such is the deplorable state of this once most glorious city; but *her works were not found perfect*; that is, they were found blameable before God; she was dead even while she lived; and she is punished accordingly."—Bishop Newton. Mr. Lindsay, however, informs us, that there is a small church establishment on the plains of Sardis, where, about five years ago, the few Christians who dwell around the modern *Sart*, and who had been in the habit of meeting at each other's houses for the exercise of religion, built a church within view of ancient Sardis; and that there they maintain a priest. In consequence of this, the

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thou hast a name that thou livest, ^c and A. M. 4100.
art dead. A. D. 96.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have

^c Eph. ii. 1, 5; 1 Tim. v. 6.

place has gradually risen into a little village, now called Tartar-keury, and thither the few Christians of Sart, who amount to seven, and those in its immediate vicinity, resort for public worship, and form together a congregation of about forty. There appears then still a remnant, *a few names even in Sardis*, which have been preserved. "I cannot repeat," says he, "the expressions of gratitude with which they received a copy of the New Testament in a language with which they were familiar. Several crowded about the priest to hear it on the spot; and I left them thus engaged."

These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God—That is, the Holy Spirit, from whom alone all spiritual gifts and graces proceed; or he who presides over and orders the various dispensations of the Spirit, and produces thereby such wonderful effects; *and the seven stars*—Which represent the ministers of the churches, all whose motions he continues to govern and direct, according to his all-wise and gracious pleasure. *I know thy works*—The state thou art in, and thy conduct: and that thou dost not answer that character which thou generally maintainest in the neighbouring churches for true religion and virtue; *that thou hast a name that thou livest*—A fair reputation; the character of being truly alive unto God; of possessing spiritual life here, and being in the way to eternal life hereafter; *but art dead*—Art really destitute of that life, and in the way to the second death.

Verses 2, 3. *Be watchful*—Therefore awake to a sense of thy danger, and stand on thy guard against the enemies, visible and invisible, which threaten thy eternal destruction; *and strengthen*—By prayer,

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A. M. 4100. not found thy works perfect before
A. D. 96. God.

3 ^d Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and ^e repent. ^f If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast ^g a few names even in Sardis which have not ^h defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me ⁱ in white: for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh, ^k the same shall be

⁴ 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 13; Verse 11.—^e Verse 19. ^f Matt. xxiv. 42, 43; xxv. 13; Mark xiii. 33; Luke xii. 39, 40; 1 Thess. v. 2, 6; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Chap. xvi. 15.—^g Acts i. 15. ^h Jude 23.—ⁱ Chap. iv. 4; vi. 11; vii. 9, 13.—^j Chap. xix. 8. ^k Exod. xxxii. 32; Psa. lxxix. 28.

hearing and reading the word, by meditation thereon, and a conscientious use of every private and public means of grace; *the things which remain*—In thy soul: such as knowledge of the truth, good desires, convictions of sin, of depravity and weakness, and of thy duty and interest; *which are ready to die*—Wherever pride, self-confidence, lukewarmness, indolence, levity, or the love of the world revives, every fruit of the Spirit is ready to die. *For I have not found thy works perfect*—Greek, *πεπληρωμενα*, filled up, or complete; *before God*—As not being performed from a right principle; a principle of love to God and man; to a right end, the glory of God; by a right rule, his holy will; and in a right spirit, a spirit of humility, resignation, and patience; of meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering: and therefore the good things, which might still remain in part, were very defective, wanting those qualities required in the gospel to render them acceptable in the sight of God. *Remember therefore how thou hast received*—How humbly, zealously, affectionately, and seriously thou didst once receive the enlightening, pardoning, and renewing grace of God; *and hear*—His word; *and hold fast*—That knowledge of and faith in the truth, and whatever degree of grace thou yet retainest; *and repent*—Of that carelessness and negligence through which thou hast lost so many opportunities of gaining and doing good. *If, therefore, thou wilt not watch*—As thou art now directed to do; *I will come on thee*—By some sudden and unforeseen judgment, *as a thief* in the night comes on those that are buried in sleep; *and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee*—So that the surprise will throw thee into the greatest consternation and distress.

Verse 4. *Yet thou hast a few names*—That is, persons; *even in Sardis*—Corrupt and indolent as the general state of the place is; *who have not defiled their garments*—Who, notwithstanding the common corruption, have preserved their purity, having neither spotted themselves, nor partaken of the guilt of other men's sins. These persons, though few, had not separated themselves from the rest;

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clothed in white raiment; and I A. M. 4100. will not ^l blot out his name out of ^{A. D. 96.} the ^m book of life, but ⁿ I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 ^o He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith ^p he that is holy, ^q he that is true, he that hath ^r the key of David, ^s he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and ^t shutteth, and no man openeth:

^l Philip. iv. 3; Chapter xiii. 8; xvii. 8; xx. 12; xxi. 27. ^m Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 8.—ⁿ Chapter ii. 7.—^o Acts iii. 14. ^p 1 John v. 20; Verse 14; Chap. i. 5; vi. 10; xix. 11.—^q Isa. xxii. 22; Luke i. 32; Chapter i. 18.—^r Matthew xvi. 19. ^s Job xii. 14.

otherwise the angel of this church would not have had them. Yet it was no virtue of his that they were unspotted; whereas it was his fault that they were but few. *They shall walk with me in white*—In joy, in perfect holiness, in glory. "It is well known that white robes were worn on occasions of great joy, and sometimes in triumphal processions; to both which there is probably a reference here. Priests also were clothed in white; and the addition of that dignity may likewise be implied as certainly coming within the scheme of Christ with regard to his people: see Rev. i. 6. Some think here is an allusion to the custom of the sanhedrim, when they examined the candidates for the high-priesthood; if they judged the candidate worthy, they gave him a white garment; if unqualified, he was sent out from among them in mourning."—Doddridge. *For they are worthy*—A few good among many bad are doubly acceptable unto God. O how much happier is this *worthiness* than that mentioned chap. xvi. 6.

Verses 5, 6. *He that overcometh*—That is finally victorious over his spiritual enemies; *shall be clothed in white raiment*—In the habit of victory, joy, and triumph; *and I will not blot his name out of the book of life*—Like that of the angel of the church at Sardis. See on Phil. iv. 3; Dan. xii. 1. This passage plainly implies, that some names shall be blotted out from the book of life: that is, some who, in consequence of their adoption and regeneration, were entitled to and fitted for eternal life, shall, through falling from grace, lose these blessings, and come again under guilt, condemnation, and wrath. *But I will confess his name*—Who overcomes to the end, as one of my faithful servants and soldiers; *before my Father*—In the great day of decisive judgment: and as he was enrolled among my believing, loving, and obedient people, he shall continue for ever in their number. *He that hath an ear, &c.*—Let every one that hears this be animated by so glorious a hope to exert his utmost efforts in this holy and honourable warfare.

Verses 7, 8. *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write*—"Philadelphia, so called from Attalus Philadelphus, its builder, is distant from Sar-

A. M. 4100. 8 ^a I know thy works: behold, I
A. D. 96. have set before thee ^a an open door,
and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little
strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not
denied my name.

9 Behold, I will make ^v them of the syna-
gogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and

^a Verse 1.—^v 1 Corinthians xvi. 9; 2 Corinthians ii. 12.
^v Chap. ii. 9.

dis about twenty-seven miles to the south-east. It is called by the Turks Alah Shahr, or the beautiful city, on account of its delightful situation, standing on the declivity of the mountain Tmolus, and having a most pleasant prospect on the plains beneath, well furnished with divers villages, and watered by the river Pactolus. It still retains the form of a city, with something of trade to invite the people to it, being the road of the Persian caravans. Here is little of antiquity remaining, besides the ruins of a church dedicated to St. John, which is now made a dunghill to receive the offals of dead beasts. However, God hath been pleased to preserve some of this place to make profession of the Christian faith, there being above two hundred houses of Christians, and four churches. Next to Smyrna, this city hath the greatest number of Christians, and Christ hath promised a more particular protection to it. *Behold, I have set before thee an open door, &c.,* verse 8." So Bishop Newton. But Mr. Lindsay's account given of this church two years ago, in consequence of a personal inspection, is still more favourable, thus: "Whatever may be lost of the *spirit* of Christianity, there is still the *form* of a Christian church; which, according to the promise, has been kept from the *hour of temptation*, &c., verse 10. There are here about one thousand Christians, chiefly Greeks, who for the most part speak only Turkish. There are twenty-five places of public worship; five of which are large, regular churches: to these there is a resident bishop, with twenty inferior clergy. A copy of the modern Greek Testament was received by the bishop with great thankfulness."

These things saith he that is holy, he that is true—Or, the Holy One, the true One; two great and glorious titles; he that hath the key of David—A master of a family has one or more keys wherewith he can open and shut all the doors of his house or palace. So had David a key, (a token of right or sovereignty,) which was afterward adjudged to Eliakim, Isa. xxii. 22. Much more has Christ, the Son of David, the key of the spiritual city of David, the New Jerusalem; the supreme right, power, and authority, as in his own house. He openeth this to all that overcome, and none shutteth: he shutteth it against all the fearful and unbelieving, and none openeth—He hath likewise all authority and power in his church on earth, so that none can exclude from the privileges of that kingdom those whom he thinks proper to admit to the enjoyment of them; and none can bestow them upon those from whom he shall be

are not, but do lie; behold, ^a I will make A. M. 4100.
them to come and worship before thy A. D. 96.
feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my
patience, ^a I also will keep thee from the hour
of temptation, which shall come upon ^b all the
world, to try them that dwell ^c upon the earth.

^a Isa. xlix. 23; lx. 14.—^a 2 Peter ii. 9.—^b Luke ii. 1.
^c Isa. xxiv. 17.

pleased to withhold them. Likewise, when *he openeth* a door for the progress of his work, or the usefulness of his servants, none can shut it; and when he *shut-teth* against whatever would hurt or defile, none can open. *I know thy works*—How exemplary they are; *behold, I have set before thee an open door, &c.*—I have given thee power and opportunity of spreading my gospel, which none can hinder thee from doing; *for thou hast a little strength*—A little courage and power; *and hast kept my word*—Both in judgment and practice; *and hast not denied my name*—Though my enemies have made many efforts to compel thee to do it.

Verses 9, 10. *Behold, I*—Who have all power, and when I exert it they must then comply; *will make them*—Who are indeed of the *synagogue of Satan*—And under all the solemn guise of religious worship are carrying on Satan's cause and interest; *which say they are Jews*—Pretend to be my people, but are not; *I will make them to come and worship, or bow down, before thy feet*—To pay thee the lowest homage; *and to know that I have loved thee*—That all depends on my love; and that thou hast a place therein; or to find that I evidently support thy cause and interest against all that oppose it. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience*—That gospel which I have myself, by such patient suffering in my human nature, established in the world, and by which I at once exercise and support the faith and patience of my people; *I also will keep thee*—O happy exemption from that spreading calamity! *from the hour of temptation*—Or of trial. I will partly preserve thee from it, and partly support thee under it. In other words, My hand shall remarkably appear in defending thee from the dangers by which others fall; and in strengthening thee in proportion to the trial. The word *hour* denotes the short time of its continuance; that is, at any one place. At every one it was very sharp, though short, wherein the great tempter was not idle, chap. ii. 10. *Which shall come upon all the world*—Upon the whole Roman empire, as the original expression frequently signifies. It went over the Christians, and over the Jews and heathen, though in a very different manner. This was the time of the persecution under the seemingly virtuous emperor Trajan. The two preceding persecutions were under those monsters, Nero and Domitian. But Trajan was so admired for his goodness, and his persecution was of such a nature, that it was a temptation indeed, and did thoroughly *try them that dwell upon the earth.*

A. M. 4100. 11 Behold, ^d I come quickly: ^e hold
A. D. 96. that fast which thou hast, that no
man take ^f thy crown.

12 Him that overcometh, will I make ^g a pillar
in the temple of my God, and he shall go no
more out: and ^h I will write upon him the
name of my God, and the name of the city of
my God, *which is* ⁱ New Jerusalem, which
cometh down out of heaven from my God:

^d Phil. iv. 5; Chap. i. 3; xxii. 7, 12, 20.—^e Verse 3; Chap. ii. 25.—^f Chapter ii. 10.—^g 1 Kings vii. 21; Galatians ii. 9.
^h Chap. ii. 17; xiv. 1; xxii. 4.

Verses 11, 12. *Behold, I come quickly*—To put an end to those trials which for the present are so painful; *hold that fast which thou hast*—With resolute fidelity; *that no man take thy crown*—That no person or thing may prevent thy receiving that crown of everlasting glory which will be the gracious reward of thy continued fidelity. *Him that overcometh*—All opposing power by faith and patience; *will I make a pillar in the temple of my God*—I will fix him immovable in God's heavenly temple, where he shall be as a pillar of distinguished ornament and beauty; *and he shall go no more out*—But shall be holy and happy for ever: *and I will write upon him the name of my God*—So that the nature and image of God shall appear visibly upon him. *And the name of the city of my God*—Giving him a title to dwell in the *New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God*—And shall soon be represented to thee, O John, in a most glorious vision. *And I will write upon him my new name*—I will give him a share in that joy which I entered into after overcoming all my enemies. "Few texts," says Doddridge, "in the whole New Testament, are more illustrated by antiquity than this. Great numbers of inscriptions are yet remaining, brought from the Grecian cities of Europe and Asia, and some from islands in the neighbourhood of Patmos, in which the victories of eminent persons are commemorated. And, as some of these were placed near the temples of their deities, others were in those temples, to signify their being put under the particular protection of those deities; whose names therefore were inscribed upon them, and the names of the conquerors and of the cities to which they belonged; as also the names of the generals by whose conduct the victory was gained."

Verses 14-16. *And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write*—Laodicea lay south of Philadelphia in the way to return to Ephesus: for the seven churches lay in a kind of circular form, so that the natural progress was from Ephesus to Smyrna, and so forward in the order in which the cities are here addressed, which probably was the order in which St. John used to visit them. "That there was a flourishing church at Laodicea, in the primitive times of Christianity, is evident, from St. Paul's epistle to the Colossians, wherein frequent mention is made of the Laodiceans, as well as from this epistle

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^k and *I will write upon him my new* A. M. 4100
name. A. D. 96.

13 ^l He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

14 And unto the angel of the church ¹ of the Laodiceans write; ^m These things saith the Amen, ⁿ the faithful and true Witness, ^o the beginning of the creation of God;

15 ^p I know thy works, that thou art neither

^k Gal. iv. 26; Heb. xii. 22; Ch. xxi. 2, 10.—^l Ch. xxii. 4.
¹ Chap. ii. 7.—^m Or, in Laodicea.—ⁿ Isa. lxxv. 16.—^o Chap. i. 5; xix. 11; xxii. 6; Verse 7.—^p Col. i. 15.—^q Verse 1.

by St. John. But the doom of Laodicea seemeth to have been more severe and terrible than that of almost any other of the seven churches. For it is now utterly destroyed and forsaken of men, and is become a habitation only for wolves, foxes, and jackals, a den of dragons, snakes, and vipers. And that because the Lord hath executed the judgment that he had pronounced upon her, that all the world might know and tremble at the fierce anger of God against impenitent, negligent, and careless sinners. The ruins show it to have been a very great city, situated on six or seven hills, and encompassing a large space of ground. Some notion may be formed of its former greatness and glory from three theatres and a circus which are remaining; one of which is truly admirable, as it was capable of containing about thirty thousand men, into whose area they descended by fifty steps. This city is now called Eski Hisar, or the Old Castle; and though it was once the mother church of sixteen bishoprics, yet it now lies desolate, not so much as inhabited by shepherds; and, so far from showing any of the ornaments of God's ancient worship, it cannot now boast of an anchorite's or hermit's chapel, where God is praised or invoked." The testimony of Mr. Lindsay (quoted respecting the other churches) agrees perfectly with this of Bishop Newton. "Eski Hisar," he says, "close to which are the remains of ancient Laodicea, contains about fifty poor inhabitants, in which number are but two Christians, who live together in a small mill: unhappily, neither could read at all: the copy, therefore, of the New Testament, which I intended for this church, I left with that of Denizli, the offspring and poor remains of Laodicea and Colosse. The prayers of the mosque are the only prayers which are heard near the ruins of Laodicea, on which the threat seems to have been fully executed in its utter rejection as a church."

These things saith the Amen—That is, *The true One; the faithful and true Witness*—He who attests those truths, which are of the utmost importance, on the most perfect knowledge of them, and with the most unerring exactness: *the beginning*—The Author, Head, and Ruler of the creation of God—Of all creatures, as ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως evidently here signifies. The person by whom the Father created all things, Heb. i. 2; Eph. iii. 9; John i. 3. *I know thy works*—Thy disposition and behaviour; though thou

A. M. 4100. cold nor hot : I would thou wert cold
A. D. 96. or hot.

16 So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth :

17 Because thou sayest, ^a I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked :

18 I counsel thee ^r to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and ^s white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ;

^a Hos. xii. 8 ; 1 Cor. iv. 8.—^r Isa. lv. 1 ; Matt. xiii. 44 ; xxv. 9.—^s 2 Cor. v. 3 ; Chapter vii. 13 ; xvi. 15 ; xix. 8. ^t Job v. 17 ; Prov. iii. 11, 12 ; Heb. xii. 5, 6 ; James i. 12.

knowest it not thyself ; *that thou art neither cold*—An utter stranger to divine things, having no care or thought about them ; *nor hot*—*Ζεσος*, *fervent*, like boiling water, as the word implies : so ought we to be penetrated and heated by the fire of divine love. *I would that thou wert*—This wish of our Lord plainly implies that he does not work on us irresistibly, as the fire does on the water which it heats : *cold or hot*—Even if thou wert *cold*, without any thought or profession of religion, there would be more hope of thy recovery. The religion of the Lord Jesus is either true or false : there is no medium : if it be false, it is worth nothing ; and therefore it is quite reasonable to be cold and indifferent about it : but if it be true, as we are sure, on the most satisfactory evidence, that it is, it is worth every thing : it is of infinite, because of everlasting worth : it is therefore a most unreasonable thing, not to be deeply concerned about it ; even unspeakably more than about any earthly thing whatsoever : and we are inexcusable if we are not so concerned. *So then, because thou art lukewarm*—In a state of indifference, which is as disagreeable to me as lukewarm water is to a man's stomach ; *I will spew thee out of my mouth*—I will utterly cast thee from me ; that is, unless thou repent.

Verses 17–19. *Because thou sayest, I am rich*—In gifts and grace, as well as worldly goods ; *and increased with goods*—Greek, *και πεπληθηκα*, literally, *And have enriched myself*, by my own wisdom and virtue ; *and have need of nothing*—Imagining thy state in religion to be very prosperous and happy ; *and knowest not*—Dost not so much as suspect that thy religion is at all defective : *that thou art*—In God's account ; *wretched, miserable, &c.*—In a most deplorable condition, destitute of every desirable blessing. *I counsel thee*—Who art poor, and blind, and naked ; *to buy of me*—Without money or price ; *gold tried in the fire*—Living faith, purified in the furnace of affliction ; *that thou mayest be rich*—In the enjoyment of God's favour, and communion with him, and all the blessings consequent thereon. *And white raiment*—True and genuine holiness ; *that thou mayest be clothed*—With the divine image and

and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, A. M. 4100
that thou mayest see. A. D. 96.

19 ^t As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous, therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, ^u I stand at the door, and knock : ^v if any man hear my voice, and open the door, ^w I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh ^x will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 ^y He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

^u Cant. v. 2.—^v Luke xii. 37.—^w John xiv. 23.—^x Matt. xix. 28 ; Luke xxii. 30 ; 1 Cor. vi. 2 ; 2 Tim. ii. 12 ; Chap. ii. 26, 27.—^y Chap. ii. 7.

nature. *And anoint thine eyes with eye-salve*—Spiritual illumination ; the unction of the Holy One, which teacheth all things ; *that thou mayest see*—Mayest possess that acquaintance with God and things divine which is essential to true religion. *As many as I love*—Even thee, thou poor Laodicean. As if he had said, Do not imagine that what may seem severe in this address, proceeds from any unkindness to thee : far from it : love, that is, a regard to thine immortal interests, dictates the whole. *O* how much has his unwearied love to do ! From this principle, *I rebuke*—For what is past : *and chasten*—That men may amend for the time to come. *Be zealous, therefore*—More so than thou hast ever been, *and deeply repent*—Of thy prevailing lukewarmness and indolence.

Verses 20, 21. *Behold, I stand*—Or, *I have stood*, as *εστηκα* literally signifies, namely, for a long time ; and I still stand, even at this instant ; *at the door*—Of men's hearts ; *and knock*—Waiting for admittance : *if any man hear my voice*—With a due regard, namely, the voice of my providence, word, and Spirit ; *and open the door*—Willingly receive me, or welcome me with the affection due to such a friend and Saviour ; *I will come in to him*—*And dwell in his heart by faith*, (Eph. iii. 17.) how mean soever his circumstances in life may be, and how faulty soever his character may have been formerly ; *and will sup with him*—Refreshing him with the gifts and graces of my Spirit, and delighting myself in what I have given ; *and he with me*—As I will sup with him here, he shall sup with me in life everlasting hereafter. *For to him that overcometh*—The various temptations with which he is assaulted, and patiently bears the trials which he is called to pass through ; *will I grant to sit down with me on my throne*—In unspeakable happiness and glory in the heavenly and eternal world ; *even as I also overcame*—The enemies which violently assaulted me in the days of my flesh ; *and am set down with my Father in his throne*—For all things that the Father hath are mine.

Verse 22. *He that hath an ear, let him hear, &c.*—This stands in the three former letters before the

promise; in the four latter, after it; clearly dividing the seven into two parts; the first containing three, the last four letters. The titles given our Lord in the three former letters peculiarly respect his power after his resurrection and ascension, particularly over his church; those in the four latter, his divine glory and unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Again, this word being placed before the promises in the three former letters, excludes the false apostles at Ephesus, the false Jews at Smyrna, and the partakers with the heathen at Pergamos, from having any share therein. In the four latter being placed after them, it leaves the promises immediately joined with Christ's address to the angel of the church, to show that the fulfilling of these was near; whereas the others reach beyond the end of the world. It should be observed, that the overcoming or victory (to which alone these peculiar promises are annexed) is not the ordinary victory obtained by every believer, but a special victory obtained over great and peculiar temptations by those that are strong in faith. "Such," says Bishop Newton on

the close of these chapters, "is the state and condition of these seven once glorious and flourishing churches; and there cannot be a stronger proof of the truth of prophecy, nor a more effectual warning to other Christians. 'These objects,' Wheeler justly observes, 'ought to make us, who yet enjoy the divine mercies, to tremble, and earnestly contend to find out *from whence we are fallen*, and do daily fall from bad to worse; that God is a God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and seeing *the axe is thus long since put to the root of the tree*, should it not make us repent and turn to God, lest we likewise perish? We see here *what destruction the Lord hath brought upon the earth*. But it is the Lord's doing: and thence we may reap no small advantage by considering how just he is in all his judgments, and faithful in all his promises.' We may truly say, (1 Cor. x. 11, 12,) that *all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*"

CHAPTER IV.

We are now entering upon the main prophecy, to which the contents of this and of the following chapter are a solemn introduction. Another scene therefore now opens on the apostle, in which, (1.) God is represented as enthroned in celestial glory, surrounded by a rainbow, emblematical of the covenant of grace, and with hieroglyphical representations of his church, both under the Jewish and Christian dispensations, 1-7. (2.) These attendants on the Divine Majesty are represented as adoring him with incessant songs of praise, 8-11.

A. M. 4100. AFTER* this I looked, and behold,
A. D. 96. a door was opened in heaven:
and * the first voice which I heard was as it

were of a trumpet talking with me; A. M. 4100.
which said, ^b Come up hither, ^c and I ^{A. D. 96.}
will show thee things which must be hereafter.

* Trinity Sunday, epistle, verse 1 to the end.

^a Chap. i. 10.—^b Chap. xi. 12.—^c Chap. i. 19; xxii. 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. The former vision which John saw, contained in the foregoing chapters, represented the state of the church at the time when the vision was given, or the things that then were, (chap. i. 19,) and gave suitable directions to the churches, with their pastors, to encourage their faith and patience, and excite them to constancy and perseverance. Now the apostle records a second vision, in which the things were revealed to him *that should be afterward*, namely, to the end of time: or the things which were to come to pass, in successive order, from the time of the vision till the mystery of God should be finished. In order to raise the greater attention of the church, and to represent the certainty and great importance of the things revealed, both to the glory of God and the salvation of mankind, God himself is represented as seated on his heavenly throne, in the midst of his saints, and the whole general assembly of his church, and the glorious majesty and infinite perfections of God are set forth by very lively, expressive, and beautiful images, together with the high regard which the churches

ought always to have for the counsels, designs, and dispensations of divine providence, declared and published in so solemn a manner.

After this—That is, after I had seen the foregoing vision, and had written as I was directed, the seven letters to the seven churches, from the mouth of Christ; *I looked*—Being directed so to do; *and, behold, a door was opened in heaven*—So it appeared to me, and hereby I understood that other heavenly discoveries, such as had not been made before, were about to be communicated to me, and that I should obtain a further insight into the divine counsels. Other openings like that here spoken of are successively mentioned. Here *a door is opened*; afterward, *the temple of God in heaven*, chap. xi. 19; xv. 5; and, at last, heaven itself is opened, chap. xix. 11. By each of these openings, St. John gains a new and more extended prospect. He saw and heard, and then, it seems, immediately wrote down one part after another. By the particle *and* the several parts of the prophecy are usually connected: by the expression *after these things*, they are distinguished from each other, chap. vii. 9; xix. 1; and by that

A. M. 4100. 2 And immediately ^d I was in the
A. D. 96. Spirit: and behold, ^e a throne was
set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne.

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a
jasper and a sardine-stone: ^f and *there was* a
rainbow round about the throne, in sight like
unto an emerald.

4 ^g And round about the throne *were* four and

twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw A. M. 4100.
four and twenty elders sitting, ^h clothed A. D. 96.
in white raiment; ⁱ and they had on their heads
crowns of gold.

5 And out of the throne proceeded ^k lightnings,
and thunderings, and voices. ^l And *there were*
seven lamps of fire burning before the throne,
which are ^m the seven Spirits of God.

^d Chap. i. 10; xvii. 3; xxi. 10.—^e Isa. vi. 1; Jer. xvii. 12;
Ezek. i. 26; x. 1; Dan. vii. 9.—^f Ezek. i. 28.—^g Chap. xi.
16.—^h Chap. iii. 4, 5; vi. 11; vii. 9, 13, 14; xix. 14.

ⁱ Verse 10.—^k Chap. viii. 5; xvi. 18.—^l Exod. xxxvii. 23;
2 Chron. iv. 20; Ezek. i. 13; Zech. iv. 2.—^m Chap. i. 4; iii.
1; v. 6.

expression, *And after these things*, they are both
distinguished and connected, chap. vii. 1; xv. 5;
xviii. 1. *And the first voice which I heard*—Name-
ly, that of Christ, (afterward he heard the voices of
many others,) *was as it were of a trumpet talking
with me*—There may probably be an allusion here
to the custom of the Jewish Church, in which, upon
opening the gates of the temple, the priests sounded
their trumpets to call the Levites and priests to at-
tend to their several offices; *which said, Come up
hither*—Not in body, but in spirit, which was in-
stantly done; *and I will show thee things which
must be hereafter*—To such things, then future, the
whole subsequent prophecy refers.

Verse 2. *Immediately I was in the Spirit*—Even
in a higher degree than before. "This phrase,"
says Doddridge, "signifies to be under a strong and
supernatural impulse, caused by the miraculous op-
eration of the Spirit of God acting on the imagina-
tion, in such a manner as to open extraordinary
scenes, which had not any exact external archetype.
And it is much illustrated by the view presented to
Ezekiel, when he sat in his house among the elders
of the people, (Ezek. viii. 1,) who probably saw
nothing but the prophet himself, as one who was in
a trance or ecstasy, or whose thoughts were so at-
tentively fixed as to be insensible of what passed
around him. We are not therefore to imagine that
the person *sitting on the throne*, or the *four animals*,
or the *four and twenty elders*, were real beings ex-
isting in nature, though they represented, in a figura-
tive manner, things that did really exist. And,
though it is possible that aerial scenes might, by di-
vine or angelic power, have been formed, I think it
much more probable that all that passed was purely
in the imagination of St. John. This will keep us,
in our interpretation, clear of a thousand difficulties,
not to say absurdities, which would follow from a
contrary supposition, namely, that there is in hea-
ven an animal in the form of a lamb, to represent
Christ, and that there are such living creatures as
here described; and that God himself appears in a
human form," &c.

Behold, a throne was set in heaven—Representing
that of the blessed God; *and one sat on the throne*—
Of a majestic form and appearance, and arrayed in
robes of glory as a king, governor, and judge. Here
is described God, the Almighty, the Father of hea-
ven, in his majesty, glory, and dominion.

Verse 3. *He that sat was to look upon like a jasper*
—Shone with a visible lustre, like that of sparkling
precious stones, such as those which were of old on
the high-priest's breast-plate, and those placed as the
foundations of the New Jerusalem, chap. xxi. 19, 20.
If there be any thing emblematical in the colours of
these stones, possibly the jasper (one species, at least,
of which, according to Pliny, is *milky white*, and
according to Daubuz, of a *white and bright shining
colour*) might be a symbol of God's purity, with va-
rious other perfections which shine in all his dispen-
sations. The *sardine-stone*, of a blood-red colour,
or with white and red strata, may be an emblem of
his justice, and of the vengeance he was about to
execute on his enemies. An *emerald*, being green,
may betoken favour to the penitent and pious; and
the rainbow, of an emerald colour, was undoubtedly
intended to express the everlasting covenant of grace
and peace, of which the rainbow was to Noah an ap-
pointed token. And this rainbow, being round
about the whole breadth of the throne, fixed the dis-
tance of those who stood or sat round it.

Verses 4, 5. *And round about the throne*—In a cir-
cle; *four and twenty seats*—Greek, *θρόνοι*, thrones;
and upon the thrones four and twenty elders—Signi-
fying, perhaps, the most wise, holy, and useful of all
the former ages, whether of the patriarchal, Jewish,
or Christian Church, Isa. xxiv. 23; Heb. xii. 1. In
the number, there seems to be an allusion to that of
the patriarchs and apostles, and they may be called
elders, because the presidency of elders was common
among the Jews. Or, as Bishop Newton thinks, the
allusion is to the princes of the four and twenty
courses of the Jewish priests: and if so, these four
and twenty elders must be considered as represent-
ing the Jewish Church. Indeed, their *harps*, and
golden vials full of odours, (chap. v. 8,) seem to in-
timate their connection with the ancient tabernacle
service, in which such things were wont to be used.
Sitting—In general; but falling down when they
worshipped; *clothed in white raiment*—A habit
resembling that of the Jewish priests, and emble-
matical of their purity; *and on their heads crowns
of gold*—In token of their being made *kings* as well
as *priests* unto God. *And out of the throne proceed-
ed lightnings, thunderings, voices*—The usual con-
comitants of the divine presence, representing the
awful majesty of the one true God, the King of Is-
rael; and also emblematical of the revelations about

A. M. 4100. 6 And before the throne *there was*
 A. D. 96. ^a a sea of glass like unto crystal :
 ° and in the midst of the throne, and round
 about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes
 before ^p and behind.

7 ^q And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the
 second beast like a calf, and the third beast had

^a Exod. xxxviii. 8 ; Chap. xv. 2.—^p Ezek. i. 5.—^q Verse 8.
^q Num. ii. 2, &c. ; Ezek. i. 10 ; x. 14.

to be given, and of the commotions and convulsions
 about to take place in the world and in the church.
 See on chap. viii. 5 ; xi. 19. *And there were seven
 lamps of fire, &c., which are the seven spirits*—That
 is, which represent the various gifts and operations
 of God's Holy Spirit. See on chap. i. 4.

Verses 6, 7. *And before the throne there was a sea
 of glass like unto crystal*—Wide and deep, pure and
 clear, transparent and still. Both the *seven lamps
 of fire* and this sea are *before the throne*, and both
 may mean the *seven Spirits of God*, the Holy Ghost ;
 whose powers and operations are frequently repre-
 sented both under the emblem of *fire* and *water*.
 We read again, chap. xv. 2, of *a sea as of glass*,
 where there is no mention of the *seven lamps of
 fire* ; but, on the contrary, the sea itself is *mingled
 with fire*. We read also, chap. xxii. 1, of *a stream
 of water of life, clear as crystal*. Now, the *sea
 which is before the throne*, and the *stream which
 goes out of the throne*, may both mean the same,
 namely, the Spirit of God. *And in the midst of the
 throne*—With respect to its height ; *and round
 about the throne*—That is, toward the four quarters,
 east, west, north, and south ; *were four beasts*—Or
 rather *living creatures*, as ζῶα means, (not *beasts*,
 certainly, any more than *birds*.) “It was a most
 unhappy mistake,” says Doddridge, “in our trans-
 lators to render the word *beasts*, as it certainly sig-
 nifies any other kind of animals ; that is, of creatures
 which have animal life, as well as *beasts*. The word
beasts not only degrades the signification, but the
 animals here mentioned have parts and appearances
 which *beasts* have not, and are represented in the
 highest sense rational.” It has been observed on
 verse 4, that the four and twenty elders may repre-
 sent the Jewish Church. If so, these living crea-
 tures may represent the Christian Church. Their
 number, also, is symbolical of universality, and
 agrees with the dispensation of the gospel, which ex-
 tends to all nations under heaven. And the *new
 song*, which they all sing, saying, *Thou hast re-
 deemed us out of every kindred, and tongue, and
 people, and nation*, (chap. v. 9,) could not possibly
 suit the Jewish without the Christian Church ; nor
 is it, in any respect, applicable to angels. *The first
 living creature was like a lion*—To signify undaunt-
 ed courage ; *the second like a calf*—Or ox, (Ezek.
 i. 10,) to signify unwearied patience : *the third with
 the face of a man*—To signify prudence and compas-
 sion ; *the fourth like a flying eagle*—To signify ac-
 tivity and vigour ; *full of eyes*—To betoken wisdom

b

A. M. 4100. *was* like a flying eagle. A. D. 96.

8 And the four beasts had each of them ^r six
 wings about *him* ; and *they were* full of eyes
^s within : and ^t they rest not day and night, say-
 ing, ‘Holy, holy, holy, ^u Lord God Almighty,
^v which was, and is, and is to come.

^r Isa. vi. 2.—^s Verse 6.—^t Gr. *they have no rest*.—^u Isa. vi. 3.
^v Chap. i. 8.—^x Chap. i. 4.

and knowledge ; *before*—To see the face of him that
 sitteth on the throne ; *and behind*—To see what is
 done among the creatures. Two things may be ob-
 served here ; 1st, That the four qualities, thus em-
 blematically set forth in these four living creatures,
 namely, undaunted courage, unwearied patience
 under sufferings, prudence, and compassion, and vig-
 orous activity, are found, more or less, in the true
 members of Christ's church in every age and nation.
 2d, That it may possibly be here intimated, that
 these qualities would especially prevail in succeed-
 ing ages of the church, in the order in which they
 are here placed ; that is, that in the first age, true
 Christians would be eminent for the courage, forti-
 tude, and success wherewith they should spread the
 gospel ; that in the next age they would manifest
 remarkable patience in bearing persecution, when
 they should be *killed all the day*, like calves or sheep
 appointed for the slaughter : that in the subsequent
 age or ages, when the storms of persecution were
 blown over, and Christianity generally spread
 through the whole Roman empire, knowledge and
 wisdom, piety and virtue should increase, the church
 should wear the *face of a man* ; and excel in pru-
 dence, humanity, love, and good works : and that in
 ages still later, being reformed from various corrup-
 tions in doctrine and practice, and full of vigour and
 activity, it should carry the gospel as upon the wings
 of *a flying eagle*, to the remotest nations under hea-
 ven ; to every kindred, and tongue, and people.

Verse 8. *And the four living creatures*—With an
 allusion to the seraphim represented in Isaiah's
 vision ; *had each of them six wings about him*—
 Which they used in part to express their reverence
 and humility, and in part to show readiness and ex-
 pedition in performing the orders and commands of
 God. See on Isa. vi. 2, 3. *And they were full of eyes
 within*—Bengelius reads κεντροθεν και εσωθεν γεμισται
 οφθαλμων, *round about and within they are full of
 eyes* : *round about* signifying their attention to and
 knowledge of the state of the world and church in
 general ; or rather, perhaps, their vigilance and cir-
 cumsppection, their attention to their duty to God
 and man, and their watchful observance of the de-
 signs, wiles, devices, and various motions and snares
 of their spiritual enemies ; and they are said to be
full of eyes within, to signify their self-knowledge,
 their diligent attention to the state of their own
 hearts, and the various workings of their passions
 and appetites, their affections and thoughts. *And
 they rest not*—O happy unrest ! *day and night*—

A. M. 4100. 9 And when those beasts give glo-
A. D. 96. ry, and honour, and thanks to him
that sat on the throne, ^v who liveth for ever and
ever,

10 ^{*} The four and twenty elders fall down be-
fore him that sat on the throne, ^{*} and worship him

^v Chap. i. 18; v. 14; xv. 7.—^{*} Chap. v. 8, 14.—[^] Verse 9.
^b Verse 4.

They are incessant in the spiritual worship, adoration, and praise of him who is a Spirit; and at all proper opportunities they unite in acts of solemn and external worship; *saying*—With their lips, as well as in their hearts; *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which ever was, and now is, and is still to come*—Or, for ever will be; the one true God, the everlasting Lord, the Supreme Governor of all beings.

There are two words in the original very different from each other, both which we translate *holy*. The one, *osios*, means properly, *merciful*: but the other, *ayios*, which occurs here, implies much more. "This holiness is the sum of all the praise which is given to the Almighty Creator, for all that he does and reveals concerning himself, till the new song brings with it new matter of glory. This word properly signifies *separated*. And when God is termed holy, it denotes that excellence which is altogether peculiar to himself; and the glory flowing from all his attributes conjoined, shining forth from all his works, and darkening all things besides itself, whereby he is, and eternally remains, in an incomprehensible manner, *separate*, and at a distance, not only from all that is impure, but likewise from all that is created. God is *separate* from all things. He is, and works from himself, out of himself, in himself, through himself, for himself. Therefore he is the First and the Last, the only One, and the Eternal; living and happy, endless and unchangeable, almighty, omniscient, wise and true, just and faithful, gracious and merciful. When God is spoken of, he is often named, *The Holy One*. And as God swears by his name, so he does also by his holiness, that is, by himself. This holiness is often styled glory; often his holiness and glory are celebrated together, Lev. x. 3; Isa. vi. 4. For holiness is covered glory, and glory is uncovered holiness. The Scripture speaks abund-

that liveth for ever and ever, ^b and cast A. M. 4100
their crowns before the throne, saying, A. D. 96.

11 ^o Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: ^d for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

^c Chap. v. 12.—^a Gen. i. 1; Acts xvii. 24; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16; Chap. x. 6.

antly of the holiness and glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And hereby is the mystery of the Holy Trinity eminently confirmed. That is also termed *holy*, which is consecrated to him, and for that end *separated* from other things. And so is that wherein we may be like God, or united to him. In the hymn resembling this, recorded by Isaiah, (chap. vi. 3,) is added, *The whole earth is full of his glory*. But this is deferred in the Revelation, till the glory of the Lord (his enemies being destroyed) fills the earth."—Wesley.

Verses 9–11. *And when those living creatures give glory, &c., the elders fall down*—That is, as often as the living creatures begin their song of adoration and praise, the elders immediately fall down. The expression implies that they did so at the same instant, and that they both did this frequently. The living creatures do not say directly, *Holy, holy, holy art thou*; but only bend a little, out of deep reverence, and say, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord*. But the elders, when they are fallen down, say, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory*—This he receives, not only when he is thus praised, but also when he destroys his enemies, and glorifies himself anew; *glory, &c.*—In the Greek, (which has the article with each noun,) it is, *the glory, and the honour, and the power*; answering the *thrice holy* of the *living creatures*, verse 9. *For thou hast created all things*—By thine almighty energy. Creation is the ground of all the works of God. Therefore for this, as well as for all his other works, he must and will be praised to all eternity. *And for thy pleasure*—*Δια το θελημα σου, on account of thy will*; *they are*—They exist; *and were at first created*—Their first production and continued existence are owing to the riches of thy free goodness; and therefore they are all under the strongest obligations, according to their respective natures, to subserve the purposes of thy glory.

CHAPTER V.

In this chapter, (1.) The future events which were about to take place successively, in relation to God's church, are represented as recorded in a book of seven volumes, or a roll of seven parchments wrapped up one within another, and each sealed; which, to John's great grief, no creature could open, 1–4. (2.) To his comfort, Christ takes the book from his Father's hand to open it, 5–7. (3.) Hereupon the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders, or the church universal, Christian and Jewish, fall down before the Lamb, and ascribe high praises to him and the Father in their respective songs, 8–14.

A. M. 4100. **AND I** saw in the right hand of
A. D. 96. him that sat on the throne, a

^a book written within and on the back side,
^b sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And no man ^c in heaven, nor in earth, nei-

^a Ezekiel ii. 9, 10.—^b Isaiah xxix. 11; Daniel xii. 4.
^c Verse 13.

NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *And I saw*—(This is a continuation of the same vision;) *in the right hand of him that sat on the throne*—The emblem of his all-ruling power; *a book*—Which he held openly, in order to give it to him that was worthy and able to make known its contents. Future events are supposed by St. John, as well as by Daniel, and other prophets, in a beautiful figure, to be registered in a book for the greater certainty of them. This book is here represented as being in the right hand of God, to signify that, as he alone directs the affairs of futurity, so he alone is able to reveal them. It is hardly needful (after what was observed on chap. iv. 2) to say that there is not in heaven any real book, of parchment or paper, or that Christ does not really stand there, in the shape of a lion or of a lamb. Neither is there on earth any monstrous beast with seven heads and ten horns. But as there is upon earth something which, in its kind, answers to such a representation; so there are in heaven divine counsels and transactions answerable to these figurative expressions. Writings serve to inform us of distant and of future things. And hence things which are yet to come, are figuratively said to be written in God's book. The book here spoken of, through the abundance of the matter, is said to be *written within and without, or on the back side*—As the roll of the book which was spread before Ezekiel (chap. ii. 10) was written *within and without*. This book was also *sealed*, to signify that the counsels of God are inscrutable; and to be *sealed with seven seals*, referring to so many signal periods of prophecy. In short, we should consider this book as being such a one as the ancients used, whose books were not like ours, but volumes, or long pieces of parchment, rolled upon a stick, as we frequently roll silks. Such was this volume or roll, consisting of seven volumes all sealed. Not as if the apostle saw all the seals at once, there being seven volumes wrapped up one within another, each of which was sealed: so that upon opening and unrolling the first, the contents only of one volume were laid open, and the second appeared to be sealed up till that was opened, and so on to the seventh. All the contents of this book are included and exhibited in the following chapters. The seals, successively opened, show the state of the church under the heathen Roman emperors, and predict the judgments coming on that empire, (which had so cruelly persecuted the Christians,) and the events whereby it should be brought to the profession of Christianity.

ther under the earth, was able to open A. M. 4100.
the book, neither to look thereon. A. D. 96.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, ^d the Lion of the tribe of Juda, ^e the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the

^d Gen. xlix. 9, 10; Heb. vii. 14.—^e Isa. xi. 1, 10; Rom. xv. 12; Chap. xxii. 16.

By the trumpets, contained under the seventh seal, the kingdoms of this world are shaken, that they may at length become the kingdom of Christ. By the vials, (under the seventh trumpet,) the power of the beast, and whatsoever is connected with it, is broken. This sum of all we should have continually before our eyes. It was all represented to St. John, at Patmos, in one day, by way of vision; but the accomplishment of it extends from that time throughout all ages.

Verses 2, 3. *And I saw a strong angel, &c.*—I beheld in my vision an angel of chief power, as attendant upon the heavenly court, making proclamation, with a strong audible voice, to every creature; a proclamation too great for a man to make, and yet not becoming the Lamb himself, and therefore made by an angel, and one of uncommon eminence. *Who is worthy to open the book, &c.*—Is any being able and fit to reveal and make known the counsels of God registered in this book, and to bring them into execution? *And no man*—Greek, *ουδεις*, no one, no creature; no, not the Virgin Mary herself; *in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth*—That is, none in the universe; for these are the three great regions into which the whole creation is divided; *was able to open the book*—To declare the counsels of God; *neither to look thereon*—So as to understand any part of it.

Verses 4, 5. *And I wept much*—Being greatly affected with the thought that no being whatsoever was to be found able to understand, reveal, and accomplish the divine counsels, fearing they would still remain concealed from the church. This weeping of the apostle sprang from greatness of mind. The tenderness of heart which he always had, appeared more clearly now he was out of his own power. The Revelation was not written without tears: neither without tears will it be understood. How far are they from the temper of St. John, who inquire after any thing rather than after the contents of this book! Yea, who applaud their own clemency, if they excuse those that do inquire into them! *And one of the elders*—One of the four and twenty mentioned chap. iv. 4; *saith unto me, Weep not*—He relieved my fears, and comforted me, saying, *Behold, the Lion, &c.*—Though no one is yet found able to reveal and execute these purposes of God, respecting future events, there is one person described in ancient prophecy as the *Lion of the tribe of Juda*—The victorious Prince, who is, like a lion, able to tear his enemies in pieces; *the Root of David*

A. M. 4100. book, ^f and to loose the seven seals
A. D. 96. thereof.

6 And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood ^g a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and ^h seven eyes, which are ⁱ the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand ^k of him that sat upon the throne.

^f Verse 1; Chap. vi. 1.—^g Isa. liii. 7; John i. 29, 36; 1 Pet. i. 19; Chap. xiii. 8; Verses 9, 12.—^h Zech. iii. 9; iv. 10.—ⁱ Chapter iv. 5.—^j Chapter iv. 2.—^k Chap. iv. 8, 10.
^m Chap. xiv. 2; xv. 2.—^l Or, *incense*.—ⁿ Psa. cxli. 2; Chap. viii. 3, 4.

—As God, the root and source of David's family, Isa. xi. 1, 10; *hath prevailed to open the book*—Hath overcome all obstructions, and obtained the honour and the power to disclose the divine counsels to the church, and ensure their accomplishment.

Verses 6, 7. *And I beheld, and lo, &c.*—Upon this I observed, in my vision, a new representation; *in, or on, the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures*—Within the circle which they made round him; *and in the midst of the elders*—Making a larger circle round him and them; *stood a Lamb*—*Ἀρνίον ἐστῆς, a lamb standing*. He no more falls on his face; the days of his weakness and mourning are ended! He is now in a posture of readiness to execute all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; *as it had been slain*—For sacrifice; bearing the recent marks of slaughter, in the wounds and blood on its throat and breast. And because he *was slain*, he was now worthy to open the book, (verse 9), to the joy of his own people and the terror of his enemies. Nor was this lamb only represented as a sacrifice; but *having seven horns and seven eyes*—Emblematical of perfect power and perfect knowledge, whereby he is able to accomplish what is contained in the book; namely, by his almighty and all-wise Spirit, even to reveal future events respecting the world and the church, and to accomplish all God's designs of providence and grace. To these *seven horns and seven eyes* answer the seven seals and the seven-fold song of praise, verse 12. In Zechariah, likewise, (chap. iii. 9; iv. 10.) mention is made of *the seven eyes of the Lord, which go forth over all the earth*. Which (both the horns and the eyes) *are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*—They represent that divine wisdom and energy which operate everywhere; or that effectual working of the Spirit of God, which goes through the whole creation: and that in the natural as well as spiritual world. For could mere matter act or think? Could it gravitate or attract? Just as much as it could think or speak. *And he came*—Here we have an instance of the accomplishment of the words recorded Psa. ii. 8, *Ask of me and I will give thee, &c.*: *and took the book, &c.*—It is one state of exaltation that reaches from our Lord's ascension to his coming in glory, yet this state admits of various de-

8 And when he had taken the book, A. M. 4100.
^l the four beasts, and four *and* twenty ^m A. D. 96.

elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them ⁿ harps, and golden vials full of ^o odours, ^p which are the prayers of saints.

9 And ^q they sung a new song, saying, ^r Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: ^s for thou wast slain, and ^t hast redeemed us to God by thy blood ^u out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

^v Psa. xl. 3; Chap. xiv. 3.—^w Chap. iv. 11.—^x Verse 6.
^y Acts xx. 28; Rom. iii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Heb. ix. 12; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 John i. 7; Chap. xiv. 4.—^z Dan. iv. 1; vi. 25; Chap. vii. 9; xi. 9; xiv. 6.

grees. At his ascension, *angels, and principalities, and powers, were subjected to him*. Ten days after he received from the Father, and sent, the Holy Ghost. And now he *took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne*—Who gave it to him as a signal of his delivering to him all power in heaven and earth. He received it in token of his being both able and willing to fulfil all that was written therein.

Verses 8-10. *And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures fell down*—Now is homage done to the Lamb by the whole Christian Church and all its members, represented by these four living creatures. These, together with the *elders*, make the beginning, and afterward (verse 14) the conclusion. They are together surrounded with a multitude of angels, (verse 11,) and together sing the new song, as they had before praised God together, chap. iv. 8, &c. *Having every one*—That is, each of the elders, not of the living creatures; *harps*—*Κιθάραν, a harp*, which was one of the chief instruments of thanksgiving in the temple service; a fit emblem of the melody of their hearts; *and golden vials*—Cups or censers; *full of odours*—Or *incense*, producing odours; *which are the prayers of the saints*—That is, fit representations of them. As if the apostle had said, As I understood these elders to be the representatives of the church, I apprehended that, in allusion to the incense offered in the temple, while the people were praying, this circumstance had a reference to prayer, and was intended to show how acceptable it is to God, when it proceeds from a holy and an upright heart. *And they sung*—Or, rather, *sing, ἀδούσιν, a new song*—One which neither they nor any others had sung before; *saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, &c.*—That is, to undertake the work of revealing and accomplishing the designs of God's providence toward the world, and of his grace toward his church; *for thou wast slain*—A sacrifice of propitiation; *and by thy blood hast redeemed us to God*—So the living creatures also were of the number of the redeemed; but this does not so much refer to the act of redemption, which was long before, as to the fruit of it; namely, deliverance from the guilt and power of sin; the tyranny of Satan; the curse of the law; and the

A. M. 4100. 10 ^a And hast made us unto our God
A. D. 96. kings and priests: and we shall reign
on the earth.

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels ^a round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ^x ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12 Saying with a loud voice, ^y Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and

^a Exod. xix. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9; Chap. i. 6; xx. 6; xxii. 5.
^x Chap. iv. 4, 6.—^y Psa. lxxviii. 17; Dan. vii. 10; Heb. xii. 22.
^y Chap. iv. 11.—^z Phil. ii. 10; Verse 3.

wrath of a justly offended God, whose servants and favourites they were now become. *Out of every kindred, &c.*—That is, out of all mankind. *And hast made us*, who are thus redeemed, *unto our God kings and priests*—Consecrated to his service, and honoured with the liberty of a near approach to his presence, to offer up prayers and praises acceptable in his sight; *and we shall reign on the earth*—The Christian cause shall prevail through all ages, while those happy persons who have passed courageously through their trials on earth shall, at the appointed season, share the honours of thy triumphant kingdom in the new heavens and new earth.

Verses 11–14. *And I beheld*—The many angels; *and heard the voice*—And the number of them; *round about the throne*—Of the Divine Majesty; *and the living creatures and the elders*—So forming the third circle. It is remarkable that men are represented, through the whole vision, as nearer to God than any of the angels. *And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands*—An innumerable multitude. And yet these are but a part of the holy angels; afterward, (chap. vii. 11,) St. John heard them all. *Saying, with a loud voice*—With united ardour and harmony, there not being a cold and languid mind in the whole assembly; *Worthy is the Lamb*—The elders said, verse 9, *Worthy art thou*; being more nearly allied to him, and addressing him with greater familiarity than the angels; *to receive power, &c.*—The seven-fold praise answers the seven seals, of which the four former represent all visible, the latter all invisible things made subject to the Lamb. *And every creature*—In the whole universe; *which is in heaven—on the earth—under the earth—in the sea*—“As the inhabitants of the watery elements are necessarily mute, we are not to understand by

honour, and glory, and blessing. A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

13 And ^a every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, ^a Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be unto* ^b him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

14 ^c And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him ^d that liveth for ever and ever.

^a 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Rom. ix. 5; xvi. 27; 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1 Pet. iv. 11; v. 11; Chap. i. 6.—^b Chap. vi. 16; vii. 10.
^c Chap. xix. 4.—^d Chap. iv. 9, 10.

this that they seemed to grow vocal in the praises of Christ, upon this occasion, but rather that heaven, earth, and sea are used to signify that all nature, in its different ways, concurred in the praise; that is, the whole constitution of it contributed to furnish out matter of praise; just as inanimate, as well as rational creatures, are called upon to praise God, in several of the Psalms, especially in Psa. cxlviii.²³—Doddridge. *And all that are in them*—In every varied form of nature; *heard I saying, Blessing, &c.*—This praise, from all creatures, begins before the opening of the first seal; but it continues from that time to eternity, according to the capacity of each. His enemies must acknowledge his glory, but those in heaven say, Blessed be God and the Lamb. *And the four living creatures said, Amen*—To this hymn, to testify their hearty concurrence. *And the four and twenty elders*, at the same time, *fell down before the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever*—Acknowledging him to be infinitely superior to all those services which the most exalted powers of created nature are capable of rendering. This royal manifesto is, as it were, a proclamation, showing how Christ fulfils all things, and *every knee bows to him*, not only on earth, but also in heaven, and under the earth. This book exhausts all things, (1 Cor. xv. 27, 28,) and is suitable to a heart enlarged as the sand of the sea. It inspires the attentive and intelligent reader with such a magnanimity, that he accounts nothing in this world great; no, not the whole frame of visible nature, compared to the immense greatness of what he is here called to behold; yea, and in part to inherit. St. John has in view, through the whole of the following vision, what he has been now describing; namely, the four living creatures, the elders, the angels, and all creatures, looking together at the opening of the seven seals.

CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter, under the emblem of six seals opened successively, the state of the Christian Church, with that of the Roman empire, is represented till about A. D. 323, including the important and awful events which accompany the opening of each seal, 1–17.

A. M. 4100. **AND** ^aI saw when the Lamb
A. D. 96. opened one of the seals, and I
heard, as it were the noise of thunder, ^bone of
the four beasts, saying, Come and see.

* Chap. v. 5-7. — ^b Chap. iv. 7. — ^c Zech. vi. 3; Chap. xix. 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

St. John had seen, in the former part of his vision, a representation of the majesty, glory, power, and supreme authority of God; and the sealed book, in which were contained the counsels of Divine Providence toward the church and the world, delivered to Christ, the Lamb of God, to open and make known its contents for the encouragement of the church to patience and faithfulness; together with the adoration of the church on this solemn occasion. Now this revelation of Christ begins with a prophetic representation of the future state of the church and the world, so far as the wisdom and goodness of God thought fit to make it known, for the consolation of his faithful people, comprehended under the emblem of opening, one after another, seven seals. These seven seals are not distinguished from each other, by specifying the time of them: they swiftly follow the letters to the seven churches. And by the four former is shown, First, the progress of the gospel; and afterward that all the public occurrences, as wars between nations, destruction of mankind thereby, famine, pestilence, are made subject to Christ. And these four have a peculiar connection with each other, as have also the three latter seals.

Before we proceed it may be observed, 1st, No man should constrain either himself or another to explain every thing in this book. It is sufficient for every one to speak just so far as he understands. 2d, We should remember, that although the ancient prophets wrote the occurrences of those kingdoms only with which Israel had to do, yet the Revelation contains what relates to the whole world, through which the Christian Church began to be extended. Yet, 3d, We should not prescribe to this prophecy, as if it must needs admit or exclude this or that history, according as we judge one or the other to be of great or small importance. *God seeth not as man seeth.* Therefore, what we think great is often omitted, what we think little inserted, in Scripture history or prophecy. 4th, We must take care not to overlook what is already fulfilled, and not to describe as fulfilled what is still to come. We are to look in history for the fulfilling of the first four seals, quickly after the date of the prophecy. In each of these appears a different horseman, and in each we are to consider, 1st, The horseman himself. 2d, What he does. The horseman himself, by an emblematical prosopopœia, represents a swift power, bringing with it either conquest, producing a flourishing state,—or bloodshed,—or scarcity of provision,—or public calamities. With the qualities of each of these riders, the colour of his horse agrees. The first horseman, with his bow and crown, is a conqueror. The second, with his great sword, is a warrior. The third, with his scales, has power over

2 And I saw, and behold, ^ca white A. M. 4100.
horse: ^dand he that sat on him had ^eA. D. 96.
a bow; ^fand a crown was given unto him:
and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

⁴ Psa. xlv. 4, 5. LXX. — ^c Zech. vi. 11; Chap. xiv. 14.

the produce of the earth. The fourth is expressly termed *death*, implying certainly a great destruction of the lives of men by some signal judgments.

Verses 1, 2. *And*—Being all attention to this wonderful scene; *I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals*—Of the book which he had taken from the hand of him that sat on the throne; *and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder*—Signifying the great importance of the event about to be disclosed; *one of the four living creatures*—That is, it seems, the first, which was like a lion, looking forward toward the east, toward Asia and Syria, where the prophecy had its principal accomplishment, and from whence Christ and his gospel came. *Saying, Come and see*—Pay particular attention to what is now to be exhibited. *And I saw, and behold a white horse*—The contents of this seal seem evidently to refer to the triumph of Christianity over Jewish and heathen opposition, by the labours of its first preachers. Therefore the person here represented is Jesus Christ, who had received a kingdom from the Father, which was to rule all nations, and concerning which it was foretold, that notwithstanding the efforts that would be made by earth and hell to oppose its progress, and even to destroy it, it should be preserved and prevail, so that at length all enemies to it should be subdued, and *the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.* The white colour of the horse, the bow which he had that sat on it, shooting arrows afar off, the crown given unto him, and his going forth conquering and to conquer—All these circumstances betoken victory, triumph, prosperity, enlargement of empire, and dominion over many people. And all these figurative representations of authority, government, success, and conquest, may be properly applied to the gospel and the kingdom of Christ, which was now beginning to spread far and wide, and would tend greatly to comfort the faithful in Christ Jesus, assuring them that, however the Jews on the one hand, or the heathen Roman empire on the other, opposed and persecuted them, yet they should see the punishment of their enemies, both Jews and heathen, and the cause of Christianity prevailing over both, in the proper and appointed time. These expressions, and this interpretation of them, are elucidated by the words of the psalmist, Psalm xlv. 3, &c.: *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, &c. Thine arrows are sharp, &c., whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever, &c.* The application of this prophecy to Christ is still further justified by chap. xix. 11, *I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, &c.*, a passage which all allow was intended of Christ; he only being worthy of being called, as he

A. M. 4100. 3 And when he had opened the se- A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96. cond seal, ^fI heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4 ^g And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when he had opened the third seal, ^hI

^f Chapter iv. 7.—^g Zechariah vi. 2.—^h Chapter iv. 7.
ⁱ Zechariah vi. 2.—^j The word *chanis* signifieth a measure

is there, *Faithful and True*, and THE WORD OF GOD. Thus, with great propriety to the order and design of this revelation, the dignity and power of Christ, and the protection and success of his gospel, are the first part of its prophecy for the consolation of his followers, which, it seems, is the chief end of the whole book.

Verses 3, 4. *When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature*—Which was like an ox, and had his station toward the west; *say, Come and see*—As the former had done when the first seal was opened; and *there went out another horse that was red*—Seeming to betoken great slaughter and desolation by approaching wars: and *to him that sat thereon was given to take peace from the earth*—In the year 75, Vespasian had dedicated a temple to Peace: but after a time we hear no more of peace; all is full of war and bloodshed. According to Bishop Newton, this second period commences with Trajan, who came from the west, being a Spaniard by birth, and was the first foreigner who was elevated to the imperial throne. In his reign, and that of his successor, Adrian, there were horrid wars and slaughters, and especially between the rebellious Jews and Romans. Dion relates, that the Jews about Cyrene slew of the Romans and Greeks two hundred and twenty thousand men, with the most shocking circumstances of barbarity. In Egypt also, and in Cyprus, they committed the like barbarities, and there perished two hundred and forty thousand men more. But the Jews were subdued in their turn by the other generals and Lucius, sent against them by Trajan. Eusebius, writing of the same time, says, that the Jews, inflamed, as it were, by some violent and seditious spirit, in the first conflict gained a victory over the Gentiles, who, flying to Alexandria, took and killed the Jews in the city. The emperor sent Marius Turbo against them, with great forces by sea and land, who, in many battles, slew many myriads of the Jews. The emperor also, suspecting that they might make the like commotions in Mesopotamia, ordered Lucius Quietus to expel them out of the province, who, marching against them, slew a very great multitude of them there. Orosius, treating of the same time, says, that the Jews, with an incredible commotion, made wild, as it were, with rage, rose at once in different parts of the earth. For throughout all Libya they waged the fiercest wars against the inhabitants,

b

heard the third beast say, Come and A. M. 4100.
see. And I beheld, and lo, ⁱa black A. D. 96.
horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, ^jA measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and ^ksee thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

containing one wine quart, and the twelfth part of a quart.
^k Chap. ix. 4.

and the country was almost desolated. Egypt also, Cyrene, and Thebais they disturbed with cruel seditions. But in Alexandria they were overcome in battle. In Mesopotamia also war was made upon the rebellious Jews by the command of the emperor. So that many thousands of them were destroyed with vast slaughter. They utterly destroyed Salamis, a city of Cyprus, having first murdered all the inhabitants. These things were transacted in the reign of Trajan; and in the reign of Adrian was their great rebellion, under their false Messiah Barchochab, and their final dispersion, after fifty of their strongest castles, and nine hundred and eighty-five of their best towns had been demolished, and after five hundred and eighty thousand men had been slain by the sword, besides an infinite number who had perished by famine and sickness, and other casualties; with great loss and slaughter too of the Romans, insomuch that the emperor forbore the usual salutations in his letters to the senate. Here was another illustrious triumph of Christ over his enemies; and the Jews and the Romans, both the persecutors of the Christians, were remarkably made the dreadful executioners of divine vengeance upon one another. The *great sword* and *red horse* are expressive emblems of this slaughtering and bloody period, and the proclamation for slaughter is fitly made by a creature like an ox, that is destined for slaughter. This period continued during the reigns of Trajan and his successors, by blood or adoption, about ninety-five years.

Verses 5, 6. *And when he had opened the third seal I heard the third living creature*—Which was like a man, and had his station in the south; *say—As the two former had done; Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse*—A fit emblem of mourning and distress; particularly a *black famine*, as the ancient poets termed it. *And he that sat on him had a pair of balances*, or scales, *in his hand*—Implying that men should eat their bread by weight, and drink their water by measure, or that there should be a great scarcity. For when there is great plenty men do not think it worth their while to weigh and measure what they eat and drink; but when there is a famine or scarcity they are obliged to do it. *And I heard a voice*—It seems from God himself; *in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, A measure of wheat for a penny, &c.*—As if he had said to the horseman, Hitherto shalt thou

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A. M. 4100. 7 And when he had opened the
A. D. 96. fourth seal, ¹ I heard the voice of the
fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 ^m And I looked, and behold, a pale horse:
and his name that sat on him was Death, and

¹ Chap. iv. 7.—^m Zech. vi. 3.—³ Or, to him.

come, and no farther. Let there be a *measure of wheat for a penny*—This may seem, to an English reader, a description of great plenty, but it certainly intends the contrary. The word *χοινίς, chœnix*, a Grecian measure, was only about equal to our quart, and was no more than was allowed to a slave for his daily food. And the Roman penny, the *denarius*, about $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ English, was the usual daily wages of a labourer: so that, if a man's daily labour could earn no more than his daily bread, without other provision for himself and family, corn must needs bear a very high price. This must have been fulfilled when the Grecian measure and the Roman money were still in use, as also when that measure was the common measure, and this money the current coin. It was so in Egypt under Trajan. And three *measures of barley for a penny*—Either barley was, in common, far cheaper among the ancients than wheat, or the prophecy mentions this as something peculiar. And see thou hurt not the oil and the wine—Let there not be a scarcity of every thing. Let there be some provision left to supply the want of the rest. Lowman interprets this third seal of the scarcity in the time of the Antonines, from A. D. 138 to A. D. 193, and produces passages from Tertullian and the Roman historians, concerning the calamity the empire endured by scarcity in this period. But Bishop Newton supposes this third period commences with Septimius Severus, who was an emperor from the south, being a native of Africa; and was an enactor of just and equal laws, and very severe and implacable to offences; he would not suffer even petty larcenies to go unpunished; as neither would Alexander Severus in the same period, who was a most severe judge against thieves; and was so fond of the Christian maxim, *Whatsoever you would not have done to you, do not you to another*, that he commanded it to be engraven on the palace, and on the public buildings. These two emperors were also no less celebrated for the procuring of corn and oil, and other provisions; and for supplying the Romans with them, after they had experienced the want of them: thus repairing the neglects of former times, and correcting the abuses of former princes. The colour of the *black horse* befits the severity of their nature and their name, and the *balances* are the well-known emblem of justice, as well as an intimation of scarcity. And the proclamation for justice and judgment, and for the procurement of corn, oil, and wine, is fitly made by a creature like a man. This period continued during the reigns of the Septimian family, about forty-two years.

Verses 7, 8. *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature—*

hell followed with him. And power ^{A. M. 4100.}
was given ^{A. D. 96.} ² unto them over the fourth
part of the earth, ³ to kill with sword, and with
hunger, and with death, ³ and with the beasts
of the earth.

² Ezek. xiv. 21.—³ Lev. xxvi. 22.

Like an eagle, toward the north; say, *Come and see*—Receive a further discovery of the divine will. *And I looked, and behold a pale horse*—Suitable to pale death, his rider. By *death*, in the Hebrew, we are frequently to understand the *pestilence*. See Jer. ix. 21; xviii. 21; and Eccles. xxxix. 29. And many other instances might be produced. *And hell*—Or *hades*, rather, representing the state of separate souls, *followed with him*. *And power was given unto them*—Namely, to death and *hades*. Or if we read, with Bengelius, *αυτο*, the expression is, *Power was given to him*, namely, to death; *over the fourth part of the earth*—That is, a very considerable part of the heathen Roman empire: *to kill*—By the several judgments of God here mentioned; *with sword*—That is, with war; *with hunger*—Or *famine*; *with death*—Or the *pestilence*; *and with the beasts of the earth*—These are called the four sore judgments of God, in the style of ancient prophecy. See Ezek. xiv. 21; xxxiii. 27. The meaning is, That the sword and famine, which were judgments of the foregoing seals, are continued in this, and the *pestilence* is added to them. Accordingly, says Lowman, we find all these judgments in a very remarkable manner in this part of history, that is, in the reigns of Maximin, Decius, Gallus, Volusian, and Valerian, beginning after Severus, about the year 211, to A. D. 270. Thus also Bishop Newton; who observes, This period commences with Maximin, who was an emperor from the north, being born of barbarous parents in a village of Thrace. He was indeed a barbarian in all respects; an historian affirming that there was not a more cruel animal upon the earth. The history of his, and several succeeding reigns, is full of wars and murders, mutinies of soldiers, invasions of foreign armies, rebellions of subjects, and deaths of princes. There were more than twenty emperors in the space of fifty years, and all, or most of them, died in war, or were murdered by their own soldiers and subjects. Besides lawful emperors, there were, in the reign of Gallienus, thirty usurpers, who set up in different parts of the empire, and came all to violent and miserable ends. Here was sufficient employment for the sword; and such wars and devastations must necessarily produce a *famine*, and the *famine* is another distinguishing calamity of this period. In the reign of Gallus, the Scythians made such incursions, that not one nation, subject to the Romans, was left unwasted by them; and every unwalled town, and most of the walled cities, were taken by them. In the reign of Probus also there was a great famine throughout the world; and for want of victuals, the army mutinied and slew him. A usual consequence of famine is the *pestilence*, which is the third distinguishing calamity of this period. According to Zonaras, it arose from Ethl

A. M. 4100. 9 And when he had opened the
A. D. 96. fifth seal, I saw under ^a the altar ^r the
souls of them that were slain ^a for the word of
God, and for ^t the testimony which they held :

10 And they cried with a loud voice, say-
ing, ^o How long, O Lord, ^s holy and true,
^v dost thou not judge and avenge our blood

¹ Chap. viii. 3 ; ix. 13 ; xiv. 18. — ^r Chap. xx. 4. — ^a Chap. i. 9.
^t 2 Tim. i. 8 ; Chap. xii. 17 ; xix. 10. — ^v Zech. i. 12.

opia, while Gallus and Volusian were emperors, pervaded all the Roman provinces, and for fifteen years together incredibly exhausted them ; and the learned Lipsius declares, that he never read of any greater plague, for the space of time that it lasted, or of land that it overspread. Zozimus also, speaking of the devastations of the Scythians before mentioned, further adds, that the pestilence, not less pernicious than war, destroyed whatever was left of human kind, and made such havoc as it had never done in former times. Many other historians, and other authors quoted by Bishop Newton, bear the same testimony ; among whom Eutropius affirms, that the reign of Gallus and Volusian was remarkable only for the pestilence and diseases. And Trebellius Pollio attests, that in the reign of Gallienus the pestilence was so great, that five thousand men died in one day. Now when countries thus lie uncultivated, uninhabited, and unfrequented, the wild beasts usually multiply, and come into the towns to devour men, which is the fourth distinguishing calamity of this period. This would appear a probable consequence of the former calamities, if history had recorded nothing. But Julius Capitolinus, in his account of the younger Maximin, p. 150, informs us that five hundred wolves together entered into a city, which was deserted by its inhabitants, where this Maximin chanced to be. The colour of the pale horse, therefore, is very suitable to the mortality of this period ; and the proclamation for death and destruction is fitly made by a creature like an eagle, that watches for carcases. This period the bishop considers as continuing from Maximin to Dioclesian, about fifty years.

Verses 9, 10. The following seals have nothing extrinsecal, like the proclamation of the living creatures, but they are sufficiently distinguished by their internal marks and characters. *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under, or at the foot of, the altar*—Which was presented to my view ; not the golden altar of incense, mentioned chap. ix. 13, but the altar of burnt-offering, spoken of also chap. viii. 5 ; xiv. 18 ; xvi. 7 ; *the souls of them that were slain*—Namely, newly slain as sacrifices, and offered to God ; *for the word of God*—For believing and professing faith in it ; *and for the testimony*—To the truth of the gospel ; *which they held*—That is, courageously retained in the midst of all opposition. A proper description this of true Christians, who persevered in the faith and practice of the gospel, notwithstanding all the difficulties and sufferings of

on them that dwell on the earth ? A. M. 4100.

11 And ^s white robes were given ^a
A. D. 96. unto every one of them ; and it was said unto
them, ^a that they should rest yet for a little sea-
son, until their fellow-servants also and their
brethren, that should be killed as they *were*,
should be fulfilled.

^s Chap. iii. 7. — ^r Chap. xi. 18 ; xix. 2. — ^a Chap. iii. 4, 5 ;
vii. 9, 14. — ^v Heb. xi. 40 ; Chap. xiv. 13.

persecution. *And they cried with a loud voice*—As making an appeal to the injured justice of God. This cry did not begin now, but under the first Roman persecution. The Romans themselves had already avenged the martyrs slain by the Jews on the whole nation ; *saying, How long*—They knew their blood would be avenged, but not immediately, as is now shown them ; *O Lord*—The word *o deo-potens* properly signifies the master of a family ; it is therefore beautifully used by these, who were peculiarly of the household of God. *Holy and true*—Both the holiness and truth of God require him to execute judgment and vengeance ; *dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them*—Who, without remorse, have poured it out as water. This desire of theirs is pure, and suitable to the will of God. These martyrs are concerned for the praise of their Master, of his holiness and truth. And the praise is given him, chap. xix. 2, where the prayer of the martyrs is changed into a thanksgiving. But this sentence, *How long, &c.*, is intended, not so much to express the desire of the martyrs that their cause should be vindicated, and their persecutors punished, as to signify that the cruelties exercised upon them were of so barbarous and atrocious a nature as to deserve and provoke the vengeance of God.

Verse 11. *And white robes were given unto every one of them*—As a token of their justification, and favourable acceptance with God ; of their victory and triumph over death, their joy and glory. *And it was said unto them, that they should rest*—That is, wait ; *yet for a little season*—Though, in the mean time, their blood remained unrevenged ; *until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed for the defence of the gospel, as they had been, should be fulfilled*—That is, should have finished their testimony ; or till the number of the martyrs should be completed, according to the intention of Divine Providence, in letting persecutors go on a while, until they should have filled up the measure of their iniquities, when the martyrs should receive their full reward, as we shall see hereafter. Lowman observes here, very well, that “this representation seems much to favour the immediate happiness of departed saints, and hardly to consist with that uncomfortable opinion, the insensible state of departed souls, till after the resurrection.” There were other persecutions before, but this was by far the most considerable, the tenth and last general persecution, which was begun by Dio-

A. M. 4100. 12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, ^b and lo, there was a great earthquake; and ^c the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood:

13 ^d And the stars of heaven fell unto the

^b Chap. xvi. 18.—^c Joel ii. 10, 31; iii. 15; Matt. xxiv. 29; Acts ii. 20.—^d Chap. viii. 10; ix. 1.—^e Or, green figs.

eclesian, and continued by others, and lasted longer, and extended farther, and was sharper and more bloody, than any or all preceding; and therefore this was particularly predicted. Eusebius and Lactantius, who were two eye-witnesses, have written large accounts of it. Orosius asserts that this persecution was longer and more cruel than all the past; for it raged incessantly for ten years, by burning the churches, proscribing the innocent, and slaying the martyrs. Sulpicius Severus, too, describes it as the most bitter persecution, which for ten years together depopulated the people of God; at which time all the world almost was stained with the sacred blood of the martyrs, and was never more exhausted by any wars. So that this became a memorable era to the Christians, under the name of the era of Dioclesian, or, as it is otherwise called, the era of martyrs.

Verses 12-17. *And I beheld*—Further in my vision; *when he*—The Lamb; *had opened the sixth seal; and lo! there was a great earthquake*—Greek, *οισουος μεγας εγεγερτο*, *there was a great concussion*: for the expression comprehends the shaking of heaven as well as of the earth; *and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair*—It lost its usual lustre, and looked black and dark, as in a total eclipse; *and the moon became as blood*—Instead of appearing with its usual brightness in the heavens, it appeared of a dusky-red colour, as blood. *And the stars of heaven fell*—They seemed to disappear out of their places in the heavens, and to fall down upon the earth, like meteors, or as blasted fruit is blown down from the trees upon the ground in a violent storm. *And the heaven departed as a scroll, &c.*—It was further represented to me in my vision as if the heavens were no longer spread over the earth, but rolled up together as a roll of parchment; *and every mountain and every island*—The most secure from the danger of earthquakes, were not only shaken, but quite overturned and destroyed; so as never to be restored again: and all this, says Lowman, “to signify, according to the expressions of ancient prophecy, such a downfall of the empire and power of heathen Rome, as should never be recovered; but the power of these idolatrous enemies of the Christian faith should cease and be no more, as the power of the Assyrians and Babylonians, the ancient enemies of God’s people, was destroyed and never recovered.” Thus the Prophet Joel describing, in the beautiful images of prophetic style, a famine to be occasioned by a great number of locusts, which were to devour the whole fruits of the earth, so expresses it, Joel ii. 10; *The earth shall quake before them, the*

earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her ³ untimely figs, when she is shaken ^{A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.} of a mighty wind.

14 ^e And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and ^f every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

^e Psa. ciii. 26; Isa. xxxiv. 4; Heb. i. 12, 13.—^f Jer. iii. 23; iv. 24; Chap. xvi. 20.

heavens shall tremble, the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Prophet Isaiah, prophesying of a great destruction of God’s enemies, for their opposition to his church, (which he calls the *day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion*, Isa. xxxiv. 8.) thus describes it, verse 4; *And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their hosts shall fall down as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree.* The general meaning of which expressions is explained in the following verse; *For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment.* In like manner, the same prophet thus expresses the judgments of God in the punishment of sinners, Isa. xiii. 10; *For 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 meaning of which is thus explained in the next words, verse 11; *I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.* The Prophet Ezekiel uses the same images to express the downfall of oppressive empires and power. Thus in the prophecy of the destruction of the empire of Egypt by the empire of Babylon, Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; *And 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; all the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.* And Jeremiah, concerning the land of Judah, chap. iv. 23, 24; *I beheld the earth, and, lo! it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light; I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled; and all the hills moved lightly.* And thus our Saviour himself also speaks, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, Matt. xxiv. 29; *The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.* Now it is certain, says Bishop Newton, who interprets this prophecy in the same manner, that the fall of any of those cities and kingdoms was not of greater concern and consequence to the world, nor more deserving to be described in such pompous figures, than the fall of the pagan Roman empire, when the great lights of the heathen world, *the sun, moon, and stars, the powers*

A. M. 4100. 15 And the kings of the earth, and
A. D. 96. the great men, and the rich men, and
the chief captains, and the mighty men, and
every bond-man, and every free-man, hid
themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the
mountains;

† Isa. ii. 19.—‡ Hos. x. 8; Luke xxiii. 30; Ch. ix. 6.—§ Isa.

civil and ecclesiastical, were all eclipsed and obscured, the heathen emperors and Cesars were slain, the heathen priests and augurs were extirpated, the heathen officers and magistrates were removed, the temples demolished, and their revenues appropriated to better uses.

It is customary with the prophets, after they have described a thing in the most symbolical and figurative diction, to represent the same again in plainer language; and the same method is observed here, verses 15, 16, 17: *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man and every free-man*;—That is, Maximian, Galerius, Maximin, Maxentius, Licinius, &c., with all their adherents and followers, were so routed and dispersed, that they hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, *Fall on us and hide us*—Expressions used, as in other prophets, (Isa. ii. 19, 21; Hos. x. 8; Luke xxiii. 30,) to denote the utmost terror and consternation; *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, &c.*—This is therefore a triumph of Christ over his heathen enemies, and a triumph after a severe persecution; so that the time and all the circumstances, as well as the series and order of the prophecy, agree perfectly with this interpretation. Galerius, Maximin, and Licinius made even a public confession of their guilt, recalled their decrees and edicts against the Christians, and acknowledged the just judgments of God and of Christ in their destruction. The history of this extraordinary event is given more at large by Lowman, from whose account the following short extract is taken. A short time after the heavy persecution of Dioclesian, termed, in the prophecy, *a little season*, (verse 11,) a very great change took place in the heathen Roman empire, attended with great calamities on the persecutors of the Christians, even such as broke in pieces their oppressive power. Dioclesian and Maximian had been compelled by Galerius to resign the empire and retire to private life; but upon the death of Constantius, and the accession of his son Constantine to his part of the empire, Maxentius having got himself declared emperor at Rome, Galerius, to suppress this rebellion, persuaded Maximian to resume the empire, which he did; but in a short time had the mortification of being deposed; and soon after, having in vain attempted to take the life of Constantine, put an end to his own life. Galerius was smitten with a very loathsome and incurable distemper, attended with such insupportable torments, that he often endeavoured to kill himself, and caused

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16 ^b And said to the mountains and A. M. 4100.
rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from A. D. 96.
the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and
from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 ⁱ For the great day of his wrath is come;
^k and who shall be able to stand?

xiii. 6, &c.; Zeph. i. 14, &c.; Ch. xvi. 14.—^l Psa. lxxvi. 7.

some of his physicians to be put to death because their medicines had not been effectual to remove his disorder. At last, his wicked and cruel conduct toward the Christians being brought to his remembrance, as the cause of his sufferings, he immediately put an end to the persecution (that had been carried on against them) by a public edict, in which he particularly desired their prayers for his recovery. Soon after this public acknowledgment, however, in favour of Christianity, he died of his loathsome distemper. Constantine, who had become a great favourite of the Christians, marched against Maxentius, who opposed him with an army of one hundred and seventy thousand foot, and eighteen thousand horse; after a very fierce and bloody battle, Maxentius was defeated by Constantine, who, having upon this victory secured to himself the whole empire of the west, gave free liberty to Christians openly to profess their religion. But in the east, Maximian revoked the liberties which had been granted to the Christians, and made war against Licinius; being defeated, however, with great slaughter of his numerous army, he put many heathen priests and soothsayers to death as cheats. But not long after, when he was endeavouring to try the event of a second battle, he was seized with a violent distemper, attended with intolerable pains and torments all over his body; so that, after being wasted to a skeleton, and becoming quite blind, he at length died in rage and despair; confessing, upon his death-bed, that his torments were a just punishment upon him for his malicious and unprovoked proceedings against Christ and his religion.

Constantine and Licinius now remained sole emperors, the former in the west, and the latter in the east. Licinius having cruelly persecuted the Christians in his part of the empire, a war broke out between him and Constantine, in which Licinius was overcome, and forced to flee; and after renewing the war, and carrying it on with greater fury than before, he was again defeated in a general battle, in which it is said one hundred thousand men were slain. He also was taken prisoner, and though his life was then spared, yet upon new attempts against the life of Constantine, he was put to death, and with him ended all the heathen power of Rome. Thus, by great and frequent calamities, in which so many emperors had their share one after another, this wonderful change was wrought in the heathen Roman empire. So that their power to oppress and persecute the Christians fell, never to rise again; and, together with it, fell the pagan superstition and idolatry. "This part of history," as Lowman observes, "is very proper to the general design of

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this whole revelation ; to support the patience, and encourage the perseverance of the church, by such an instance of God's power and faithfulness in the protection of the religion of Christ, and punishment of its enemies. We see in this period, during the persecution of heathen Rome, the church in a state of great trial and suffering, and yet preserved and

protected, and finally obtaining a state of peace and safety, when all the power of its persecutors was totally destroyed by God's overruling providence. Thus this history confirms the general truth of all the prophecies, and the particular predictions of each of them severally :—a strong encouragement to the patience and constancy of the true church."

CHAPTER VII.

in this chapter is represented, (1.) The suspension of further calamities to the church by persecution, till multitudes should be converted to the faith of Christ, and the enjoyment of the blessed privileges of the gospel, from among both Jews and Gentiles, and should be prepared, by the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit, for glorifying God on earth and enjoying him in heaven, 1-8. (2.) The happy state which the church, now delivered from all persecution, should be in, even on earth, but especially in the eternal world, when all tribulation should be for ever ended, 9-17.

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

AND after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, ^a holding the four winds of

the earth, ^b that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

^a Dan. vii. 2.

^b Chap. ix. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

The former chapter concluded the first grand period of the sufferings of the church, under the persecutions of the heathen Roman empire. The second grand period of prophecy begins with the opening of the seventh seal, and is contained in the events which attend the sounding of the trumpets; an account of which we have in chap. viii., ix. In this chapter we have an account of a little pause, or interval, to describe the state of things for a short time, between the two periods. It seems to be a representation of a state of peace and quiet throughout the earth, especially in the Roman empire; and of the great number of persons in every nation who embraced the profession of Christianity; of the encouraging protection that was given to the Christian church; of thankful acknowledgments, by the whole church, for the goodness and power of God and Christ, in such eminent instances of favour and protection; and, finally, of the happy state of all the faithful confessors and martyrs; who, after a short time of tribulation for the faith of Christ, and constancy in his religion, have arrived at a state of everlasting rest, happiness, and glory. Thus wisely does this part of prophecy promote the principal design of the whole, to encourage the faith and patience, the hope and constancy of the church, under all opposition and sufferings. It seems designed to show, with the certainty of prophetic revelation, that, as God directs all things in the world by his providence, so he will direct them to serve the designs of his goodness to the church; and that the great revolutions of the world shall often be in favour of true religion, and for its protection; and to assure the faithful that all they suffer, for the sake of truth and righteousness, shall soon be rewarded with a state of peace, glory, and felicity. See Lowman.

Verse 1. *After these things*—After the former

discoveries made to me, which represented the providence of God toward his church and the world, till the downfall of the heathen Roman empire, the state of the church and the world immediately to succeed was also represented to me in the manner following:—*I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth*—That is, the north, the south, the east, and the west; *holding the four cardinal winds of the earth*—Keeping them in a state of restraint; *that the wind might not blow upon the earth*—That there might be the most entire and complete calm, to represent the peaceful state of things which should succeed the tumultuous and distressing revolutions which had been last discovered to me. Winds are emblems of commotions, and very properly, as they are the natural causes of storms. Thus this figurative expression is used and explained by Jeremiah, chap. xlix. 36, 37; *Upon Elam will I bring the four winds, from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds, &c., for I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, &c. To hold the winds, therefore, that they should not blow, is a very proper prophetic emblem of a state of peace and tranquillity.* This chapter, it must be observed, is still a continuation of the sixth seal, for the seventh seal is not opened till the beginning of the next chapter. It is a description of the state of the church in Constantine's time, of the peace and protection that it should enjoy under the civil powers, and of the great accession that should be made to it, both of Jews and Gentiles. Eusebius is very copious upon this subject in several parts of his writings, and hath applied that passage of the psalmist in the version of the Seventy, (Psa. xlvi. 8, 9,) *Come hither, and behold the works of the Lord, what wonders he hath wrought in the earth; he maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear asunder; he burneth*

A. M. 4100. 2 * And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, ° Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have ^d sealed the servants of our God ° in their foreheads.

4 ^f And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed * a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed

twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

* All Saints' Day, epistle, verse 2 to verse 13.—° Chap. vi. 6; ix. 4.

^d Ezek. ix. 4; Chap. xiv. 1.—° Chap. xxii. 4.—^f Chap. ix. 16. * Chap. xiv. 1.

the chariot in the fire; which things, saith he, being manifestly fulfilled in our times, we rejoice over them. Lactantius also saith, in the same triumphant strain, "Tranquillity being restored throughout the world, the church which was lately ruined riseth again. Now, after the violent agitations of so great a tempest, a calm air and the desired light become resplendent. Now God hath relieved the afflicted. Now he hath wiped away the tears of the sorrowful." These are testimonies of contemporary writers. Medals of Constantine are still preserved, with the head of this emperor on one side, and this inscription, CONSTANTINUS AUG., and on the reverse, BEATA TRANQUILLITAS, Blessed Tranquillity.

Verses 2, 3. And I saw another angel ascending from the east—To intimate the progress which the gospel should make from the east to the west; having in his hand the seal of the living God—In order to impress a mark upon those who should believe and obey the gospel, and dedicate themselves to his service. And he cried with a loud voice—Thus showing the great importance of what he uttered; to the four angels to whom it was given—At present to restrain the winds, but afterward to loose them with great violence, and by them to hurt the earth and the sea—To injure them in a terrible manner; saying, Hurt not the earth, &c.—Execute not your commission with respect to punishing the inhabitants of the earth; till we have sealed the servants of God—Marked them out as such, and secured them from the impending calamities in a manner by which they shall be as clearly distinguished from the rest of mankind as if they were visibly marked on their foreheads. Bishop Newton thinks that this expression, sealing on the forehead, is used in allusion to the ancient custom of marking servants on their foreheads, to distinguish what they were, and to whom they belonged: and that as, among Christians, baptism was considered as the seal of the covenant between God and believers, so the sealing here spoken of signifies the admitting them into the visible church of Christ by baptism; and that their being said to be sealed on their foreheads can im-

ply no less than that those who before, in times of persecution, had been compelled to worship God in private, should now make a free, open, and public profession of their religion, without any fear or danger of thereby exposing themselves to persecution. To this, however, must be added, that this sealing doubtless implies that very many should not only be baptized, and make a profession of Christianity, but should also be really converted to God, made new creatures in Christ; and, having believed in him, should, as the apostle observes, (Eph. i. 13,) be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; that is, both stamped with God's image, and assured of their sonship by the Spirit of adoption and regeneration; and should possess that Spirit, in his witness and fruits, till they should receive the redemption of the purchased possession.

Verses 4-8. And I heard the number of them, a hundred and forty and four thousand—This single passage, says the bishop of Meaux, may show the mistake of those who always expect the numbers in the Revelation to be precise and exact; for is it to be supposed, that there should be in each tribe twelve thousand believers, neither more nor fewer, to make up the total sum of one hundred and forty-four thousand? It is not by such trifles and low sense the divine oracles are to be explained. We are to observe, in the numbers of the Revelation, a certain figurative proportion which the Holy Ghost designs to point out to observation. As there were twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, twelve became a sacred number in the synagogue and in the Christian Church. This number of twelve, first multiplied into itself, and then by one thousand, makes one hundred and forty-four thousand. The bishop sees, in the solid proportion of this square number, the unchangeableness of the truth of God and his promises. Perhaps it may mean the beauty and stability of the Christian Church, keeping to the apostolical purity of faith and worship. Of the tribe of Juda, &c.—As the Church of Christ was first formed out of the Jewish Church and nation, so here the spiritual Israel is first mentioned. But the twelve

A. M. 4100. 9 After this I beheld, and lo, ^h a
A. D. 96. great multitude, which no man could
number, ⁱ of all nations, and kindreds, and peo-
ple, and tongues, stood before the throne, and
before the Lamb, ^k clothed with white robes,
and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, ^l Sal-

^h Rom. xi. 25.—ⁱ Chap. v. 9.—^k Chap. iii. 5, 18; iv. 4; vi.
11; Verse 14.

tribes are not enumerated here in the same order as they are in other places of Holy Scripture. Judah hath the precedence, because from him descended the Messiah, and in this tribe the kingdom was established. Dan is entirely omitted, being the first tribe that fell into idolatry after the settlement of Israel in Canaan; and also being early reduced to a single family, which family itself seems to have been cut off in war before the time of Ezra. For in the Chronicles, where the posterity of the patriarchs is recited, Dan is wholly omitted. Ephraim also was a tribe that greatly promoted idolatry, and therefore is not mentioned by name, but the tribe is denominated that of *Joseph*. The Levitical ceremonies being abolished, Levi was again on a level with his brethren, and is here mentioned as a tribe instead of that of Dan. In this list the children of the bond-woman and of the free-woman are confounded together; for in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free.

Verse 9. *After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude*—This first refers to the happy and prosperous state of the church at the end of so many grievous persecutions and sufferings: for an innumerable multitude of all nations and tongues embraced the gospel, and are here represented as clothed with white robes, in token of their acceptance with God, and their sanctification through his Holy Spirit. And, as Sulpicius Severus says, it is wonderful how much the Christian religion prevailed at that time. The historians who have written of this reign relate how even the most remote and barbarous nations were converted to the faith, Jews as well as Gentiles. One historian in particular affirms, that at the time when Constantine took possession of Rome, after the death of Maxentius, there were baptized more than twelve thousand Jews and heathen, besides women and children. These converts from the tribes of Israel and from the Gentile nations are here represented as having finished their course, and as standing before the throne in robes of glory, and with palms in their hands as tokens of joy and victory; because if they were sincere converts, brought to possess, as well as profess, the religion of Jesus, and should continue in the faith grounded and settled, and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel, they would certainly be presented before the presence of the divine glory with exceeding joy, and obtain all the felicity here spoken of. Doddridge indeed supposes that only the sealing of these thousands expresses the progress of the gospel under Constantine; and that the innumerable multitude

vation to our God ^m which sitteth ⁿ upon the throne, and unto the ^o Lamb.

11 ^p And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

^l Psa. iii. 8; Isa. xliiii. 11; Jer. iii. 23; Hos. xliiii. 4; Chap. xix. 1.
^m Chap. v. 13.—ⁿ Chap. iv. 6.

here spoken of were the spirits of good men departed out of this world, and then with God in glory: and especially those who had weathered the difficulties and persecutions with which the church had been tried during the first centuries of Christianity, when the civil power was generally active against it, and when probably many persecutions raged in various parts of the world, whose histories are not come down to us.

Verses 10–12. *And cried with a loud voice*—In token of the intenseness of their devotion; *saying, Salvation to our God*—That is, Let the salvation which we have attained be ascribed to him; *which sitteth upon the throne*—And from thence has graciously regarded us, and exalted us to such dignity and happiness, mean and miserable as we once were. *And unto the Lamb*—Let it be also ascribed to the mediation and grace of the Lamb, who gave himself to be slain for our redemption. The salvation fo- which they praised God is a deliverance from sin and its consequences, and a restoration to the favour and image of God, and communion with him here, and the eternal enjoyment of him hereafter. It is described and exhibited in its blessed results and completion, verses 15–17: that for which they praise God is described verse 15; that for which they praise the Lamb, verse 14; and both in the 16th and 17th verses. This vision, especially when compared with the former, in the fourth and fifth chapters, Lowman also thinks is to be understood of the church in heaven; because, as heaven seems to be the proper scene of the vision, so the innumerable company of saints, with whom the angels join in the following words, in the presence of God and the Lamb, is most naturally to be understood of those who, having been faithful unto death, have received the crown of immortal life in the state of heavenly happiness. And he questions whether the praises of the church on earth can answer this prophetic description, or the intention of the prophetic Spirit, in the great encouragement it designed to give to faithfulness and constancy. He thinks, to understand it of the heavenly church, is a natural sense of the expressions, and a sense proper to the design of the prophecy, as it represents the faithful martyrs and confessors, once so great sufferers on earth, now blessed saints in heaven. *And all the angels stood*—In waiting; *round the throne, and the elders, and the four living creatures*—That is, the living creatures next the throne, the elders round these, and the angels round them both; *and fell before the throne*—Of the Divine Majesty; *on their faces*—So

A. M. 4100. 12 ° Saying, Amen : Blessing, and
A. D. 96. glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving,
and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our
God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying
unto me, What are these which are arrayed in
^p white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.
And he said to me, ^a These are they which
came out of great tribulation, and have ^r washed
their robes, and made them white in the blood
of the Lamb.

^o Chap. v. 13, 14.—^p Verse 9.—^q Chap. vi. 9; xvii. 6.
^r Isaiah i. 18; Hebrews ix. 14; 1 John i. 7; Chapter i. 5;
Zech. iii. 3-5.

do the elders once only, chap. xi. 16; and *worship-
ped God*—Joining in the same act of worship and
thanksgiving with the saints; *saying, Amen*—So
let it be! With this word all the angels confirm the
praises and thanksgivings of the great multitude, and
show their hearty consent with them and approba-
tion of them, carrying likewise the praises much
higher, saying, *Blessing, and glory, &c., be unto our
God for ever and ever*—May all creatures for ever
bless and give *thanks* to him, as originally and es-
sentially possessed of supreme *glory*, complete *wis-
dom*, of irresistible and almighty *power*, and therefore
worthy of all *honour*, though exalted above all
praise. Before the Lamb began to open the seven
seals, a seven-fold hymn of praise was brought him
by many angels, chap. v. 12. Now he is upon open-
ing the last seal, and the seven angels are going to
receive seven trumpets, in order to make the king-
doms of the world subject to God, *all the angels*
give seven-fold praise to God.

Verses 13-17. *And one of the elders, &c.*—What
is here related, to verse 17, might have immediately
followed the tenth verse; but that the praise of
the angels, which was given at the same time with
that of the great multitude, came in between: *an-
swered*—That is, he answered St. John's desire to
know, not to any words the apostle spoke. Or, in
order to give him a more exact information concern-
ing the persons who were clothed in the white
robes of purity, honour, and dignity, one of the
elders led him on by a question to ask of him a fuller
account of them. *What are these which are arrayed
in white robes?*—And make such a splendid appear-
ance; and *whence came, or come, they?* And, be-
lieving the question to be asked in order to quicken
my attention to what he had to tell me concerning
them, *I said, Sir, thou knowest*—Though I do not.
And he said, &c.—These persons, whom you behold
appearing in their state of honour and happiness,
are they which came?—Or *come*, as *οι ερχομενοι* rather
signifies; *out of great tribulation*—They were very

15 Therefore are they before the A. M. 4100.
throne of God, and serve him day A. D. 96.
and night in his temple: and he that
sitteth on the throne shall ^a dwell among
them.

16 ^t They shall hunger no more, neither thirst
any more; ^u neither shall the sun light on
them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the
throne ^s shall feed them, and shall lead them
unto living fountains of waters: ^v and God shall
wipe away all tears from their eyes.

^u Isa. iv. 5, 6; Chap. xxi. 3.—^v Isa. xlix. 10.—^w Psa. cxxi.
6; Chap. xxi. 4.—^x Psa. xxxiii. 1; xxxvi. 8; John x. 11, 14.
^y Isa. xxv. 8; Chap. iv. 21.

lately in a state of great affliction and suffering, for
the sake of their faith and constancy; but, having
kept the faith, they have received the blessings
which Christ obtained by his blood for his church
and faithful people. Yet these could not be all mar-
tyrs, for the martyrs could not be such a multitude
as *no man could number*. But as all the angels ap-
pear here, so probably did all the souls of the right-
eous, who had lived from the beginning of the
world. All these may be said, more or less, to come
out of great tribulation, of various kinds, wisely and
graciously allotted by God to all his children; and
have washed their robes—From all guilt; and *made
them white*—In all purity and holiness; *in, or by,
the blood of the Lamb*—Through which alone we
obtain remission of sins, and the influences of the
sanctifying Spirit, so that they are advanced to the
state of glory and happiness in which you see them.
Therefore—Because they came out of great afflic-
tion, and have washed their robes in Christ's blood;
are they before the throne of God—It seems even
nearer than the angels; and *serve him day and
night*—Speaking after the manner of men; that is,
continually; *in his temple*—In heaven; and *he that
sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them*—*Σκη-
νωσει εν αυτοις, shall have his tent over them*: shall
spread his glory over them as a covering. *They
shall hunger no more*—They shall be no more sub-
ject to any of their former infirmities, wants, or
afflictions; *neither shall the sun light on them, &c.*
—None of the natural or common evils of the world
below shall reach them any more. *For the Lamb
who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them*—
With eternal peace and joy, so that they shall hun-
ger no more; and *shall lead them unto living foun-
tains of waters*—The comforts of the Holy Spi-
rit, so that they shall thirst no more; neither shall
they grieve any more, for *God shall wipe away
all tears from their eyes*—Every sorrow, with
every cause of sorrow, shall be fully taken away
for ever

CHAPTER VIII.

- (1.) *The seventh seal being opened, after a short silence, seven angels prepare to give solemn alarms of approaching judgments, answerable to Christ's intercession, and the prayers of his people, 1-6. (2.) Four of the trumpets being sounded, are each followed by terrible judgments, till the Roman empire is quite destroyed, and the church fearfully defaced, 7-12. (3.) An angel denounces still greater miseries to come upon the earth under the three following trumpets, 13.*

A. M. 4100. **AND** * when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2 ^b And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; ^c and to them were given seven trumpets.

* Chap. vi. 2.—^b Matt. xviii. 10; Luke i. 19.—^c 2 Chron. xxix. 25-28.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

This chapter introduces the second period of this prophecy, which begins upon the opening of the seventh seal, and is distinguished by the sounding of the seven trumpets. This period of the trumpets contains a prophetic description of the state of the world and church for a considerable space of time after the empire became nominally Christian, and was governed by the successors of Constantine. It describes the great devastation of that empire by the several nations that broke in upon it, and finally put an end to it; and it predicts a time of great calamity, a state of new trials. So that here the church was shown the new dangers and oppositions it had to expect, after it should be delivered from the persecutions of the heathen Roman government: and that even when the Christian religion should have the protection of the laws and the favour of the emperors, the church would still have great need of caution, watchfulness, patience, and constancy; and there would be still this encouragement to faithfulness and perseverance, that though the opposition in this period of time would be very great, yet neither should this prevail against the cause of truth and righteousness, but the Christian faith should be preserved, and in the end triumph over this opposition, as it had before been victorious over that of the heathen emperors of Rome. And thus these fresh discoveries fully answer the general design and use of the prophecy, namely, to direct and encourage the constancy of Christ's true church, whatever opposition it may meet with from its enemies, visible or invisible.

Vers 1. *And when he had opened the seventh seal*—This seal is introductory to the trumpets contained under it, as the seventh trumpet introduces the vials which belong to it. The period, therefore, of this seal is of much longer duration, and comprehends many more events, than any of the former seals. It comprehends, indeed, seven periods, distinguished by the sounding of seven trumpets. *There was silence in heaven about half an hour*—This seems to have been intended, not only as an interval and pause, as it were, between the foregoing and the succeeding revelations, distinguishing in a remarkable manner the seventh seal from the

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should ¹ offer it with ^d the prayers of all saints upon ^e the golden altar which was before the throne.

¹ Or, add it to the prayers.—^d Chap. v. 8.—^e Exod. xxx. 1; Chap. vi. 9.

six preceding; but as expressive of the solemn expectation excited on this occasion of great events about to be revealed. And the time of this silence being only *half an hour*, it seems, was intended to signify that the peace of the church would continue for a short season only, which was the case, namely, during the last fifteen years of Constantine's reign, from A. D. 323 to A. D. 337. Of this silence some expositors think they find a figure in the following ceremonies of the Jews, mentioned by Philo. The incense, in the worship of God in the temple, used to be offered before the morning and after the evening sacrifice: and while the sacrifices were made, (2 Chron. xxix. 25-28,) the voices, and instruments, and trumpets sounded; while the priest went into the temple to burn incense, (Luke i. 10,) all were silent, and the people prayed without in silence or to themselves. Now this was the morning of the church, and therefore the silence precedes the sounding of the trumpets.

Verses 2, 3. *And I saw the seven angels*—I beheld further in my vision seven chief angels, instruments especially designed of God for a very important service, now to be declared; *which stood*—Or were standing; *before God*—To receive and execute his commands, after the manner of the great princes of the East, who used to be so attended by the chief officers of their courts. *And to them were given seven trumpets*—To sound an alarm, and give warning to the nations of approaching judgments. *And another angel came*—Representing, it seems, the great High-Priest of the church. The Lamb was emblematical of Christ, as a sacrifice for us, and this angel represented him in his priestly office as offering up to God the prayers of all the saints, recommended by his intercessions; *having a golden censer*—Signifying his mediatorial office. *And there was given unto him much incense*—An emblem of his great merits, and power with God; *that he should offer it with*, or add it to, *the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar*—The altar of incense; *which was before the throne*—There being in this representation of the divine presence no veil, and so no distinction between the holy and most holy place. "The great angel of the covenant," says Bishop Hall, "came and stood as the High-Priest of his

A. M. 4100. 4 And ^fthe smoke of the incense, A. D. 96. *which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.*

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it ²into the earth: and ³there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, ⁴and an earthquake.

^f Psa. cxli. 2; Luke i. 10.—³ Or, upon.—⁴ Chap. xvi. 18. ² 2 Sam. xxiii. 8; 1 Kings xix. 11; Acts iv. 31.

church before the altar of heaven, and many holy and effectual prayers were offered unto him, that he might by his merciful mediation present them to God the Father." "Some have thought," says Doddridge, "that this is a plain intimation of the doctrine of the intercession of the angels, which is urged to have been an erroneous Jewish notion; and those who imagine it to be taught here, have made it an argument against the inspiration of this book. But I rather agree with those interpreters who consider this angel as an emblem of Christ. If we were indeed to consider Christ as appearing in the shape of a lamb, this would be a difficulty; but it does not appear at all absurd to me, that while the efficacy of Christ's atonement was represented by a lamb slain, his intercession consequent upon it should be represented by an angel offering the incense; which seems only a symbolical or hieroglyphical declaration of this truth, that the prayers of the saints on earth are rendered acceptable to God by the intercession of one in heaven, who appears as a priest before God: just as the vision of the Lamb represents to us that a person of perfect innocence, and of a most gentle and amiable disposition, eminently adorned and enriched with the Spirit of God, has been offered as a sacrifice; and is, in consequence of that, highly honoured on the throne of God. But who this important victim and this intercessor is, we are to learn elsewhere; and we do learn that both these offices met in one, and that this illustrious person is Jesus the Son of God. As the golden altar made a part of the scene, there was a propriety in its appearing to be used, and the time of praying was the hour of incense. This vision may probably be designed to intimate, that considering the scenes of confusion represented by the trumpets, the saints should be exceeding earnest with God to pour out a spirit of wisdom, piety, and zeal upon the churches amidst these confusions."

Verses 4-6. *And the smoke of the incense ascended before God*—In an odoriferous cloud, *with the prayers of the saints*—A testimony of God's gracious acceptance, both of the intercession of the great High-Priest, and of the prayers of his believing people, proceeding from devout hearts; and consequently of the continuance of his protection and blessing to his faithful worshippers. *And when the angel had performed this office, in order to show the awful manner in which God would avenge the injury which his praying people upon earth had received from its*

6 And the seven angels which had A. M. 4100. the seven trumpets prepared them- A. D. 96. selves to sound.

7 The first angel sounded, ¹and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast ²upon the earth: and the third part ³of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

¹ Ezekiel xxxviii. 22.—² Chapter xvi. 2.—³ Isaiah ii. 13; Chap. ix. 4.

tyrannical and oppressive powers, he *took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar*—Not of the golden altar, upon which there was no fire, (except that which was in the censer, and which burned the incense,) but from the brazen altar of burnt-offerings; *and cast it into the earth*—To denote the judgments about to be executed upon the earth, as in Ezek. x. 2 coals of fire are taken from between the cherubim and scattered over Jerusalem, to denote the judgments of God about to be executed upon that city; *and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings*—Which seemed to break forth from the divine presence; *and also an earthquake*—The violent shock of which seemed to shake the foundation of the world; the usual prophetic signs these, and preludes of great calamities and commotions upon the earth. See chap. xvi. 19. Accordingly, this being mentioned here previous to the sounding of the trumpets, was intended to foretel that many calamities were approaching, which should afflict the world and the church, notwithstanding the seeming secure prosperity of both, after the Roman empire had become, in profession, Christian. *And the seven angels prepared themselves to sound*—As the *seals* foretold the state and condition of the Roman empire before and till it became Christian, so the trumpets foreshow the fate and condition of it afterward. The *sound of the trumpet*, as Jeremiah says, chap. iv. 19, and as every one understands it, is the *alarm of war*; and the sounding of these trumpets is designed to rouse and excite the nations against the Roman empire, called *the third part of the world*, as perhaps including the third part of the world, and being seated principally in Europe, which was the third part of the world at that time.

Vers 7. *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood*—A proper representation of great commotions and disorders, attended with much bloodshed, and the destruction of many of the several ranks and conditions of men. "A thunder-storm or tempest, that throws down all before it, is a fit metaphor to express the calamities of war, whether from civil disturbances or foreign invasion, which often, like a hurricane, lay all things waste as far as they reach. Accordingly, in the language of prophecy, this is a usual representation thereof. So the Prophet Isaiah expresses the invasion of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, chap. xxviii. 2. And thus he expresses the judgments of God in general, chap. xxix. 6. And in this

way Ezekiel expresses the judgments of God on the prophets who deceived the people, chap. xiii. 13."—Lowman. *Trees* here, says Mr. Waple, according to the prophetic manner of speech, signify the great ones, and *grass*, by the like analogy, signifies the common people. The reader will wish to see how this prophetic representation was verified in corresponding history. Let it be recollected then, as was stated in the notes on the opening of the sixth seal, chap. vi. 12–17, that the former period put an end to the persecution of heathen Rome by the empire of Constantine, about A. D. 323. Then was a time of peace and rest to the empire, as well as the church; which answers well to the time appointed for sealing the servants of God in their foreheads. But this is represented as a short time, and the angels soon prepared themselves to sound when there would be new commotions to disturb the peace of the empire and church. Constantine came to the whole power of the empire about A. D. 323, and continued possessed of that power about fifteen years, namely to A. D. 337. During all this time the empire enjoyed a state of tranquillity unknown for many years; there were no civil disorders; and though the Goths made some incursions into Mysia, the most distant parts of the Roman dominions, they were soon driven back into their own country. The profession of Christianity was greatly encouraged, and the converts to it from idolatry were innumerable; so that the face of religion was in a very short time quite changed throughout the Roman empire. Thus the providence of God, notwithstanding all opposition, brought the Christian Church into a state of great security and prosperity.

But on the death of Constantine the state of things was soon altered. He was succeeded by his three sons in different parts of his empire; by Constantine in Gaul, Constans in Italy, and Constantius in Asia and the East. Constantius in a short time sacrificed his father's near relations to his jealousy and power; differences arose between Constantine and Constans, and the latter surprised the former and put him to death. Soon after Constans himself was put to death by Magnentius, who assumed the empire. At the same time Constantius, in the East, was hard pressed by the Persians; but apprehending greater danger from Magnentius, he marched against him; and the war between them was so fierce and bloody, that it almost ruined the empire. A little after this bloody intestine war all the Roman provinces were invaded at once, from the eastern to the western limits, by the Franks, Almans, Saxons, Quades, Sarmatians, and Persians; so that, according to Eutropius, when the barbarians had taken many towns, besieged others, and there was everywhere a most destructive devastation, the Roman empire evidently tottered to its fall. It is a remarkable part of this history, that this storm of war fell so heavy on the great men of the empire, and in particular on the family of Constantine, though so likely to continue, seeing his own children and near relations were so many: and yet, in twenty-four years after his death these commotions put an end to his posterity, in the death of his three sons; and in three years more

extinguished his family by the death of Julian in a battle against the Persians. The following reigns of Jovian, Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian, to the time when Gratian nominated Theodosius to the empire, are one continued series of trouble, by the invasion of the several provinces of the empire, and bloody battles in defence of them, for about the space of sixteen years, from the year 363 to 379. Thus Lowman, whose interpretation and application of this part of the prophecy are confirmed by Bishop Newton, save that the bishop considers this first trumpet as comprehending several events subsequent to those which Lowman includes in it. At the sounding of the first trumpet, says he, the barbarous nations, like a storm of *hail and fire mingled with blood*, invade the Roman territories, and destroy *the third part of trees*—That is, *the trees of the third part of the earth; and the green grass*—That is, both old and young, high and low, rich and poor together. Theodosius the Great died in the year 395; and no sooner was he dead, than the Huns, Goths, and other barbarians, like hail for multitude, and breathing fire and slaughter, broke in upon the best provinces of the empire, both in the east and west, with greater success than they had ever done before. But by this trumpet, I conceive, were principally intended the irruptions and depredations of the Goths, under the conduct of the famous Alaric, who began his incursions in the same year, 395; first ravaged Greece, then wasted Italy, besieged Rome, and was bought off at an exorbitant price; besieged it again in the year 410, took and plundered the city, and set fire to it in several places. Philostorgius, who lived and wrote of these times, saith, that "the sword of the barbarians destroyed the greatest multitude of men; and among other calamities, dry heats, with flashes of flame and whirlwinds of fire, occasioned various and intolerable terrors; yea, and hail greater than could be held in a man's hand, fell down in several places, weighing as much as eight pounds." Well therefore might the prophet compare these incursions of the barbarians to *hail and fire mingled with blood*. Claudian, in like manner, compares them to a storm of *hail*, in his poem on this very war. Jerome also saith, of some of these barbarians, "that they came on unexpectedly everywhere, and marching quicker than report, spared not religion, nor dignities, nor age, nor had compassion on crying infants: those were compelled to die, who had not yet begun to live." So truly did they destroy the *trees* and the *green grass* together. These great calamities, which in so short a time befell the Roman empire after its being brought to the profession of Christianity, and in particular the family of Constantine, by whose instrumentality the great change in favour of Christianity had been effected, was a new and great trial of the faith, constancy, and patience of the church. As it became the wisdom and justice of Divine Providence to punish the wickedness of the world, which caused the disorders of those times, Christ was pleased in his goodness to forewarn the church of it, that it might learn to justify the ways of Providence, and not to faint under the chastisement

A. M. 4100. 8 And the second angel sounded, A. D. 96. and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the

Jer. li. 25; Amos vii. 4.—Chap. xvi. 3.—Ezek. xiv. 19.

which the abuse of the best religion in the world had rendered both proper and necessary: and when probably such afflictions, coming so soon after their great deliverance from the persecutions of heathen Rome, would be very unexpected, and the more discouraging.

Verses 8, 9. *And the second angel sounded, and, as it were, a great mountain burning with fire*—That is, a great warlike nation, or hero; for in the style of poetry, which is near akin to the style of prophecy, heroes are compared to mountains; *was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea died*—The sea, in the Hebrew language, is any collection of waters, as Daubuz observes: now, as waters are expressly made a symbol of people in this prophecy, Rev. xvii. 15, *the waters which thou savest are people, and nations, and tongues; the sea here may well represent the collection of many people and nations into one body politic, or empire; and when a sea is considered as an empire or a collection of people into one body, the living creatures in that sea will be the people or nations whose union constitutes this empire. And the third part of the ships were destroyed*—Ships, from their use in trade, are a proper representation of the riches of the people; and as they are of use in war, especially to maritime nations, they are proper emblems of strength and power. As ships were of both uses in the Roman empire, they may be well understood both of the riches and power of that empire. Thus we have a description, in this part of the second period of prophecy, of a judgment to come on the empire, in which the capital should suffer much, many provinces should be dismembered, as well as invaded, and the springs of power and riches in the empire should be very much diminished. And accordingly we find in history that this was indeed a most calamitous period. The year 400 is marked out as one of the most memorable and calamitous that had ever befallen the empire; and in the latter end of the year 406, the Alans, Vandals, and other barbarous people, passed the Rhine, and made the most furious irruption into Gaul that had yet been known; passed into Spain, and from thence over into Africa; so that the maritime provinces became a prey to them, and the riches and naval power of the empire were almost quite ruined. But the heaviest calamities fell upon Rome itself, besieged and oppressed with famine and pestilence. After Alaric and his Goths, the next ravagers were Attila and his Huns, who, for the space of fourteen years, shook the east and west with the most cruel fear, and de-

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third part of the ships were destroyed. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

Chap. xvi. 3.—Isa. xiv. 12; Chap. ix. 1.—Chap. xvi. 4.

formed the provinces of each empire with all kinds of plundering, slaughter, and burning. They first wasted Thrace, Macedon, and Greece, putting all to fire and sword, and compelled the eastern emperor, Theodosius the second, to purchase a shameful peace. Then Attila turned his arms against the western emperor, Valentinian the third; entered Gaul with seven hundred thousand men, and, not content with taking and spoiling, set most of the cities on fire. But at length, being there vigorously opposed, he fell upon Italy, took and destroyed Aquileia, with several other cities, slaying the inhabitants, and laying the buildings in ashes, and filled all places between the Alps and the Appennines with flight, depopulation, slaughter, servitude, burning, and desperation. Such a man might properly be compared to a great mountain burning with fire, who really was, as he called himself, *the scourge of God, and the terror of men*, and boasted that he was sent into the world by God for this purpose, that, as the executioner of his just anger, he might fill the earth with all kinds of evils; and he bounded his cruelty and passion by nothing less than blood and burning.

Verses 10, 11. *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven*—Bengelius, and some other commentators, interpret this of Arius and his heresy, and the persecutions connected therewith; "and no doubt," as Mr. Scott observes, "such events might very aptly be represented by the falling of a star, and its imbittering and poisoning the waters to the destruction of those who drank of them: yet the series of the prophecy favours the interpretation of those who explain these verses as predicting the continuation of those calamities which subverted the empire." Stars, in prophetic style, are figurative representations of many things. Among others they signify kings and kingdoms, eminent persons of great authority and power. *Rivers, and fountains of waters*—To supply them, may be considered as necessary to the support of life; the drying up these expresses the scarcity of things necessary. Here then we have a prophecy which aptly expresses a judgment to come on the seat of the Roman empire, which should destroy the power of it in its spring and fountain, and cut off all its necessary supports; as when rivers and fountains, so necessary to life, are infected, and become rather deadly than fit for use. At the sounding of the third trumpet, says Bishop Newton, "a great prince appears like a star shooting from heaven to earth, a similitude not unusual in poetry. His coming therefore is sudden and unexpected, and his stay but short. The name of the star is called *Wormwood*, and he

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b

A. M. 4100. 11 * And the name of the star is called Wormwood: † and the third part of

the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

12 * And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and

* Ruth i. 20.—† Exodus xv. 23; Jeremiah ix. 15; xxiii. 15.

infects the third part of the rivers and fountains with the bitterness of wormwood—That is, he is a bitter enemy, and proves the author of grievous calamities to the Roman empire. The rivers and fountains have a near connection with the sea; and it was within two years after Attila's retreat from Italy, that Valentinian was murdered; and Maximus, who had caused him to be murdered, reigning in his stead, Genseric, the king of the Vandals, having settled in Africa, was solicited by Eudoxia, the widow of the deceased emperor, to come and revenge his death. Genseric accordingly embarked with three hundred thousand Vandals and Moors, and arrived upon the Roman coast in June, 455, the emperor and people not expecting nor thinking of any such enemy. He landed his men, and marched directly to Rome; whereupon the inhabitants fleeing into the woods and mountains, the city fell an easy prey into his hands. He abandoned it to the cruelty and avarice of his soldiers, who plundered it for fourteen days together, not only spoiling the private houses and palaces, but stripping the public buildings, and even the churches, of their riches and ornaments. He then set sail again for Africa, carrying away with him immense wealth, and an innumerable multitude of captives, together with the Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters; and left the state so weakened, that in a little time it was utterly subverted. Some critics understand rivers and fountains with relation to doctrines; and in this sense the application is still very proper to Genseric, who was a most bigoted Arian, and during his whole reign most cruelly persecuted the orthodox Christians."

Verse 12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, &c.—A fit representation to express the last desolation of the imperial city, which God's righteous judgment doomed, as Babylon heretofore, to a loss of all power and of all authority. Darkening, smiting, or the setting of the sun, moon, and stars, says Sir I. Newton, are put for the setting of a kingdom, or the desolation thereof, proportional to the darkness. And when darkness is opposed to light, as light is a symbol of joy and safety, so darkness is a symbol of misery and adversity; according to the style of Jeremiah, chap. xiii. 16, Give glory to the Lord before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, &c. The darkness of the sun, moon, and stars, is likewise observed to denote a general deficiency in government, as the prophets describe a day of severe judgment. See Isa. xiii.

the day shone not for a third part of A. M. 4100. it, and the night likewise. A. D. 96.

13 And I beheld, * and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, † Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

* Isaiah xlii. 10; Amos viii. 9.—† Chapter xiv. 6; xix. 17. † Chap. ix. 12; xi. 14.

10, 11; Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. In pointing out the accomplishment of this prophecy, and showing how the great lights of the Roman empire were eclipsed and darkened, and remained in darkness, Bishop Newton observes, Genseric left the western empire in a weak and desperate condition. It struggled hard, and gasped, as it were, for breath, through eight short and turbulent reigns, for the space of twenty years, and at length expired in the year 476, under Momyllus, or Augustulus, as he was named in derision, being a diminutive Augustus. This change was effected by Odoacer, king of the Heruli, who, coming to Rome with an army of barbarians, stripped Momyllus of the imperial robes, put an end to the very name of the western empire, and caused himself to be proclaimed king of Italy. His kingdom indeed was of no long duration: for after a reign of sixteen years, he was overcome and slain in the year 493 by Theodoric, who founded the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy, which continued about sixty years under his successors. Thus was the Roman sun extinguished in the western emperor, but the other lesser luminaries, the moon and stars, still subsisted; for Rome was still allowed to have her senate and consuls, and other subordinate magistrates, as before. These lights, we may suppose, shone more faintly under barbarian kings than under Roman emperors; but they were not totally suppressed and extinguished till after the kingdom of the Ostrogoths was destroyed by the emperor of the east's lieutenants, and Italy was made a province of the eastern empire. Longinus was sent in the year 553 by the Emperor Justin II. to govern Italy with absolute authority; and he changed the whole form of the government, abolished the senate and consuls, and all the former magistrates in Rome and Italy, and in every city of note constituted a new governor with the title of duke. He himself presided over all; and, residing at Ravenna, and not at Rome, he was called the exarch of Ravenna, as were also his successors in the same office. Rome was degraded to the same level with other places, and, from being the queen of cities and empress of the world, was reduced to a poor dukedom, and made tributary to Ravenna, which she had used to govern.

Verse 13. And I beheld an angel flying through the midst of heaven—Between the trumpets of the fourth and fifth angels; saying with a loud voice—That is, proclaiming for the information of all, Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabitants of the earth—All, without exception: heavy calamities were coming on all;

by reason of the other voices of the trumpet, &c.—As if he had said, Though the judgments signified by the four trumpets which have already sounded are very great and dreadful, yet greater judgments still remain to be inflicted on the earth, in the events that are to follow upon sounding the three remaining trumpets. Several interpreters suppose this part of the vision to be a representation of some faithful witnesses against the superstition, idolatry, and growing corruptions of those times; and that the dreadfulness of the woes of the three remaining trumpets is proclaimed to the corrupt members of the church, because as they were endued, by the divine revelation, with more knowledge than before, being all Christians by name, they therefore deserved to suffer more for their crimes than plain heathen, such as were chiefly concerned in the former judgments. Be this as it may, whether this angel was designed to represent any such faithful witnesses against these corruptions, and to signify that such should

arise, or not, it must at least be allowed, as Bishop Newton observes, that the design of this messenger, in conformity with the design of the angels that sounded the preceding trumpets, was to raise men's attention especially to the three following trumpets; predicting events of a more calamitous nature, or more terrible plagues, than any of the preceding; and therefore distinguished from them by the name of *woes*. And they are not woes of a light or common nature, but such in the extreme; for the Hebrews, having no superlative degree, in the manner of other languages, express their superlative by repeating the positive three times, as in this place. The foregoing calamities relate chiefly to the downfall of the western empire, the two following to the downfall of the eastern empire. The foregoing are described more succinctly, and contain a less compass of time; the following are set forth with more particular circumstances, and are of longer duration, as well as larger description.

CHAPTER IX.

(1.) *The fifth trumpet sounds, and the bottomless pit is opened, 1, 2.* (2.) *Mohammed and his Saracens, or Ishmaelites, propagate and establish the imposture of Mohammedanism in the East, to the terrible destruction of the souls and bodies of men, 3-11.* (3.) *The sixth trumpet is sounded, and the Turks, after a long restraint, near the river Euphrates, are permitted by Christ terribly to ravage the countries between Asia and Greece, and destroy the nominal, but wicked Christians, Papists and others, for about four hundred and ninety years, 12-21.*

A. M. 4100. **A**ND the fifth angel sounded, ^a and
A. D. 96. I saw a star fall from heaven

unto the earth: and to him was given A. M. 4100.
the key of ^b the bottomless pit. A. D. 96.

^a Luke x. 18; Chap. viii. 10.

^b Luke viii. 31; Chap. xvii. 8; xx. 1; Verses 2, 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. *The fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven to the earth*—"Stars, in the language of prophecy," says Lowman, "signify angels. The angels of the heavenly host, as well as the angels or bishops of the churches, (see chap. i. 20; viii. 10.) seem to be called stars in Scripture: as when, at the creation, *the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy*, Job xxxviii. 7. In like manner, when the abyss or bottomless pit is shut up, it is represented in this prophecy to be done by an *angel coming down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit*. These expressions are so nearly the same, as well as upon the same subject, that they may be well taken in the same sense, and so used to explain each other. The expression then, *a star fallen from heaven, or an angel come down from heaven*, with a key to open the bottomless pit, seems naturally to mean the permission of the Divine Providence for those evil and calamitous events, which are described to follow from opening the bottomless pit, which could not have happened but by the permission of the Divine Providence, and according to the wise and holy orders of the divine government; for the providence of God could as surely have prevented the temptations of Satan, and the powers of darkness, as if Satan and

his angels had been fast locked up, and secured in safe prison; so that he sends an angel, his messenger, with the key of the bottomless pit, to open the prison and permit them to go out, to teach that they can only act so far as they have permission, and can always be restrained and shut up again, at the good pleasure of the supreme Governor of the world. The abyss, or bottomless pit, is explained in the prophecy itself to be the place where the devil and Satan are shut up, that they should not deceive the nations, chap. xx. 1-3. The abyss seems also to be used in the same sense when the devils besought Christ that he would not command them to go out into the deep, Greek, *εις την ἀβύσσον, into the abyss*, or bottomless pit. Grotius observes on Luke viii. 31, that this abyss is the same with what St. Peter calls *hell, or tartarus*," 2 Pet. ii. 4; where see the note. "Now this prison of Satan and of his angels, by the righteous judgment of God, is permitted to be opened for the just punishment of apostate churches, who would not repent of their evil works. We may then say with the bishop of Meaux, 'Behold something more terrible than what we have hitherto seen! Hell opens, and the devil appears, followed by an army, of a stranger figure than any St. John has anywhere described.' And we may observe from others, that this great temptation of the faithful was to be with

A. M. 4100. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit ;
A. D. 96. ° and there arose a smoke out of the
pit, as the smoke of a great furnace ; and the
sun and the air were darkened by reason of
the smoke of the pit.

3 And there came out of the smoke ^d locusts
upon the earth : and unto them was given power,

° Joel ii. 2, 10.—^d Exod. x. 4 ; Judges vii. 22.—^e Verse 10.
^f Chap. vi. 6 ; vii. 3.

the united force of false doctrine and persecution. Hell does not open itself, (as the bishop observes,) it is always some false teacher that opens it."

Verses 2, 3. *There arose a smoke out of the pit*—As a great smoke hinders the sight, so do errors blind the understanding. The apostle keeps to the allegory, says Grotius, for smoke takes from us the sight of the stars ; smoke, especially when proceeding from a fierce fire, is also a representation of devastation. Thus when Abraham beheld the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, *the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace*. The great displeasure of God is represented by the same figurative expressions of smoke and fire, Psa. xviii. 7, 8. *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth*—Many Protestant writers imagine these locusts signify the religious orders of monks and friars, &c., but Mede understands by them the inundation of the Saracens, locusts and grasshoppers being elsewhere expressly made to signify both the multitude of the eastern nations invading Israel, and the swift progress and destruction they made, Judg. vi. 5. And Lowman confirms this interpretation, and shows that the rise and progress of the Mohammedan religion and empire, till checked by internal divisions, is a remarkable accomplishment of this part of the prophecy ; which is further illustrated by the ignorance and error the Mohammedans everywhere spread, their great number and hardness, their habits, customs, and manners, namely, twisting their hair, wearing beards, their care of their horses, invading their neighbours in summer like locusts, sparing the trees and fruits of the countries they invaded ; the captivity of the men, and the miserable condition of the women, exposed to persons who gave an almost unbounded liberty to their lusts, which was enough to make them even to desire death, verse 6. All these circumstances are suitable to the character of the Arabians, the history of this period, and to the particulars of this prophecy.

That the Saracens were intended by the *locusts* here mentioned, was also the opinion of Bishop Newton, who interprets this part of the prophecy as follows :—"At the sounding of the fifth trumpet, a star fallen from heaven, meaning the wicked impostor Mohammed, opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, and the sun and the air were darkened by it ; that is, a false religion was set up, which filled the world with darkness and error, and swarms of Saracen or Arabian locusts overspread the earth. A false prophet is very fitly typified by a blazing star or meteor. The Arabians,

° as the scorpions of the earth have A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96. power.

4 And it was commanded them ^f that they should not hurt ^g the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree ; but only those men which have not ^h the seal of God in their foreheads.

° Chapter viii. 7.—^h Chapter vii. 3 ; Exodus xii. 23 ; Ezekiel ix. 4.

likewise, are properly compared to *locusts*, not only because numerous armies frequently are so, but also because swarms of locusts often arise from Arabia ; and also because in the plagues of Egypt, to which constant allusion is made in these trumpets, the *locusts* (Exod. x. 13) are brought by an east wind, that is, from Arabia, which lay eastward of Egypt ; and also because in the book of Judges, (vii. 12,) the people of Arabia are compared to *locusts or grasshoppers for multitude*, for in the original the word for both is the same. As the natural locusts are bred in pits, and holes of the earth, so these mystical locusts are truly *infernal*, and proceed with the smoke from the *bottomless pit*." It is too a remarkable coincidence, that at this time *the sun and the earth were really darkened*. For we learn from an eminent Arabian historian, that "in the seventeenth year of Heraclius half the body of the sun was eclipsed, and this defect continued from the former Tisrin to Haziran, (that is, from October to June,) so that only a little of its light appeared." The seventeenth year of Heraclius coincides with the year of Christ 626, and with the fifth year of the Hegira ; and at this time Mohammed was training and exercising his followers in depredations at home, to fit them for greater conquests abroad.

Verses 4-6. *And it was commanded that they should not hurt the grass, &c.*—This verse demonstrates that they were not natural, but symbolical locusts. The like injunctions were given to the Arabian officers and soldiers. When Yezid was marching with the army to invade Syria, Abubeker charged him with this among other orders : "Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn ; cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat." Their commission is to hurt only those men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads—That is, those who were not the true servants of God, but were corrupt and idolatrous Christians. Now from history it appears evidently, that in those countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe, where the Saracens extended their conquests, the Christians were generally guilty of idolatry in the worshipping of saints, if not of images ; and it was the pretence of Mohammed and his followers to chastise them for it, and to re-establish the unity of the Godhead. The parts which remained the freest from the general infection were Savoy, Piedmont, and the southern parts of France, which were afterward the nurseries and habitations of the Waldenses and Albigenses ; and it is very memorable that when the Saracens approached these parts,

A. M. 4100. 5 And to them it was given that they
A. D. 96. should not kill them, ⁱ but that they
should be tormented five months: and their torment
was as the torment of a scorpion, when
ne striketh a man.

6 And in those days ^k shall men seek death,
and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and
death shall flee from them.

7 And ^l the shapes of the locusts were like unto

^l Chap. xi. 7; Verse 10.—^k Job iii. 21; Isa. ii. 19; Jer. viii.
3; Chap. vi. 16.

they were defeated with great slaughter by the famous Charles Martel, in several engagements. To them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented, &c.—As the Saracens were to hurt only the corrupt and idolatrous Christians, so these they were not to kill, but only to torment, and should bring such calamities upon the earth, as should make men weary of their lives. Not that it could be supposed that the Saracens would not kill many thousands in their incursions. On the contrary, their angel (verse 11) hath the name of the destroyer. They might kill them as individuals, but still they should not kill them as a political body, as a state, or empire. They might greatly harass and torment both the Greek and the Latin churches, but they should not utterly extirpate the one or the other. They besieged Constantinople, and even plundered Rome, but they could not make themselves masters of either of those capital cities. The Greek empire suffered most from them, as it lay nearest to them. They dismembered it of Syria and Egypt, and some other of its best and richest provinces; but they were never able to subdue and conquer the whole. As often as they besieged Constantinople, they were repulsed and defeated. They attempted it in the reign of Constantine Pogonatus, A. D. 672; but their men and ships were miserably destroyed by the sea-fire invented by Callinicus, and after seven years fruitless pains they were compelled to raise the siege, and to conclude a peace. They attempted it again in the reign of Leo Isauricus, A. D. 718; but they were forced to desist by famine and pestilence, and losses of various kinds. In this attempt they exceeded their commission, and therefore they were not crowned with their usual success. The taking of this city, and the putting an end to this empire, was a work reserved for another power, as we shall see under the next trumpet.

Verses 7-9. The shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle—In this and the two following verses, the nature and qualities of these locusts are described, partly in allusion to the properties of natural locusts and the description given of them by Joel, and partly in allusion to the habits and manners of the Arabians, to show that not real but figurative locusts were here intended. The first quality mentioned is their being like unto horses prepared unto battle; which is copied from Joel ii. 4. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, &c. Many authors have observed that

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horses prepared unto battle; ^m and on A. M. 4100
their heads were as it were crowns like A. D. 96.
gold, ⁿ and their faces were as the faces of men.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women,
and ^o their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

9 And they had breast-plates, as it were
breast-plates of iron; and the sound of their
wings was ^p as the sound of chariots of many
horses running to battle.

^l Joel ii. 4.—^m Nah. iii. 17.—ⁿ Dan. vii. 8.—^o Joel i. 6.
^p Joel ii. 5-7.

the head of a locust resembles that of a horse. The Italians, therefore, call them *cavalette*, as it were little horses. The Arabians too have in all ages been famous for their horses and horsemanship. Their strength is well known to consist chiefly in their cavalry. Another distinguishing mark and character is their having on their heads as it were crowns like gold—Which is an allusion to the head-dress of the Arabians, who have constantly worn turbans or mitres, and boast of having those ornaments for their common attire, which are crowns and diadems with other people. The crowns also signify the kingdoms and dominions which they should acquire. For, as Mede excellently observes, "No nation had ever so wide a command, nor ever were so many kingdoms, so many regions subjugated in so short a space of time. It sounds incredible, yet most true it is, that in the space of eighty or not many more years, they subdued and acquired to the diabolical kingdom of Mohammed, Palestine, Syria, both Armenias, almost all Asia Minor, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all Barbary, even to the river Niger, Portugal, Spain. Neither did their fortune or ambition stop here till they had added also a great part of Italy, as far as to the gates of Rome; moreover, Sicily, Candia, Cyprus, and the other islands of the Mediterranean sea. Good God! how great a tract of land! how many crowns were here! Whence also it is worthy of observation, that mention is not made here, as in other trumpets, of the third part; forasmuch as this plague fell no less without the bounds of the Roman empire than within it, and extended itself even to the remotest Indies." They had also faces as the faces of men, and hair as the hair of women—And the Arabians wore their beards, or at least mustaches, as men; while the hair of their heads was flowing, or platted like that of women; as Pliny and other ancient authors testify. Another property, copied from Joel, is their having teeth as the teeth of lions; that is, strong to devour. So Joel describes the locusts, (chap. i. 6,) as a nation whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, &c.; and it is wonderful how they bite and gnaw all things, as Pliny says, even the doors of the houses. They had also breast-plates, as it were breast-plates of iron—And the locusts have a hard shell or skin, which hath been called their armour. This figure is designed to express the defensive, as the former was the offensive arms of the Saracens. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots

A. M. 4100. 10 And they had tails like unto scor-
A. D. 96. pions, and there were stings in their tails:
and their power was to hurt men five months.
11 And they had a king over them, which is

¶ Verse 5.—Eph. ii. 2.—Verse 1.

of many horses running to battle—Much the same comparison had been used by Joel, chap. ii. 5, *Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap*; and Pliny affirms that they fly with so great a noise of their wings, that they may be taken for birds. Their wings, and the sound of their wings, denote the swiftness and rapidity of their conquests; and it is indeed astonishing that in less than a century they erected an empire which extended from India to Spain.

Verses 10, 11. *They had tails like unto scorpions*—They are thrice compared to scorpions, namely, verses 3, 5, as well as in this verse. But whether these tails and stings, as of scorpions, were designed to express that these Saracens should spread the poison of error and delusion where they came, or only to signify the great pain and uneasiness their invasion should occasion, seems doubtful. Bishop Newton, however, interprets the metaphor in the former sense, as intended to signify, that wherever they carried their arms, there also they should distil the venom of a false religion. *And their power was to hurt men five months*—“One difficulty,” says Bishop Newton, “and the greatest of all, remains yet to be explained; and that is the period of five months assigned to these locusts, which being twice mentioned, merits the more particular consideration. They tormented men five months, verse 5; and again here, their power was to hurt men five months. It is said, without doubt, in conformity to the type; for locusts are observed to live about five months; that is, from April to September. Scorpions, too, as Bochart asserts, are noxious for no longer a term, the cold rendering them torpid and inactive. But of these locusts it is said, not that their duration or existence was only for five months, but their power of hurting and tormenting men continued five months. Now, these months may either be months commonly so taken; or prophetic months, consisting each of thirty days, as St. John reckons them, and so making one hundred and fifty years, at the rate of each day for a year; or the number being repeated twice, the sums may be thought to be doubled, and five months and five months, in prophetic computation, will amount to three hundred years. If these months be taken for common months, then, as the natural locusts live and do hurt only in the five summer months, so the Saracens, in the five summer months too, made their excursions, and retreated again in the winter. It appears that this was their usual practice, and particularly when they first besieged Constantinople in the time of Constantine Pogonatus. For from the month of April to September, they pertinaciously continued the siege, and then, despairing of success, departed to Cyzicum, where they wintered, and in spring

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the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

¹ That is to say, a destroyer.

again renewed the war: and this course they held for seven years, as the Greek annals tell us. If these months be taken for prophetic months, or one hundred and fifty years, it was within that space of time that the Saracens made their principal conquests. Their empire might subsist much longer, but their power of hurting and tormenting men was exerted chiefly within that period. Read the history of the Saracens, and you will find that their greatest exploits were performed, their greatest conquests were made, between the year 612, when Mohammed first opened the bottomless pit, and began publicly to teach and propagate his imposture, and the year 762, when the Calif Almansor built Bagdad, to fix there the seat of his empire, and called it the city of peace. Syria, Persia, India, and the greatest part of Asia; Egypt, and the greatest part of Africa; Spain, and some parts of Europe, were all subdued in the intermediate time. But when the califs, who before had removed from place to place, fixed their habitation at Bagdad, then the Saracens ceased from their incursions and ravages, like locusts, and became a settled nation; then they made no more such rapid and amazing conquests as before, but only engaged in common and ordinary wars, like other nations; then their power and glory began to decline, and their empire by little and little to moulder away; then they had no longer, like the prophetic locusts, one king over them; Spain having revolted in the year 736, and set up another calif in opposition to the reigning house of Abbas. If these months be taken doubly, or for three hundred years, then, according to Sir Isaac Newton, ‘the whole time that the califs of the Saracens reigned with a temporal dominion at Damascus and Bagdad together, was three hundred years; namely, from the year 637 to the year 936 inclusive; when their mighty empire was broken and divided into several principalities or kingdoms. So that, let these five months be taken in any possible construction, the event will still answer, and the prophecy will still be fulfilled; though the second method of interpretation and application appears much more probable than either the first or the third. *And they had a king over them*—By this is signified that the same person should exercise temporal as well as spiritual sovereignty over them; and the califs were their emperors, as well as the heads of their religion. The king is the same as the star or angel of the bottomless pit, whose name is Abaddon in Hebrew, and Apollyon in Greek; that is, the destroyer. Mede imagines that this is some allusion to the name of Obodas, the common name of the kings of that part of Arabia from whence Mohammed came, as Pharaoh was the common name of the kings of Egypt, and Cesar of the emperors of Rome; and such allusions are not unusual in

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A. M. 4100. 12 'One wo is past; and behold,
A. D. 96. there come two woes more hereafter.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trum-

¹ Chap. viii. 13.

the style of Scripture. However that be, the name agrees perfectly well with Mohammed, and the califs his successors, who were the authors of all those horrid wars and desolations, and openly taught and professed their religion was to be propagated and established by the sword.

Verse 12. *One wo is past, &c.*—This is added not only to distinguish the woes, and to mark more strongly each period, but also to suggest that some time will intervene between this first wo of the Arabian locusts and the next of the Euphratean horsemen. The similitude between the locusts and Arabians is indeed so great, that it cannot fail of striking every curious observer: and a further resemblance is noted by Mr. Daubuz, that "there had happened in the extent of this torment, a coincidence of the event with the nature of the locusts. The Saracens have made inroads into all those parts of Christendom where the natural locusts are wont to be seen, and known to do mischief, and nowhere else: and that, too, in the same proportion. Where the locusts are seldom seen, there the Saracens stayed little: where the natural locusts are often seen, there the Saracens abode most; and where they breed most, there the Saracens had their beginning and greatest power. This may be easily verified by history."

Verses 13-15. *The sixth angel sounded, &c.*—At the sounding of the sixth trumpet, a voice proceeded from the four horns of the golden altar, (for the scene was still in the temple,) ordering the angel of the sixth trumpet to loose the four angels which were bound in the great river Euphrates; and they were loosed accordingly. Such a voice, proceeding from the four horns of the golden altar, is a strong indication of the divine displeasure; and plainly intimates, that the sins of men must have been very great, when the altar, which was their sanctuary and protection, called aloud for vengeance. *The four angels* are the four sultanies, or four leaders of the Turks and Othmans. For there were four principal sultanies, or kingdoms of the Turks, bordering upon the river Euphrates: one at Bagdad, founded by Togrul Beg, or Tangrolipix, as he is more usually called, in the year 1055; another at Damascus, founded by Tagjuddaulas, or Ducas, in the year 1079; a third at Aleppo, founded by Sjarsuddaulas, or Melech, in the same year, 1079; and the fourth at Iconium, in Asia Minor, founded by Sedyduddaulus, or Cutlu Muses, or his son, in the year 1080. These four sultanies subsisted several years afterward; and the sultans were bound and restrained from extending their conquests farther than the territories and countries ad-

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pet, Loose the four angels which are bound ^a in the great river Euphrates. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared ² for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

^a Chap. xvi. 12.—² Or, at.

joining to the river Euphrates, primarily by the good providence of God, and secondarily by the croisades, or expeditions of the European Christians into the holy land, in the latter part of the eleventh, and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Nay, the European Christians took several cities and countries from them, and confined them within narrower bounds. But when an end was put to the croisades, and the Christians totally abandoned their conquests in Syria and Palestine, as they did in the latter part of the thirteenth century, then *the four angels on the river Euphrates were loosed*. Soliman Shah, the first chief and founder of the Othman race, retreating with his three sons from Jingiz Chan and the Tartars, would have passed the river Euphrates, but was unfortunately drowned, the time of *loosing the four angels* being not yet come. Discouraged at this sad accident, two of his sons returned to their former habitations; but Ortogrul, the third, with his three sons, Conduz, Sarubani, and Othman, remained some time in those parts; and having obtained leave of Aladin, the sultan of Iconium, he came with four hundred of his Turks, and settled in the mountains of Armenia. From thence they began their excursions; and the other Turks associating with them, and following their standard, they gained several victories over the Tartars on one side, and over the Christians on the other. Ortogrul dying in the year 1288, Othman his son succeeded him in power and authority; and in the year 1299, as some say, with the consent of Aladin himself, he was proclaimed sultan, and founded a new empire; and the people afterward, as well as the new empire, were called by his name. For though they disclaim the name of *Turks*, and assume that of *Othmans*, yet nothing is more certain than that they are a mixed multitude, the remains of the four sultanies above mentioned, as well as the descendants particularly of the house of Othman.

In this manner, and at this time, *the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men*—That is, as before, the men of the Roman empire, and especially in Europe, the third part of the world. The Latin or western empire was broken to pieces under the four first trumpets; the Greek or eastern empire was cruelly hurt and tormented under the fifth trumpet; and here, under the sixth trumpet, it is to be slain and utterly destroyed. Accordingly, all Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, and all the countries which formerly belonged to the Greek or eastern Cesars, the Othmans have conquered, and

A. M. 4100. 16 And ² the number of the army
A. D. 96. ³ of the horsemen were two hundred
thousand thousand: ⁴ and I heard the number
of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision,

² Psa. lxxviii. 17; Dan. vii. 10.—³ Ezek. xxxviii. 4.

subjugated to their dominion. They first passed over into Europe in the reign of Orchan, their second emperor, and in the year 1357; they took Constantinople in the reign of Mohammed, their seventh emperor, and in the year 1453; and in time, all the remaining parts of the Greek empire shared the fate of the capital city. The last of their conquests were Candia, or the ancient Crete, in 1669, and Cameniec, in 1672. For the execution of this great work, it is said that they were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year; which will admit either of a literal or a mystical interpretation; and the former will hold good if the latter should fail. If it be taken literally, it is only expressing the same thing by different words; as *peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*, are jointly used in other places; and then the meaning is, that they were prepared and ready to execute the divine commission at any time, or for any time,—any hour, or day, or month, or year, that God should appoint. If it be taken mystically, and the hour, and day, and month, and year be a prophetic hour, and day, and month, and year, then a year, (according to St. John's, who follows herein Daniel's computation,) consisting of three hundred and sixty days, is three hundred and sixty years; and a month, consisting of thirty days, is thirty years; and a day is a year; and an hour is, in the same proportion, fifteen days: so that the whole period of the Othmans *slaying the third part of men*, or subduing the Christian states in the Greek or Roman empire, amounts to three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days. Now it is wonderfully remarkable, that the first conquest mentioned in history of the Othmans over the Christians, was in the year of the Hegira 680, and the year of Christ 1281. For Ortoğrul "in that year (according to the accurate historian Saadi) crowned his victories with the conquest of the famous city of Kutahi upon the Greeks." Compute three hundred and ninety-one years from that time, and they will terminate in the year 1672: and in that year, as it was hinted before, Mohammed the Fourth took Cameniec from the Poles, "and forty-eight towns and villages in the territory of Cameniec were delivered up" to the sultan upon the treaty of peace. Whereupon Prince Cantemir hath made this memorable reflection: "This was the last victory by which any advantage accrued to the Othman state, or any city or province was annexed to the ancient bounds of the empire." Agreeably to which observation, he hath entitled the former part of his history, *Of the growth of the Othman empire*, and the following part, *Of the decay of the Othman empire*. Other wars and

and them that sat on them, having ⁵ breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth,
A. M. 4100. ⁶ and brimstone: ⁷ and the heads of the horses
A. D. 96. ⁸ were as the heads of lions; and out of their
mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone.

⁵ Chap. vii. 4.—⁶ 1 Chron. xii. 8; Isa. v. 28, 29.

slaughters, as he says, have ensued. The Turks even besieged Vienna in 1683; but this exceeding the bounds of their commission, they were defeated. Belgrade and other places may have been taken from them, and surrendered to them again; but still they have subdued no new state or potentate of Christendom now for the space of a hundred and fifty years; and in all probability they never may again, their empire appearing rather to decrease than increase. Here then the prophecy and the event agree exactly in the period of three hundred and ninety-one years; and if more accurate and authentic histories of the Othmans were brought to light, and we knew the very day wherein Kutahi was taken as certainly as we know that wherein Cameniec was taken, the like exactness might also be found in the fifteen days. But though the time be limited for the Othmans' *slaying the third part of men*, yet no time is fixed for the duration of their empire; only this second wo will end when the third wo, (xi. 14,) or the destruction of the beast, shall be at hand.

Verses 16-19. *The number of the army of horsemen were two hundred thousand*—A description is here given of the forces, and of the means and instruments by which the Othmans should effect the ruin of the eastern empire. The armies are described as very numerous, *myriads of myriads*. When Mohammed the Second besieged Constantinople, he had about four hundred thousand men in his army, besides a powerful fleet of thirty larger and two hundred lesser ships. They are described, too, chiefly as *horsemen*; and so they are described both by Ezekiel and by Daniel; (see Bishop Newton's last dissertation upon Daniel;) and it is well known that their armies consisted chiefly of cavalry, especially before the order of Janizaries was instituted by Amurath the First. The Timariots, or horsemen, holding lands by serving in the wars, are the strength of the government; and are in all accounted between seven and eight hundred thousand fighting men. Some say they are a million; and besides these, there are Spahis and other horsemen in the emperor's pay.

In the vision—That is, in appearance, and not in reality, they had *breast-plates of fire and of hyacinth and brimstone*—The colour of *fire* is red, of *hyacinth* blue, and of *brimstone* yellow: and this "hath a literal accomplishment; for the Othmans, from the first time of their appearance, have affected to wear such warlike apparel of scarlet, blue, and yellow." Of the Spahis particularly, some have red, and some have yellow standards, and others red or yellow, mixed with other colours. In appearance, too, *the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*—To denote their strength, courage, and fierceness; and

A. M. 4100. 18 By these three was the third part
A. D. 96. of men killed, by the fire, and by the
smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out
of their mouths.

19 For their power is in their mouth, and in
their tails: ^b for their tails were like unto ser-
pents, and had heads, and with them they do
hurt.

20 And the rest of the men which were not

^b Isa. ix. 15.—^c Deut. xxxi. 29.—^d Lev. xvii. 7; Deut. xxxii.
17; Psa. cvi. 37; 1 Cor. x. 20.

out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brim-
stone—A manifest allusion to great guns and gun-
powder, which were invented under this trumpet,
and were of such signal service to the Othmans in
their wars. For by these three was the third
part of men killed—By these the Othmans made
such havoc and destruction in the Greek or eastern
empire. Amurath the Second broke into Pelopon-
nesus, and took several strong places by means of
his artillery. But his son Mohammed, at the siege
of Constantinople, employed such great guns as were
never made before. One is described to have been of
such a monstrous size, that it was drawn by seventy
yoke of oxen, and by two thousand men. Two
more discharged a stone of the weight of two talents.
Others emitted a stone of the weight of half a talent.
But the greatest of all discharged a ball of the weight
of three talents, or about three hundred pounds; and
the report of this cannon is said to have been so great,
that all the country round about was shaken to the dis-
tance of forty furlongs. For forty days the wall was
battered by these guns, and so many breaches were
made, that the city was taken by assault, and an end
put to the Grecian empire.

Moreover they had power to do hurt by their tails
as well as by their mouths, their tails being like
unto serpents, and having heads—In this respect
they very much resemble the locusts, only the dif-
ferent tails are accommodated to the different crea-
tures, the tails of scorpions to locusts, the tails of
serpents, with a head at each end, to horses. By
this figure it is meant, that the Turks draw after
them the same poisonous trains as the Saracens;
they profess and propagate the same imposture,
they do hurt not only by their conquests, but also
by spreading their false doctrine; and wherever
they establish their dominion, there too they estab-
lish their religion. Many indeed of the Greek
Church remained, and are still remaining among
them; but they are subjected to a capitation-tax,
which is rigorously exacted from all above fourteen
years of age; are burdened besides with the most

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killed by these plagues ° yet repent- A. M. 4100
ed not of the works of their hands, A. D. 96.
that they should not worship ^d devils, ° and idols
of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and
of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor
walk :

21 Neither repented they of their murders,
nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication,
nor of their thefts.

° Psalm cxv. 4; cxxxv. 15; Daniel v. 23.—^f Chapter
xxii. 15.

heavy and arbitrary impositions; are compelled to
the most servile drudgery; are abused in their per-
sons, and robbed of their property: but notwith-
standing these and greater persecutions, some re-
mains of the Greek Church are still preserved among
them, as we may reasonably conclude, to serve some
great and mysterious ends of providence.

Verses 20, 21. And the rest of the men which were
not killed by these plagues—That is, the Latin
Church, which pretty well escaped these calamities;
yet repented not of the works of their hands, that
they should not worship devils—*Daimonia*, demons,
or second mediatory gods, as it hath largely been
shown before, saints and angels; and idols of gold,
and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood—From
hence it is evident, that those calamities were inflicted
upon the Christians for their idolatries. As the
eastern churches were first in the crime, so they
were first likewise in the punishment. At first they
were visited by the plague of the Saracens, but this
working no change or reformation, they were again
chastised by the still greater plague of the Othmans;
were partly overthrown by the former, and were
entirely ruined by the latter. What churches were
then remaining, which were guilty of the like idola-
try, but the western, or those in communion with
Rome? And the western were not at all reclaimed
by the ruin of the eastern, but persisted still in the
worship of saints and (what is worse) the worship of
images, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk—
And the world is witness to the completion of this
prophecy to this day. Neither repented they of their
murders—Their persecutions and inquisitions; nor
of their sorceries—Their pretended miracles and
revelations; nor of their fornications—Their pub-
lic stews and uncleanness; nor of their thefts—
Their exactions and impositions on mankind; and
they are as notorious for their licentiousness and
wickedness, as for their superstition and idolatry.
As they therefore refused to take warning by the
two former woes, the third wo, as we shall see, will
fall with vengeance upon them.

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CHAPTER X.

This chapter contains a solemn preparation for the sounding of the seventh trumpet. (1.) It represents a mighty angel coming down from heaven with a little open book in his hand, and on his crying aloud, seven thunders utter their voices, but John is forbidden to write what they uttered, 1-4. (2.) The angel solemnly swears by the eternal God, the Creator of all things, that the mysterious dispensation of Providence in time should end with the seventh trumpet, 5-7. (3.) John is commanded to take and digest in his mind the contents of the open book, as a preparation for his uttering further predictions concerning the future state of the church and of the world, 8-11.

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96. **AND** I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: * and a rainbow was upon his head, and ^b his face was as it were the sun, and ^c his feet as pillars of fire:

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: ^d and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

* Ezek. i. 28.—^b Matt. xvii. 2; Chap. i. 16.—^c Chap. i. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

The foregoing chapters have given us a prophetic description of the first two periods, or of the state of the world and the church under the persecutions of Rome heathen; of the troubles occasioned by the invasions of the northern nations, which broke the power of the Roman empire, and divided it into several new governments; and finally of the rise and progress of the Mohammedan religion and empire, which caused so many evils throughout the greatest part of the world, both in the eastern and western empires. This tenth chapter seems to be an interval between the second and third periods, in which the scene of the vision alters, and preparation is made for a new prophecy, representing a new state of the world and church, for a new period of *forty-two months, a time, times, and half a time*, or twelve hundred and sixty days; being the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when the mystery of God shall be finished. The scene of the vision is represented to be different from that of the foregoing: it is not now before the throne of God in heaven, as in the fourth chapter, but on earth, as is the first scene, chap. i.

Ver. 1, 2. *And*—After my former vision, related in the foregoing part of this prophecy, another scene was opened unto me introductory to a further revelation concerning the state of the church and the world. For *I saw another mighty angel*—Another, different from that mighty angel mentioned chap. v. 2; yet he was a created angel, for he did not swear by himself; *come down from heaven*—Or divinely commissioned, verse 6; *clothed with a cloud*—In token of his high dignity; and *a rainbow upon his head*—A lovely token of the divine favour, and a symbol of God's covenant and mercy toward penitent sinners; and *his face was as it were the sun*—Nor was this too much for a creature, for all the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, Matt. xiii. 43. Or this might be an emblem of the light of the gospel about to be diffused. *And his feet as pillars of fire*—Bright and shining as flame. Intimating, perhaps, that the faithful, in the period about to be opened, should suffer persecution, and yet be pre-

3 And cried with a loud voice, as A. M. 4100.
when a lion roareth: and when he A. D. 96.
had cried, * seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, ^f Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

^d Matt. xxviii. 18.—^e Chap. viii. 5.—^f Dan. viii. 26; xii. 4, 9

served from the rage of their enemies. *And he had in his hand*—His left hand, for he swore with his right, verse 6; *βιβλαριδιον*, a little book, different from the *βιβλιον*, or book, mentioned before: and it was open, that all men might freely read and consider it. It was indeed a codicil to the larger book, and properly cometh under the sixth trumpet, to describe the state of the western church after the description of the state of the eastern: and this is, with good reason, made a separate and distinct prophecy, on account of the importance of the matter, as well as for engaging the greater attention. *And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left on the earth*—To show the extent of his power and commission. This angel set his right foot on the sea toward the west, his left on the land toward the east, so that he looked southward. By the *earth*, says Sir I. Newton, the Jews understood the great continent of Asia and Africa, to which they had access by land; and by the isles of the sea they understood the places to which they sailed by sea, or the several parts of Europe: and hence, in this prophecy, the earth and sea he considers as put for the nations of the Greek and Latin empires. In this sense the angel's putting his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, will represent him as standing with one foot on Asia, and another on Europe, to signify that the prophecies which he was to reveal would relate to the empires of the east and west.

Verses 3, 4. *And he cried with a loud voice*—Uttering the words recorded verse 6; *as when a lion roareth*—With a voice strong and awful, as the roar of a lion, signifying, some think, that the gospel would be openly, resolutely, and efficaciously preached and published, in order to effect the subsequent reformation of the church from the errors and superstitions that had now overspread it. *And when he had cried*—Or, while he was crying, *seven thunders uttered their voices*—In distinct audible sounds, each after the other, as from the clouds of heaven, and loud as thunder. Doubtless those who spoke these words were glorious heavenly powers. *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices*—

A. M. 4100. 5 And the angel which I saw stand
A. D. 96. upon the sea and upon the earth, ^a lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, ^b who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, ⁱ that there should be time no longer.

7 But ^k in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath

^a Exod. vi. 8; Dan. xii. 7.—^b Neh. ix. 6; Chap. iv. 11; xiv. 7.
ⁱ Dan. xii. 7; Chap. xvi. 17.

Having understood the things they expressed; *I was about to write*—To record what was spoken by them. *And I heard a voice from heaven*—Doubtless from him who had at first commanded him to write, and who presently commands him to take the book, namely, Jesus Christ, *saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not*—These are the only things, of all which he heard, that he is commanded to keep secret. So some things peculiarly secret were revealed to the beloved John, besides all the secret things written in this book. And as we know not the subjects of the seven thunders, so neither can we know the reasons for suppressing them. Vitringa indeed, by these seven thunders, understands the seven great cruises, or expeditions of the western Christians for the conquest of the Holy Land, and Daubuz the seven kingdoms which received and established the Protestant reformation by law. On which Dr. Apthorp observes as follows: "As heaven signifies the station of the supreme visible power, which is the political heaven, so thunder is the voice and proclamation of that authority and power, and of its will and laws, implying the obedience of the subjects, and at last overcoming all opposition. The thunders are the symbols of the supreme powers, who established the Reformation in their respective dominions." But, as Bishop Newton remarks, "Doth it not savour rather of vanity and presumption than of wisdom and knowledge, to pretend to conjecture what they are when the Holy Spirit hath purposely concealed them." Suffice it that we may know all the contents of the opened book, and of the oath of the angel.

Verses 5-7. *And the angel, &c.*—But though I was not allowed to reveal what the seven thunders had uttered, yet the angel proceeded to give a further revelation of the dispensations of Divine Providence toward the world and the church in general; and, to confirm the truth and certainty of his revelation, he took his oath in the most solemn manner: *he lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever*—By the eternal God, before whom a thousand years are but as a day is with us; *who created the heaven, the earth, the sea, &c.*—And consequently has the sovereign power

declared to his servants the pro- A. M. 4100.
phets. A. D. 96.

8 And ^l the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go, *and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.*

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, ^m Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

^k Chap. xi. 15.—^l Verse 4.—^m Jer. xv. 16; Ezek. ii. 8;
iii. 1-3.

over all; therefore all his enemies, though they rage a while on the earth and on the sea, yet must give place to him: *That there should be time no longer*—Greek, *οτι χρονος ουκ εσται επι, that the time shall not be yet*; (so Lowman and Bishop Newton understand it;) that is, that the time of the glorious state of the church, though sure to take place in its due time, should not be yet; *but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel*—Who was yet to sound; *the mystery of God*—In his providence toward his church; *should be finished*—Or completed. The mystery of God is his counsel or design, which begins in the present conversion and happiness of man on earth, will terminate in diffusing that felicity over all the world, and will complete it in a state of immortality; *as he hath declared*—Ως ευηγγελισαι, according to the good news which he hath published; *to his servants the prophets*—And then the glorious state of the church should be no longer delayed. So long as the third wo remains on the earth and the sea, the mystery of God is not fulfilled. And the angel's declaration that it shall be fulfilled, confirmed by a solemn oath, is made peculiarly for the consolation of holy men, who are afflicted under that wo. Indeed the wrath of God must be first fulfilled by the pouring out of the vials, and then comes the joyful fulfilling of the mystery of God.

Verses 8-10. *And the voice said, Go up to the angel standing upon the sea and the earth, and take the little book which is open*—To signify that its contents were not to be kept secret like those of the seven thunders, but revealed for the instruction, direction, encouragement, or warning of mankind, as well as those of the larger book; for it was a kind of second prophecy added to the former, and as it concerned *kings and nations*, so it was to be made public for their use and information. *And I went unto the angel*—As I was directed; *and said*—With boldness, in consequence of the divine command; *Give me the little book. And he said, Take it, and eat it up*—As Ezekiel did that which was shown to him upon a like occasion; that is, consider its contents carefully, and digest them well in thy mind; *and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey*—The knowledge of future things was, at first, pleasant, but the sad con-

A. M. 4100. 10 And I took the little book out
A. D. 96. of the angel's hand, and ate it up ;
"and it was in my mouth sweet as honey : and
as soon as I had eaten it ° my belly was bitter.

° Ezek. iii. 3.

tents of the little book afterward filled his soul with sorrow. As this prophecy was to reveal the providences of God during the period of the seventh trumpet, in which, as there was a revelation of great opposition to true religion, and persecution of the faithful professors of it, so was there also a revelation of divine protection during the time of trial, and of a sure accomplishment of the promises concerning the glorious and happy state of the church in the end. The consideration of such a dispensation of Providence might well occasion a mixture of joy and grief in the apostle's mind, as it must do in the minds of all who understand and reflect upon it.

Verse 11. *And he said*—Thou hast not yet finished the whole of thy work, in what thou hast already recorded of the visions of the Lord : but *thou must again prophesy before, or to, many peoples and nations, &c.*—Mede infers from hence, that the apostle is about to go over the same period of time that he had before been discoursing of, giving an account of the state of the church as he had just done of the

11 And he said unto me, Thou A. M. 4100.
must prophesy again before ma- A. D. 96.
ny peoples, and nations, and tongues, and
kings.

° Ezek. ii. 10.

state of the empire. But the new descriptions and new events to which the subsequent prophecies refer, that are introduced here, and which constitute the following chapters, are sufficient, without any peculiarity of interpretation, to justify the expression, *Thou must prophesy again.* Besides, as Bishop Newton observes, if the prophecy begin here again anew, the subject be resumed from the beginning, and all that follows be contained in *the little book*, then the little book contains more matter than the larger book ; and part of the sealed book is made part of the open book, which is contrary to the regularity and order of the Apocalypse, and in a great measure destroys the beauty and symmetry of the different parts: for it is evident and undeniable that the seventh trumpet is the seventh part of the seventh seal, as the seventh seal is the seventh part of the sealed book, and consequently can be no part of the little open book, which ends, as we shall see, with the sixth trumpet, and immediately before the sounding of the seventh.

CHAPTER XI.

Here, (1.) The apostle is directed to measure the temple of God, the altar, and them that worship therein, but to leave the outer court unmeasured, as being given to the Gentiles, with a prediction that they should tread under foot the holy city forty-two months, 1, 2. (2.) Power is given to two witnesses, who should prophesy in sackcloth during twelve hundred and sixty days, 3-6. (3.) The beast makes war upon them, prevails against and slays them; but they are raised from the dead after three days and a half, when they arise and ascend into heaven, 7-12. (4.) The judgments of God are executed on their enemies, and the second voo is accomplished, 13, 14. (5.) The seventh trumpet sounds, and a revelation is made of glorious events, which should follow, and the triumphs of divine vengeance over the persecutors of God's people are celebrated, 15-18. (6.) The temple of God is opened in heaven, and a view is given of the ark of his covenant, while lightnings, thunders, and an earthquake foreshow the wars and convulsions introductory to those awful events which are to overthrow all antichristian opposers, and prepare the way for the universal reign of righteousness, 19.

A. M. 4100. AND there was given me ° a reed
A. D. 96. like unto a rod : and the angel
stood, saying, ° Rise, and measure the temple

° Ezek. xl. 3, &c. ; Zech. ii. 1 ; Chap. xxi. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

We now enter upon the third period of this prophecy, distinguished by the seven vials, as the former were by seven seals and seven trumpets. This period, being much longer than either of the foregoing, is described more at large, and with greater particularity; and the state of it is represented by several prophetic images or emblems, as by measuring the temple, by the prophesying of two witnesses, by the vision of a woman fleeing into the wilderness, and the representation of one wild beast rising out of the sea, and of another coming up out of the earth. So that here are two distinct repre-

of God, and the altar, and them that A. M. 4100.
worship therein. A. D. 96.

2 But ° the court which is without the tem-

° Num. xxiii. 18.—° Ezek. xl. 17, 20.

sentations of the state of the church during this period, and another representation of the persecuting power from whence this afflicted state of the church should proceed; and in the end of this, as in each of the other periods, here is a representation of the church's deliverance out of its afflicted state. And, in particular, the afflictions of the church are to be terminated with this period, and to be succeeded by the most happy and glorious state of peace and prosperity, of truth, purity, protection, safety, and comfort; and are not to be followed, in a short time, by a new period of troubles and calamities, to try the faith and patience of the saints, as the former deli-

A. M. 4100. ple, ¹leave out, and measure it not; A. D. 96. ^d for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they ^etread under foot ^fforty and two months.

¹Gr. cast out.—^dPsa. lxxix. 1; Luke xxi. 24.—^eDan. viii. 10.—^fChap. xiii. 5.

verances were. In the former part of this chapter, from verse 1-14, Bishop Newton thinks are exhibited the contents of the little book mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Verses 1, 2. *And there was given me*—By Christ, as appears from verse 3; a *reed*—As there was shown to Ezekiel, whose vision bore a great resemblance to this, Ezek. xi.-xliii. *And the angel*—Which had spoken to me before; *stood by me, saying, Rise*—Probably he was sitting to write; *and measure the temple of God and the altar*—The house and the inner court where the altar stood, in which the priests worshipped God and performed the duties of their office, and into which such as offered private sacrifices for themselves were admitted. A proper representation of the church of God and his true worship, and of such as were true worshippers of him. The reason, it seems, of St. John's being commanded to measure the inner court and the temple was, to show that during all this period there were some true Christians, who conformed to the rule and measure of God's word and worship. "*Measuring the servants of God is equivalent to sealing them. The unmeasured tenants of the outer court, and the unsealed men throughout the Roman empire, are alike the votaries of the apostacy; while they that were measured and they that were sealed, are the saints who refused to be partakers of its abominations.*"—Faber, vol. ii. p. 53. This measuring might allude more particularly to the Reformation from popery, which took place under the sixth trumpet. And one of the moral causes of it was the Othman's taking Constantinople, which occasioned the Greek fugitives to bring their books with them into the more western parts of Europe, and proved the happy cause of the revival of learning; as the revival of learning opened men's eyes, and proved the happy occasion of the Reformation. But though *the inner court*, which includes the smaller number, was *measured*, yet *the outer court*, which implies the far greater part, was *left out*, (verse 2,) and rejected, as being in the possession of those who were Christians only in name, but Gentiles in worship and practice, who profaned it with heathenish superstition and idolatry; *and they shall tread under foot the holy city*—They shall trample upon and tyrannise over the church of Christ, which shall be filled with idolaters, infidels, and hypocrites, possessing its most eminent and lucrative places, while true Christians are oppressed in a grievous manner; and that for the space of *forty and two months*, or twelve hundred and sixty days, thirty days being included in a month, the same period with that afterward termed a *time, times, and a half time*; that is, a year, two years, and half a year, or three years and a half, according to the ancient year of three

b

3 And ²I will give power unto my A. M. 4100. two ³witnesses, ^band they shall pro- A. D. 96. phesy ⁱa thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

²Or, *I will give unto my two witnesses that they may prophesy.* ³Chap. xx. 4.—^bChap. xix. 10.—ⁱChap. xii. 6.

hundred and sixty days, all which are prophetic numbers; so that twelve hundred and sixty days are twelve hundred and sixty years. Now it plainly appears from the predictions both of Daniel and St. John, that this period of persecution and trouble has no connection with the persecutions which the church endured from the pagan Roman emperors. We are, however, according to the same prophecies, to look for the promoters of it *within the limits of the old Roman empire*; and since that empire had embraced Christianity previous to its division into ten kingdoms, *the little horn*, which symbolizes one of these persecuting powers, and which is represented as being contemporary with the ten kingdoms, must be *nominally* Christian. And this is no other than the apostate Church of Rome, so minutely described by St. Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 1, as well as by Daniel and St. John. And the two latter specify with much exactness the era from which the computation of the twelve hundred and sixty years is to be made. Daniel directs us to date them from the time *when the saints were, by some public act of the state, delivered into the hand of the little horn*: and St. John, in a similar manner, teaches us to date them from the time when the *woman, the true church*, fled into the wilderness from the face of the *serpent*; when the *mystic city of God* began to be trampled under foot by a new race of Gentiles, or idolaters; when the great *Roman beast*, which had been slain by the preaching of the gospel, revived in its bestial character, by setting up an idolatrous spiritual tyrant in the church; and when *the witnesses* began to prophesy in sackcloth. A date which, as Mr. Faber justly observes, can have no connection with the mere acquisition of a *temporal* principality by the pope, but must evidently be the year in which the *bishop of Rome* was constituted supreme head of the church, with the proud title of *bishop of bishops*: for, by such an act, *the whole church* was formally given, by the *head of the Roman empire*, into the hand of the *little horn*. This was the year 606, when the reigning emperor, Phocas, the representative of the *sixth head of the beast*, declared Pope Boniface to be *universal bishop*; at which time, the saints being delivered into his hand, the twelve hundred and sixty years of the apostacy, in its *public and dominant* capacity, commenced.

Verses 3-6. *And I will give power unto my two witnesses*—Here God promises to raise up some true and faithful witnesses to preach and protest against the innovations and inventions which he foresaw would corrupt Christianity, especially in the western parts of Europe. "*Of these witnesses,*" says Bishop Newton, "*there should be, though but a small, yet a competent number; and it was a sufficient reason for making them two witnesses, because*

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A. M. 4100. 4 These are the ^k two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5 And if any man will hurt them, ^l fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: ^m and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6 These ⁿ have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and ^o have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7 And when they ^p shall have finished their

^k Psa. lii. 8; Jer. xi. 16; Zech. iv. 3, 11, 14.—^l 2 Kings i. 10, 12; Jer. i. 10; v. 14; Ezek. xliii. 3; Hos. vi. 5.—^m Num. xvi. 29.—ⁿ 1 Kings xvii. 1; James v. 16, 17.—^o Exod. vii. 19.—^p Luke xiii. 32.

that is the number required by the law, and approved by the gospel, Deut. xix. 15; Matt. xviii. 16; and upon former occasions two have often been joined in commission, as Moses and Aaron in Egypt, Elijah and Elisha in the apostacy of the ten tribes, and Zerubbabel and Joshua after the Babylonish captivity, to whom these witnesses are particularly compared. Our Saviour himself sent forth his disciples, (Luke x. 1,) *two and two*: and it hath been observed also, that the principal reformers have usually appeared, as it were, in pairs; as the Waldenses and Albigenes, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, Luther and Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley, and their followers. Not that I conceive that any two particular men, or two particular churches, were intended by this prophecy; but only that there should be some in every age, though but a few in number, who should bear witness to the truth, and declare against the iniquity and idolatry of their times. They should not be discouraged even by persecution and oppression, but, though *clothed in sackcloth*, and living in a mourning and afflicted state, should yet *prophesy*—Should yet preach the sincere word of God, and denounce the divine judgments against the reigning idolatry and wickedness: and this they should continue to do, as long as the grand corruption itself should last, for the space of twelve hundred and sixty *days*, which is the same space of time with the *forty and two months*, before mentioned, the period assigned for the tyranny and idolatry of the Church of Rome. The *witnesses*, therefore, cannot be any two men, or any two churches, but must be a succession of men, and a succession of churches.”

A character is then given of these witnesses, and of the power and effect of their preaching. *These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks, &c.*, verse 4—That is, they, like Zerubbabel and Joshua, (Zech. iv.,) are the great instructors and enlighteners of the church. *Fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies*, verse 5—That is, they are like unto Moses and Elijah, (Num. xvi.; 2 Kings i.,) who called for fire upon their adversaries. But their fire was real, this is symbolical,

testimony, ^q the beast that ascendeth ^r out of the bottomless pit ^s shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of ^t the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, ^u where also our Lord was crucified.

9 ^v And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, ^w and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10 ^x And they that dwell upon the earth shall

^q Chapter xiii. 11; xvii. 8.—^r Chap. ix. 2.—^s Dan. vii. 21; Zech. xiv. 2.—^t Chap. xiv. 8; xvii. 1, 5; xviii. 10.—^u Heb. xiii. 12; Chap. xviii. 24.—^v Chap. xvii. 15.—^w Psa. lxxix. 2, 3.—^x Chap. xii. 12; xiii. 8.

and *proceedeth out of the mouth* of the witnesses, denouncing the divine vengeance on the corrupters and opposers of true religion; much in the same manner as it was said to Jeremiah, (chap. v. 14.) *I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not, &c.*, verse 6—That is, they are like Elijah, who foretold a want of rain in the days of Ahab, (1 Kings xvii. 1; James v. 17.) *and it rained not on the earth for the space of three years and six months*, which, mystically understood, is the same space of time as *the forty and two months*, and the *twelve hundred and sixty days*, which are allotted for the prophesying of the witnesses. During this time the divine protection and blessing shall be withheld from those men who neglect and despise their preaching and doctrine. *They have also power over the waters, &c.*—That is, they are like Moses and Aaron, who inflicted these plagues on Egypt; and they may be said to *smite the earth with the plagues* which they denounce; for, in Scripture language, the prophets are often said to do those things which they declare and foretel. But it is most highly probable that these particulars will receive a more literal accomplishment when the plagues of God, and the vials of his wrath (chap. xvi.) shall be fully poured out upon men, in consequence of their having so long resisted the testimony of the witnesses. Their cause and the cause of truth will finally be avenged on all their enemies.

Verses 7–14. *When they shall have finished their testimony, &c.*—After the description of the power and office of the witnesses, follows a prediction of those things which shall befall them at the latter end of their ministry; and their passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, are copied from our Saviour's, who is emphatically styled, (chap. iii. 14,) *the faithful and true Witness*; but with this difference, that his were real, theirs are figurative and mystical. *And when they shall have finished—Orav τελεσσω, when they shall be about finishing their testimony*, verse 7; *the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss*—The tyrannical power of Rome, of which

A. M. 4100. rejoice over them, and make merry,
A. D. 96. * and shall send gifts one to another ;

^b because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 ^c And after three days and a half ^d the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet ; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. * And

^a Esth. ix. 19, 22. — ^b Chap. xvi. 10. — ^c Verse 9. — ^d Ezek. xxxvii. 5, 9, 10, 14. — ^e Isa. xiv. 13 ; Chap. xli. 5. — ^f Isa. li. 8 ; Acts i. 9. — ^g 2 Kings ii. 1, 5, 7.

we shall hear more hereafter ; *shall make war against them, and shall overcome and kill them*—*The beast indeed shall make war against them* all the time that they are performing their ministry ; but when they shall be near finishing it, *he shall so make war against them as to overcome them, and kill them*. They shall be subdued and suppressed, be degraded from all power and authority, be deprived of all offices and functions, and be politically dead, if not naturally so. In this low and abject state they shall lie some time, (verse 8,) *in the street of the great city*—In some conspicuous place within the jurisdiction of Rome ; *which spiritually is called Sodom*—For corruption of manners ; *and Egypt*—For tyranny and oppression of the people of God ; *where also our Lord was crucified spiritually*—Being crucified afresh in the sufferings of his faithful martyrs. Nay, to show the greater indignity and cruelty to the martyrs, *their dead bodies* shall not only be publicly exposed, (verse 9,) but they shall be denied even the common privilege of burial, which is the case of many Protestants in Popish countries ; and their enemies *shall rejoice and insult over them*, (verse 10,) *and shall send mutual presents and congratulations one to another* for their deliverance from these tormentors, whose life and doctrine were a continual reproach to them. But *after three days and a half*, (verse 11,) that is, in the prophetic style, *after three years and a half*, for no less time is requisite for all these transactions, they shall be raised again by *the Spirit of God* ; and (verse 12) shall *ascend up to heaven*—They shall not only be restored to their pristine state, but shall be further promoted to dignity and honour ; and that by *a great voice from heaven*—By the voice of public authority. *At the same hour there shall be a great earthquake*—There shall be commotions in the world ; and *the tenth part of the city shall fall*—As an omen and earnest of a still greater fall ; and *seven thousand names of men*, or seven thousand men of name, shall be *slain* ; and the remainder, in their fright and fear, shall acknowledge the great power of God.

Some interpreters are of opinion that this prophecy, of *the death and resurrection of the witnesses*, received its completion in the case of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who were *two faithful witnesses* and martyrs of the blessed Jesus, being condemned

they ascended up to heaven ^f in a ^g cloud ; ^h and their enemies beheld ⁱ them. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

13 And the same hour ^b was there a great earthquake, ⁱ and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain ³ of men seven thousand : and the remnant were affrighted, ^k and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 ^l The second wo is past ; *and behold*, the third wo cometh quickly.

^b Chap. vi. 12. — ^c Chap. xvi. 19. — ^d Gr. names of men, Chap. iii. 4. — ^e Josh. vii. 19 ; Chap. xiv. 7 ; xv. 4. — ^f Chap. viii. 13 ; ix. 12 ; xv. 1.

to death, and afterward burned for heresy, by the council of Constance. Others refer this prophecy to the Protestants of the league of Smalcald, who were entirely routed by the Emperor Charles V. in the battle of Mulburg, on the 24th of April, 1547, when the two great champions of the Protestants, John Frederic, elector of Saxony, was taken prisoner, and the landgrave of Hesse was forced to surrender himself, and to beg pardon of the emperor. Protestantism was then in a manner suppressed, and the mass restored. The witnesses were *dead*, but *not buried* ; and the Papists *rejoiced over them, and made merry, and sent gifts one to another*. But this joy and triumph of theirs were of no very long continuance ; for in the space of about *three years and a half*, the Protestants were *raised again* at Magdeburg, and defeated and took the duke of Mecklenburg prisoner, in December, 1550. From that time their affairs changed for the better almost every day ; success attended their arms and councils ; and the emperor was obliged, by the treaty of Passau, to allow them the free exercise of their religion, and to readmit them into the imperial chamber, from which they had, ever since the victory of Mulburg, been excluded. Here was indeed a *great earthquake*—A great commotion ; in which many *thousands were slain, and the tenth part of the city fell*—A great part of the German empire renounced the authority, and abandoned the communion of the Church of Rome.

Some again may think this prophecy very applicable to the horrid massacre of the Protestants at Paris, and in other cities of France, begun on the memorable eve of St. Bartholomew's day, 1572. According to the best authors there were slain thirty or forty thousand Huguenots in a few days ; and among them, without doubt, many true witnesses and faithful martyrs of Jesus Christ. *Their dead bodies lay in the streets of the great city* ; one of the greatest cities of Europe ; for they were not suffered to be buried, being the bodies of heretics ; but were dragged through the street, or thrown into the river, or hung upon gibbets, and exposed to public infamy. Great *rejoicings* too were made in the courts of France, Rome, and Spain ; they went in procession to the churches, they returned public thanks to God, they sang *Te Deums*, they celebrated jubilees, they struck medals ; and it was enacted that St. Barthol

A. M. 4100. 15 And ^mthe seventh angel sounded; ^{A. D. 96.} ⁿand there were great voices in heaven, saying, ^oThe kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; ^pand he shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And ^qthe four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, ^rwhich art, and wast, and art to

^m Chap. x. 7.—ⁿ Isa. xxvii. 13; Chap. xvi. 17; xix. 6. ^o Chap. xii. 10.—^p Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14, 18, 27.—^q Chap. iv. 4; v. 8; xix. 4.

omew's day should ever afterward be kept with double pomp and solemnity. But neither was this joy of long continuance; for in little more than *three years and a half*, Henry III., who succeeded his brother Charles, entered into a treaty with the Huguenots, which was concluded and published on the 14th of May, 1576, whereby all the former sentences against them were reversed, and the free and open exercise of their religion was granted to them; they were to be admitted to all honours, dignities, and offices, as well as the Papists. But others again apply this prophecy to the poor Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, who by a cruel edict of their sovereign the duke of Savoy, instigated by the French king, were imprisoned and murdered, or banished in the latter end of the year 1686. They were kindly received and succoured by the Protestant states; and after a while, secretly entering Savoy with their swords in their hands, they regained their ancient possessions with great slaughter of their enemies; and the duke himself, having then left the French interest, granted them a full pardon; and re-established them, by another edict, signed June 4, 1690, just *three years and a half* after their total dissipation. Bishop Lloyd not only understood the prophecy in this manner, but, what is very remarkable, made the application even before the event took place, as Mr. Whiston relates; and upon this ground encouraged a refugee minister, of the Vaudois, whose name was Jordan, to return home; and returning, he heard the joyful news of the deliverance and restitution of his country. These were indeed most barbarous persecutions of the Protestants, both in France and Savoy; and at the same time Popery here in England was advanced to the throne, and threatened an utter subversion of our religion and liberties; but in a little more than *three years and a half*, a happy deliverance was wrought by the glorious revolution. Connected with the witnesses in the valleys of Piedmont, and agreeing in their leading doctrines, in opposition to the Church of Rome, were those called Lollards in England; and many in other countries embraced the same doctrines in those times, and preached or professed them at the hazard of their lives; and great numbers were burned, or put to death in the most cruel manner, for so doing. "The visible assemblies," says Gibbon, "of the Albigeois were extirpated by fire and

come; because thou hast taken ^{A. M. 4100.} ^{A. D. 96.} to thee thy great power, ^rand hast reigned.

18 ^tAnd the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, ^uand the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, ^vsmall and great; ^wand shouldest destroy them which ^xdestroy the earth.

^r Chap. i. 4, 8; iv. 8; xvi. 5.—^s Chap. xix. 6.—^t Verses 2, 9.—^u Dan. vii. 9, 10; Chapter vi. 10.—^v Chapter xix. 5. ^w Chap. xiii. 10; xviii. 6.—^x Or, *corrupt*.

sword; and the bleeding remnant escaped by flight, concealment, or catholic conformity. But the invincible spirit which they had kindled still lived and breathed in the western world. In the state, in the church, and even in the cloister, a latent succession was preserved of the disciples of St. Paul, who protested against the tyranny of Rome, embraced the Bible as the rule of faith, and purified their creed from all the visions of the Gnostic theology. The struggles of Wickliffe in England, and of Huss in Bohemia, were premature and ineffectual; but the names of Zuinglius, Luther, and Calvin, are pronounced with gratitude as the deliverers of nations." A striking testimony this from an enemy of Christianity, to the fulfilment of the divine predictions! At length, "Luther arose, and the Reformation took place; since which time the same testimony to the truth of Christ, and against the errors of antichrist, hath been maintained. Nor does it appear that the term is yet expired; the witnesses are not indeed at present exposed to such terrible sufferings as in former times; but," as Mr. Scott observes, and as Bishop Newton and many other eminent divines have believed, "those scenes may be re-acted before long, for what any man can foreknow; and they have abundant cause to prophesy in sackcloth, on account of the declined state of religion even in the Protestant churches."

Verses 15-18. *And the seventh angel sounded, &c.*—With the sounding of this angel, *the third* wo commences, which is rather implied than expressed, as it will be described more fully hereafter. *The third* wo brought on the inhabitants of the earth, is the ruin and downfall of the antichristian kingdom: and then, and not till then, according to the heavenly chorus, *the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever*—St. John is rapt and hurried away as it were to a view of the happy millennium, without considering the steps preceding and conducting to it. At the same time, *the four and twenty elders*—Or the ministers of the church, (verses 16-18,) are represented as praising and glorifying God, for manifesting his *power and kingdom* more than he had done before. They give likewise an intimation of some succeeding events, as *the anger of the nations, Gog and Magog, (xx. 8,) and the wrath of God, displayed in their destruction, (xx.*

A. M. 4100. 19 And ^a the temple of God was
A. D. 96. opened in heaven, and there was seen
in his temple the ark of his testament: and

^a Chap. xv. 5, 8.—[→] Chap. viii. 5; xvi. 18.

9,) and the rewarding of all the good, small and great, as well as *the punishing of the wicked*. Here we have only a summary account of the circumstances and occurrences of the seventh trumpet, but the particulars will be dilated and enlarged upon hereafter. And thus are we arrived at the consummation of all things, through a series of prophecies, extending from the apostle's days to the end of the world. It is this series which has been our clew to conduct us in our interpretation of these prophecies: and though some of them may be dark and obscure, considered in themselves, yet they receive light and illustration from others preceding and following. All together, they are, as it were, a chain of prophecies, whereof one link depends on and supports another. If any parts remain yet obscure and unsatisfactory, they may perhaps be cleared up by what the apostle himself hath added by way of explanation.

Verse 19. *And the temple of God*—Bishop Newton and Grotius think that this verse should introduce chap. xii., as it appears to begin a new subject. It is

^a there were lightnings, and voices, A. M. 4100
and thunderings, and an earthquake, A. D. 96.
^b and great hail.

^b Chap. xvi. 21.

somewhat like the beginning of Isaiah's vision, (chap. vi. 1,) *I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, &c.* And like the beginning of St. John's prophetic vision, (chap. iv. 1, 2,) *I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven, &c.* This is much in the same spirit; *and the temple of God was opened in heaven, &c.*—That is, more open discoveries were now made, and the mystery of God was revealed to the prophet. *And there were lightnings and voices, &c.*—These are the usual concomitants of the divine presence, and especially at giving new laws and new revelations: see Exod. xx. 16, &c.; Rev. iv. 5; viii. 5. And with as much reason they are made, in this place, the signs and preludes of the revelations and judgments which are to follow. It is no just objection that a new subject is supposed to begin with the conjunction *and*, for this is frequent in the style of the Hebrews; some books, as Numbers, Joshua, the two books of Samuel, and others, begin with *vau*, or *and*; and the same objection would hold against beginning the division with the first verse of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

In this chapter, (1.) *The apostle sees in a vision a woman in travail, watched by a red dragon, that he might devour her offspring, 1-4.* (2.) *She brings forth a son, who is caught up unto God, and the woman flees into the wilderness to a place prepared for her, 5, 6.* (3.) *There is war between Michael and Satan; the former overcomes, and causes great joy in heaven, while a wo is denounced on the inhabitants of the earth on account of Satan's malice and rage, now about to be exercised against them in a peculiar manner, 7-12.* (4.) *The dragon persecutes the woman, but she flies into the wilderness and escapes all his efforts, many and varied as they are, to effect her destruction, 13-17.*

A. M. 4100. **AND** there appeared a great ¹ wonder
A. D. 96. in heaven; a woman clothed
with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and

¹ Or, sign.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

We now come to a second representation of the same third period of prophecy, that is, the state of the church and world in the days of the voice of the seventh angel; or while the woman, who fled into her place in the wilderness, was nourished there for a time, times, and half a time, or three years and a half, equal to forty-two months, which are equal to twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days, the exact time in which the witnesses were to prophesy. As the former representation showed that true religion should be preserved among a few faithful confessors, though in a constant state of severe persecution, so this represents the state of the church under the figure of a woman, persecuted so as to flee into desert places to hide herself; yet preserved and fed

upon her head a crown of twelve A. M. 4100.
stars: A. D. 96.

2 And she, being with child, cried, ^a tra-

^a Isa. lxvi. 7; Gal. iv. 19.

there, notwithstanding all endeavours of a furious serpent, ready to destroy her. This plainly describes an afflicted and persecuted state of the church in general during this period; in which false and idolatrous worship shall be in great power, and the faithful profession of the true religion shall expose men to great danger; that, however, the true worshippers of God shall still be preserved, though in an obscure state, and be enabled, notwithstanding all opposition, to keep and maintain the truth unto the end. See Lowman. Most of the best commentators, says Bishop Newton, divide the Apocalypse into two parts, *the book, βιβλιον*, sealed with seven seals, and *βιβλιαριδιον*, a little book, as it is called several times. But it happens unluckily, that according to their division the lesser book is made to contain as much or more

A. M. 4100. vailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. A. D. 96.

3 And there appeared another ²wonder in heaven; and behold, ^ba great red dragon, ^chaving seven heads and ten horns, ^dand seven crowns upon his heads.

^a Or, sign. — ^b Chap. xvii. 3. — ^c Chap. xvii. 9, 10. — ^d Chap. xiii. 1. — ^e Chap. ix. 10, 19.

than the larger; whereas in truth the little book is nothing more than a part of the sealed book, and is added as an appendix to it. If we were to divide the Revelation as they would have it divided, into two parts, the former of which should end with chap. ix. and the latter begin with chap. x., the whole frame of the book would be disjointed, and things would be separated which are plainly connected together, and dependant on one another. We, however, also, continues the bishop, would divide the Revelation into two parts, or rather, the book so divides itself. For the former part proceeds, as we have seen, in a regular and successive series, from the apostle's days to the consummation of all things. Nothing can be added, but it must fall somewhere or other within the compass of this period; it must in some measure be a resumption of the same subjects, and this latter part may most properly be considered as an enlargement and illustration of the former. Several things, which were only touched upon, and delivered in dark hints before, required to be more copiously handled, and placed in a stronger light. It was said that *the beast should make war against the witnesses, and overcome them*; but who or what the *beast* is, we may reasonably conjecture indeed, but the apostle himself will more surely explain. The transactions of the seventh trumpet are all summed up and comprised in a few verses, but we shall see the particulars branched out and enlarged into as many chapters. In short, this latter part is designed as a supplement to the former, to complete what was deficient, to explain what was dubious, to illustrate what was obscure; and as the former described more the destinies of the Roman empire, so this latter relates more to the fates of the Christian Church.

Verses 1-5. *And there appeared a woman clothed with the sun*—"It was a well-known custom," says Lowman, "at the time of this prophecy, to represent the several virtues, and public societies, by the figure of a woman in some peculiar dress, many of which are to be seen in the Roman coins; in particular, *Salus*, the emblem of security and protection, is represented as a woman standing upon a globe, to represent the safety and security of the world under the emperor's care. The consecration of the Roman emperors is expressed in their coins by a moon and stars, as in two of Faustina, to express a degree of glory superior to any on earth. Never was any image more expressive of honour and dignity than this in the vision: to stand in the midst of a glory made by the beams of the sun; and upon the moon, as above the low condition of this sublunary world; to wear a crown set with the stars of heaven, as jewels,

4 And ^ehis tail drew the third part ^fof the stars of heaven, ^gand did ^hcast them to the earth: and the dragon stood ⁱbefore the woman which was ready to be delivered, ^jfor to devour her child as soon as it was born.

^f Chap. xvii. 18. — ^g Dan. viii. 10. — ^h Verse 2. — ⁱ Exod. i. 16.

is something more sublime than any thing where- by antiquity has represented their societies, their virtues, or their deities." Bishop Newton explains this, and the five following verses, as follows: "St. John resumes his subject from the beginning, and represents the church (verses 1, 2) as a woman, and a mother bearing children unto Christ. She is *clothed with the sun*, invested with the rays of Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness; having *the moon*—The Jewish new moons and festivals, as well as all sublunary things; *under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars*—An emblem of her being under the light and guidance of the twelve apostles. *And she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered*—St. Paul hath made use of the same metaphor, and applied it to his preaching and propagating of the gospel, in the midst of tribulation and persecution, Gal. iv. 19. But the words of St. John are much stronger, and more emphatically express the pangs and struggles which the church endured from the first publication of the gospel to the time of Constantine the Great, when she was in some measure eased of her pains, and brought forth a deliverer. At the same time, *there appeared a great red dragon*—Which is the well-known sign or symbol of the devil and Satan, and of his agents and instruments. We find the kings and people of Egypt, who were the great persecutors of the primitive church of Israel, distinguished by this title in Psa. lxxiv. 13; Isa. li. 9; Ezek. xxix. 3; and with as much reason and propriety may the people and emperors of Rome, who were the great persecutors of the primitive church of Christ, be called by the same name, as they were actuated by the same principle. For that the Roman empire was here figured, the characters and attributes of the dragon plainly evince. *He is a great red dragon*; and purple or scarlet was the distinguishing colour of the Roman emperors, consuls, and generals; as it hath been since of the popes and cardinals. *His seven heads*, as the angel afterward (chap. xvii. 9, 10) explains the vision, allude to the seven mountains upon which Rome was built, and to the seven forms of government which successively prevailed there. *His ten horns* typify the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided; and the *seven crowns upon his heads* denote, that at this time the imperial power was in Rome, the 'high city, seated on seven hills, which presides over the whole world,' as Propertius describes it, book iii. *His tail also (verse 4) drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth*—That is, he subjected the third part of the princes

A. M. 4100. 5 And she brought forth a man-child, ^k who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne.

6 And ^l the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there ^m a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

7 *And there was war in heaven : ⁿ Michael and his angels fought ^o against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And ^p the great dragon was cast out, ^q that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, ^r which deceiveth the whole world : ^s he was cast out

^k Psa. ii. 9 ; Chap. ii. 27 ; xix. 15.—^l Verse 4.—^m Chap. xi. 3.—ⁿ St. Michael's Day, epistle, verse 7 to verse 13. ^o Dan. x. 13, 21 ; xii. 1.—^p Verse 3 ; Chap. xx. 2.—^q Luke x. 18 ; John xii. 31.—^r Gen. iii. 1, 4 ; Chap. xx. 2.

and potentates of the earth ; and the Roman empire, as we have seen before, is represented as the third part of the world. *He stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born*—And the Roman emperors and magistrates kept a jealous, watchful eye, over the Christians from the beginning. As Pharaoh laid snares for the male children of the Hebrews, and Herod for the infant Christ, the son of Mary ; so did the Roman dragon for the mystic Christ, the son of the church, that he might destroy him even in his infancy. But notwithstanding the jealousy of the Romans, the gospel was widely diffused and propagated, and the church brought many children unto Christ ; and, in time, such as were promoted to the empire. *She brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron*, verse 5—It was predicted that Christ should rule over the nations, Psa. ii. 9 ; but Christ, who is himself invisible in the heavens, ruleth visibly in Christian magistrates, princes, and emperors. It was therefore promised before, to Christians in general, (chap. ii. 26, 27,) *He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, &c.* But it should seem that Constantine was here particularly intended, for whose life the dragon Galerius laid many snares, but he providentially escaped them all ; and notwithstanding all opposition, was caught up unto the throne of God—Was not only secured by the divine protection, but was advanced to the imperial throne, called *the throne of God* ; for, (Rom. xiii. 1,) *there is no power but of God, &c.* He too ruled all nations with a rod of iron ; for he had not only the Romans, who before had persecuted the church, under his dominion, but also subdued the Scythians, Sarmatians, and other barbarous nations, who had never before been subject to the Roman empire ; and, as Spanheim informs us, there are still extant medals and coins of his with

b

into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ^t Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down ^u which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And ^v they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ; ^w and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12 Therefore ^x rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. ^y Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea ! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, ^z because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

^t Chap. xx. 3.—^u Chap. ix. 1.—^v Chap. xi. 15 ; xix. 1. ^w Job i. 9 ; ii. 5 ; Zech. iii. 1.—^x Rom. viii. 33, 34, 37 ; xvi. 20.—^y Luke xiv. 26.—^z Psa. xcvi. 11 ; Isa. xlix. 13 ; Chap. xviii. 20.—^a Chap. viii. 13 ; xi. 10.—^b Chap. x. 6.

these inscriptions : *The subduer of the barbarous nations ; the conqueror of all nations ; everywhere a conqueror ; and the like.* What is added, verse 6, *of the woman's fleeing into the wilderness for a thousand two hundred and threescore days*, is said by way of prolepsis or anticipation. For the war in heaven between Michael and the dragon, and other subsequent events, were prior, in order of time, to the flight of the woman into the wilderness ; but before the prophet passes on to a new subject, he gives a general account of what happened to the woman afterward, and enters more into the particulars in their proper place.

Verses 7–12. *And there was war in heaven, &c.*—It might reasonably be presumed that all the powers of idolatry would be strenuously exerted against the establishment of Christianity, and especially against the establishment of a Christian on the imperial throne : and these struggles and contentions between the heathen and the Christian religions are here represented by *war in heaven*, between the angels of darkness and angels of light. Michael was (Dan. x. 21 ; xii. 1) the tutelar angel and protector of the Jewish Church. He performs here the same office for the Christian Church. He and the good angels, who are sent forth (Heb. i. 14) *to minister to the heirs of salvation*, were the invisible agents on one side, as the devil and his evil agents were on the other. The visible actors in the cause of Christianity were the believing emperors and ministers of the word, the martyrs and confessors ; and in support of idolatry, were the persecuting emperors and heathen magistrates, together with the whole train of priests and sophists. This contest lasted several years, and the final issue of it was, (verses 8, 9,) that the Christian prevailed over the heathen religion ; the heathen were deposed from all rule and authority, and the Christians were advanced to dominion and empire in their stead. Our Saviour said unto his disciples,

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A. M. 4100. 13 And when the dragon saw that
A. D. 96. he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted ° the woman which brought forth the man-child.

14 ^d And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, ° that she might fly ^f into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished ^g for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent ^h cast out of his mouth wa-

° Verse 5.—^d Exod. xix. 4.—° Verse 6.—^f Chap. xvii. 3.
^g Dan. vii. 25; xii. 7.—^h Isa. lix. 19.

casting devils out of the bodies of men, (Luke x. 18,) *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* In the same figure Satan fell from heaven, and *was cast out into the earth*—When he was thrust out of the imperial throne; and his angels were cast out with him—Not only all the heathen priests and officers, civil and military, were cashiered, but their very gods and demons, who before were adored, became the subjects of contempt and execration. It is very remarkable that Constantine himself, and the Christians of his time, described his conquests under the same image, as if they had understood that this prophecy had received its accomplishment in him. Moreover, a picture of Constantine was set up over the palace gate, with the cross over his head, and under his feet the great enemy of mankind, who persecuted the church by the means of impious tyrants, in the form of a dragon, transfixed with a dart through the midst of his body, and falling headlong into the depth of the sea: in allusion, it is said expressly, to the divine oracles in the books of the prophets, where that evil spirit is called the dragon, and the crooked serpent. Upon this victory of the church there is introduced (verse 10) a triumphant hymn of thanksgiving for the depression of idolatry and exaltation of true religion. It was not by temporal means or arms that the Christians obtained this victory, (verse 11,) but by spiritual; by the merits and death of their Redeemer, by their constant profession of the truth, and by their patient suffering of all kinds of tortures, even unto death: and the blood of the martyrs hath been often called *the seed of the church*. This victory was indeed matter of joy and triumph to the blessed angels and glorified saints in heaven, (verse 12,) by whose sufferings it was in great measure obtained; but still new woes are threatened to the inhabitants of the earth; for, though the dragon was deposed, yet was he not destroyed; though idolatry was depressed, yet was it not wholly suppressed; there were still many pagans intermixed with the Christians, and the devil would incite fresh troubles and disturbances on earth, because he knew that he had but a short time.—That is, it would not be long before the pagan religion should be totally abolished, and the Christian religion prevail in all the Roman empire.

Verses 13–17. And when the dragon saw that he

ter as a flood, after the woman, that he A. M. 4100
might cause her to be carried away of A. D. 96.
the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, ⁱ and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, ^k which keep the commandments of God, and have ^l the testimony of Jesus Christ.

ⁱ Gen. iii. 15; Chap. xi. 7; xiii. 7.—^k Chap. xiv. 12.—^l 1 Cor. ii. 1; 1 John v. 10; Chap. i. 2, 9; vi. 9; xx. 4.

was cast unto the earth, &c.—When the dragon was thus deposed from the imperial throne, and *cast unto the earth*, (verse 13,) he still continued to persecute the church with equal malice, though not with equal power. He made several attempts to restore the pagan idolatry in the reign of Constantine, and afterward in the reign of Julian; he traduced and abused the Christian religion by such writers as Hierocles, Libanius, and others of the same stamp and character; he rent and troubled the church with heresies and schisms; he stirred up the favourers of the Arians to persecute and destroy the orthodox Christians. But the church was still under the protection of the empire, (verse 14,) and to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle—As God said to the children of Israel, (Exod. xix. 4.) *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, &c.*; so the church was supported and carried, as it were, on eagles' wings: but the similitude is the more proper in this case, an eagle being the Roman ensign, and the two wings alluding probably to the division that was then made of the eastern and the western empire. In this manner was the church protected, and these wings were given, that she might flee into the wilderness, into a place of retirement and security, from the face of the serpent—Not that she fled into the wilderness at that time, but several years afterward; and there she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time—That is, three prophetic years and a half, which is the same period with the twelve hundred and sixty days, or years, before mentioned. So long the church is to remain in a desolate and afflicted state, during the reign of antichrist; as Elijah, while idolatry and famine prevailed in Israel, was secretly fed and nourished three years and six months in the wilderness. But before the woman fled into the wilderness, the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, (verse 15,) with intent to wash her away. Waters, in the style of the Apocalypse, (chap. xvii. 16,) signify peoples and nations; so that here was a great inundation of various nations excited by the dragon, or the friends and patrons of the old idolatry, to oppress and overwhelm the Christian religion. Such appeared plainly to have been the design of the dragon, when Stilicho, prime minister of the Emperor Honorius, invited the barbarous heathen na-

tions, the Goths, Alans, Sueves, and Vandals, to invade the Roman empire, hoping by their means to raise his son Eucherius to the throne, who from a boy was an enemy to the Christians, and threatened to signalize the beginning of his reign with the restoration of the pagan, and abolition of the Christian religion. Nothing indeed was more likely to produce the ruin and utter subversion of the Christian Church, than the irruptions of so many barbarous heathen nations into the Roman empire. But the event proved contrary to human appearance and expectation: *the earth swallowed up the flood*, verse 16—The barbarians were rather swallowed up by the Romans, than the Romans by the barbarians; the heathen conquerors, instead of imposing their

own, submitted to the religion of the conquered Christians; and they not only embraced the religion, but affected even the laws, the manners, the customs, the language, and the very name of Romans. This course not succeeding according to probable expectation, the dragon did not therefore desist from his purpose, (verse 17,) but only took another method of persecuting the true sons of the church, as we shall see in the next chapter. It is said that he *went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus*—Which implies that at this time there was only a *remnant*; that corruptions were greatly increased, and *the faithful were diminished from among the children of men*.

CHAPTER XIII.

Here, (1.) *The apostle sees in vision a beast rising out of the sea, a description of which, as also of its power, rage, and success is given, 1-10.* (2.) *He sees a second beast coming up out of the earth, exercising all the power of the former beast, causing an image of it to be made, and compelling all to worship it, 11-17.* (3.) *The number of the beast is given, 18.*

A. M. 4100. **AND I** stood upon the sand of the
A. D. 96. sea, and saw ^a a beast rise up out of the sea, ^b having seven heads and ten horns,

^a Dan. vii. 2, 7.—^b Chap. xii. 3; xvii. 3, 9, 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

In this chapter we have a further account of the state of the church and the world in this third period. The representation of the wild beasts in this vision refers to the same times with the two former visions of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and the woman fleeing into the wilderness. Power is given unto the beast to continue, or to make war and prevail, forty-two months, verse 5. This vision gives a more distinct account of the manner and means by which the true church and worshippers of God should be persecuted, and so greatly oppressed, as is represented by the woman's fleeing into the wilderness, and by slaying the witnesses. So that this representation, in conjunction with the two former, will afford us a sufficient description of the state of providence and the church, with the useful lessons of caution, patience, and faithfulness in times of great corruption and great danger, which are the principal intentions of the Spirit of prophecy, in the whole of these revelations. See *Louman*.

Verses 1-4. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, &c.*—Here the *beast* is described at large, who was only mentioned before, chap. xi. 7; and a *beast*, in the prophetic style, is a tyrannical idolatrous empire. The kingdom of God and of Christ is never represented under the image of a *beast*. As Daniel (chap. vii. 2, 3) beheld *four great beasts*, representing the four great empires, *come up from a stormy sea*, that is, from the commotions of the world; so St. John (verse 1) saw this *beast* in like manner *rise up out of the sea*. He was said before (chap. xi. 7)

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and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the ¹ name of blasphemy. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

¹ Or, names, Chap. xvii. 3.

to ascend out of the abyss, or bottomless pit; and it is said afterward, (chap. xvii. 8,) that he shall ascend out of the abyss, or bottomless pit; and here he is said to ascend out of the sea; so that the sea and abyss, or bottomless pit, are in these passages the same. No doubt is to be made that this beast was designed to represent the Roman empire; for thus far both ancients and moderns, Papists and Protestants, are agreed: the only controversy is, whether it was Rome, pagan or Christian, imperial or papal.

St. John saw this *beast rising* out of the sea, but the Roman empire was risen and established long before St. John's time; and therefore this must be the Roman empire, not in its then present, but in some future shape and form; and it arose in another shape and form after it was broken to pieces by the incursions of the northern nations. The *beast hath seven heads and ten horns*—Which are the well-known marks of the Roman empire, the *seven heads* alluding to the seven mountains whereon Rome was seated, and to the seven forms of government which successively prevailed there; and the *ten horns* signifying the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided. It is remarkable that the dragon had *seven crowns upon his heads*, but the *beast hath upon his horns ten crowns*—So that there had been, in the mean while, a revolution of power from the heads of the dragon to the horns of the beast, and the sovereignty, which before was exercised by Rome alone, was now transferred and divided among ten kingdoms; but the Roman empire was not divided into ten kingdoms till after it was become

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A. M. 4100. 2 ° And the beast which I saw was
A. D. 96. like unto a leopard, ^d and his feet were
as *the feet* of a bear, ° and his mouth as the
mouth of a lion: and ^f the dragon gave him
his power, ° and his seat, ^h and great authority.

3 And I saw one of his heads ⁱ as it were
² wounded to death; and his deadly wound was
healed: and ^k all the world wondered after the
beast.

° Dan. vii. 6.—^d Dan. vii. 5.—^e Dan. vii. 4.—^f Ch. xii. 9.
¶ Ch. xvi. 10.—^h Ch. xii. 4.—ⁱ Ver. 12, 14.—^j Gr. slain.

Christian. Although the heads had lost their crowns, yet still they retained *the names of blasphemy*—In all its heads, in all its forms of government, Rome was still guilty of idolatry and blasphemy. Imperial Rome was called, and delighted to be called, *The eternal city; the heavenly city; the goddess of the earth; the goddess*: and had her temples and altars, with incense and sacrifices offered up to her: and how the papal Rome likewise hath arrogated to herself divine titles and honours will be shown hereafter.

As Daniel's fourth beast (chap. vii. 6) was without a name, and *devoured and brake in pieces* the three former; so this beast (verse 2) is also without a name, and partakes of the nature and qualities of the three former; having the body of a leopard—Which was the third beast, or Grecian empire; and *the feet of a bear*—Which was the second beast, or Persian empire; and *the mouth of a lion*—Which was the first beast, or Babylonian empire: and consequently this must be the same as Daniel's fourth beast, or the Roman empire. But still it is not the same beast, the same empire entirely, but with some variation. *And the dragon gave him his power*—*Δυναμιν*, or his armies; and *his seat*—*Θρονον*, or his imperial throne; and *great authority*—Or jurisdiction over all the parts of his empire. *The beast*, therefore, is the successor and substitute of the dragon, or of the idolatrous heathen Roman empire: and what other idolatrous power hath succeeded to the heathen emperors in Rome, all the world is a judge and a witness. *The dragon*, having failed in his purpose of restoring the old heathen idolatry, delegates his power to *the beast*, and thereby introduces a new species of idolatry, nominally different, but essentially the same, the worship of angels and saints, instead of the gods and demigods of antiquity.

Another mark, whereby the beast is peculiarly distinguished, is, (verse 3,) *one of his heads as it were wounded to death*—It will appear hereafter, that this head was the sixth head, for *five were fallen* (chap. xvii. 10) before St. John's time: and the sixth head was that of the Cesars, or emperors, there having been before, kings, and consuls, and dictators, and decemvirs, and military tribunes, with consular authority. The sixth head was *as it were wounded to death*, when the Roman empire was overturned by the northern nations, and an end was put to the very name of emperor in Momyllus Augustulus; or

4 And they worshipped the dragon A. M. 4100.
which gave power unto the beast: A. D. 96.
and they worshipped the beast, saying, ^l Who
is like unto the beast? who is able to make
war with him?

5 And there was given unto him ^m a mouth
speaking great things and blasphemies; and
power was given unto him ³ to continue ⁿ forty
and two months.

^k Chap. xvii. 8.—^l Chap. xviii. 18.—^m Dan. vii. 8, 11, 25;
xi. 36.—ⁿ Or, to make war.—^o Chap. xi. 2; xii. 6.

rather, as the government of the Gothic kings was much the same as that of the emperors, with only a change of the name, this head was more effectually *wounded to death*, when Rome was reduced to a poor dukedom, and made tributary to the exarchate of Ravenna. But not only one of his heads was, as it were, wounded to death, but *his deadly wound was healed*—If it was the sixth head which was wounded, that wound could not be healed by the rising of the seventh head; the same head which was wounded must be healed: and this was effected by the pope and people of Rome revolting from the exarch of Ravenna, and proclaiming *Charles the Great* Augustus and emperor of the Romans. Here the wounded imperial head was *healed* again, and hath subsisted ever since. At this time, partly through the pope, and partly through the emperor, supporting and strengthening each other, the Roman name again became formidable: *and all the world wondered after the beast*; and (verse 4) *they worshipped the dragon, which gave power unto the beast*; and *they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?*—No kingdom or empire was like that of the beast; it had no parallel upon earth; and it was in vain for any to *resist* or *oppose* it; it prevailed and triumphed over all; and *all the world*, in submitting thus to the religion of the beast, did in effect submit again to the religion of the dragon, it being the old idolatry with new names. For the worshipping of demons and idols is in effect the worshipping of devils.

Verses 5–8. *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things*—This expression seems to be taken from the description of the little horn in Daniel's vision, (chap. vii. 8,) and is explained, verse 11, by the voice of the great words which the horn spake. It must be observed, however, that it is of the *secular* empire that this is spoken, which empire is here considered as under the influence of the ecclesiastical power of Rome, and as being merely its agent, and especially the agent of the pope, the speaking image of the beast. And it is well known what blasphemous and extravagant claims of authority and power have been made by him, who has been styled, *His Holiness—Infallible—Sovereign of kings and kingdoms—Christ's Vicegerent—yea, God upon earth*. Power also has been given unto him to continue—Greek, *ποιησαι*, to practise, prevail, and prosper, *forty and two months*—It doth not fol-

A. M. 4100. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, ° and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7 And it was given unto him P to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: ° and power was given him over all kin-

° John i. 14; Col. ii. 9.—P Dan. vii. 21; Chap. xi. 7; xii. 17. ° Chap. xi. 18; xvii. 15.

low from this that the beast is to continue to exist for no longer a term, but he is to *practise*, to prosper, and prevail, for that term: as the holy city (chap. xi. 2) is to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles forty and two months, which are the twelve hundred and sixty days, or years, of the reign of antichrist. But if by the beast were understood the *heathen* Roman empire, that empire, instead of subsisting twelve hundred and sixty, did not subsist four hundred years after the date of this prophecy. *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy, &c.*—This newly-erected government of Rome used the authority it had obtained in making and publishing constitutions for the establishment of idolatry, in contempt of God and his true worship, and by all methods of oppression and persecution, forcing the church to comply with them, and yield obedience to them. "Any acts of idolatrous worship," says Lowman, "may well be expressed by *blaspheming God* and his name, as they deny to the true God his distinguishing honour, and give it to creatures, whether to images, saints, or angels. The church, as it is called *the temple of God*, the place of God's presence, is properly also called *his tabernacle*." By *them that dwell in heaven*, Grotius understands all saints, all Christians, whose conversation is in heaven. The Christian Church is called, *the Jerusalem which is above*, Gal. iv. 26; and the governors of it are styled *angels*, Rev. i. 20. *To blaspheme them*, therefore, *that dwell in heaven*, will signify the contempt and injurious manner with which the new government of Rome shall treat the true worshippers of God, as well as God himself and his name. So much for his *blasphemies*; nor are his *exploits* less extraordinary. *It was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them*—The power of this new Roman government became so great, by divine permission, that it prevailed against the worshippers of God, either to force them to a compliance with the corruptions established by its authority, or to persecute them for their constancy; and this oppressive power was extended far and wide, even *over all*, or many, *kindreds, and tongues, and nations*—Even in all the countries of the western Roman empire. And who can make any computation, or even frame any conception of the numbers of pious Christians who have fallen a sacrifice to the bigotry and cruelty of Rome, or this new Roman government? Mede, upon the place, hath observed from good authority, that in the war with the Albigenes and Waldenses, there perished of these poor creatures in France alone a *million!* From

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dreds, and tongues, and nations. A. M. 4100.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, ° whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain ° from the foundation of the world.

9 ° If any man have an ear, let him hear.

° Exod. xxxii. 32; Dan. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 3; Chap. iii. 5; xx. 12, 15; xxi. 27.—° Chap. xvii. 8.—° Chap. ii. 7.

the first institution of the Jesuits to A. D. 1480, that is, in little more than thirty years, nine hundred thousand orthodox Christians were slain. In the Netherlands alone the duke of Alva boasted that within a few years he had despatched to the amount of thirty thousand persons, and those all by the hands of the common executioner. In the space of scarce thirty years, the inquisition destroyed, by various kinds of torture, one hundred and fifty thousand Christians. Sanders himself confesses that an innumerable multitude of Lollards and Sacramentarians were burnt throughout all Europe, who yet, he says, were not put to death by the pope and bishops, but by the civil magistrates; which perfectly agrees with this prophecy, for it is of the *secular* beast that it is said, *He shall make war with the saints, and overcome them*. No wonder that by these means he should obtain a kind of universal authority over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. Let the Romanists boast, therefore, that theirs is the catholic church, and universal empire: this is so far from being any evidence of the truth, that it is the very brand infixed by the Spirit of prophecy. *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him*—All the inhabitants of the earth, to which this new power shall reach, shall be prevailed upon to receive his idolatrous constitutions, and yield obedience to his tyrannical authority: *whose names are not written in the book of life, &c.*—Except such true and faithful servants of God as are enrolled in the registers of heaven, according to the promises of Christ's gospel, who from the beginning was the true propitiation and mediator of acceptance with God, and of the blessings consequent thereon. It has been justly observed by Mr. Faber, that there is a great inaccuracy in Bishop Newton's exposition of the above paragraph, in that he seems to confound this beast, or the *secular* empire, in all the ten kingdoms, with the *little* horn predicted by Daniel, which accords with the second beast afterward mentioned. As the secular power, however, executed the persecuting decree of the ecclesiastical power, and gave its power to that beast, the things represented by Bishop Newton as accomplishing this prophecy did indeed accomplish it, though he has not marked the manner in which this was done.

Verses 9, 10. *If any man have an ear, let him hear*—It was customary with our Saviour, when he would have his auditors to pay a particular attention to what he had been saying, to add, *He who hath ears to hear, let him hear*. St. John repeats the same admonition at the end of each of the seven

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A. M. 4100. 10 ^a He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: ^a he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. ^b Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

11 And I beheld another beast ^a coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

^a Isa. xxxiii. 1.—^b Gen. ix. 6; Matt. xxvi. 52.—^c Chap. xiv. 12.—^d Chap. xi. 7.—^e Verse 3.

epistles to the seven churches of Asia, and here in the conclusion of his description of the beast, *If any man have an ear, let him hear*: and certainly the description of the beast is deserving of the highest attention upon many accounts, and particularly because the right interpretation of this book turns upon it, as one of its main hinges. It is added, by way of consolation to the church, that these enemies of God and of Christ, represented under the character of the beast, shall suffer the law of retaliation, and be as remarkably punished and tormented themselves, as they punished and tormented others, verse 10. *He who leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity; he who killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword*—Such a promise might administer some comfort; and indeed it would be wanted, for the patience and the faith of the saints would be tried to the utmost during the reign of the beast. *Here is the patience and the faith of the saints*—Of all the trials and persecutions of the church this would be the most severe, and exceed those of the primitive times, both in degree and in duration.

Verses 11, 12. *And I beheld another beast, &c.*—From the description of the ten-horned beast, or Roman state in general, the prophet passeth to that of the two-horned beast, or Roman Church in particular. *The beast with ten crowned horns* is the Roman empire, as divided into ten kingdoms; *the beast with two horns like a lamb* is the Roman hierarchy, or body of the clergy, regular and secular. This beast is otherwise called the *false prophet*; than which there cannot be a stronger or plainer argument to prove that false doctors or teachers were particularly designed. For the *false prophet*, no more than *the beast*, is a single man, but a body or succession of men, propagating false doctrines, and teaching lies for sacred truths. As the first beast rose up out of the sea, that is, out of the wars and tumults of the world, so this beast groweth up out of the earth—Like plants, silently and without noise; and the greatest prelates have often been raised from monks, and men of the lowest birth. *He had two horns like a lamb*—He had, both regular and secular, the appearance of a lamb; he derived his powers from the lamb, and pretended to be like a lamb, all meekness and mildness; but *he spake as a dragon*—He had a voice of terror, like Roman emperors, in usurping divine titles, in commanding idolatry, and in persecuting and slaying the true worshippers of God and faithful servants of Jesus Christ. He is an ecclesiastical person, but intermixeth himself

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, ^a whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And ^b he doeth great wonders, ^c so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

^b Deut. xiii. 1-3; Matt. xxiv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 9; Chap. xvi. 14. ^c 1 Kings xviii. 38; 2 Kings i. 10, 12.

much in civil affairs. He is the prime minister, adviser, and mover of the *first beast*, or the beast before mentioned. *He exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him*—He holdeth *imperium in imperio*, an empire within an empire; claimeth a temporal authority as well as a spiritual, and enforceth his canons and decrees with the sword of the civil magistrate. As the first beast concurs to maintain his authority, so he in return confirms and maintains the sovereignty and dominion of the first beast over his subjects; *and causeth the earth, and them who dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed*—He supports tyranny, as he is by tyranny supported. He enslaves the consciences, as the first beast subjugates the bodies of men. This ecclesiastical power, as Whiston observes, is the common centre and cement which unites all the distinct kingdoms of the Roman empire; and, by joining with them, procures them a blind obedience from their subjects: and so he is the occasion of the preservation of the old Roman empire in some kind of unity, and name, and strength, which otherwise would have been quite dissolved by the inundations and wars succeeding the settlement of the barbarous nations in that empire. "Here," says Mr. Faber, "we have a plain prediction of *some spiritual power*, which should arrogate to itself *universal or catholic authority* in religious matters; which should coexist, upon the most friendly terms, with the *ten-horned temporal empire*, instigating it to persecute, during the space of forty-two prophetic months, all such as should dare to dispute its usurped domination; and which, in short, should solve the symbolical problem of *two contemporary beasts*, by exhibiting to the world the singular spectacle of a *complete empire within an empire*. Where we are to look for this power, since the *great Roman beast* was divided into ten horns, let the impartial voice of history determine. Daniel, who fully delineates the character of the *little horn*, is silent respecting the *two-horned beast*; and John, who as fully delineates the character of the *two-horned beast*, is entirely silent respecting the *little horn*. The *little horn* and the *two-horned beast* act precisely in the same capacity; each exercising the power of the *first beast* before him, and each perishing in one common destruction with him."—Vol. ii. pp. 291-293.

Verses 13-17. *And he doeth great wonders*—We have seen the greatness of the power and authority of the beast, and we shall now see what course he pursues to establish it. He pretends, like other false

A. M. 4100. 14 And ^d deceiveth them that dwell on
A. D. 96.

the earth ^e by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, ^f and did live.

15 And he had power to give ⁴ life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, ^g and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

⁴ Chap. xii. 9; xix. 20.—² Thes. ii. 9, 10.—^f 2 Kings xx. 7.
^g Gr. breath.—^e Chap. xvi. 2; xix. 20; xx. 4.—^h Chap. xiv.

prophets, to show *great signs and wonders*, and even to call for *fire from heaven*, as Elias did, 2 Kings i. 11, 12. His impostures, too, are so successful, that *he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, &c.*—In this respect he perfectly resembles St. Paul's man of sin, 2 Thess. ii. 9; or rather they are one and the same character, represented in different lights, and under different names. It is further observable, that he is said to perform his miracles *in the sight of men*, in order to deceive them, and *in the sight of the beast*, in order to serve him; but not *in the sight of God*, to serve his cause, or promote his religion. Now miracles, visions, and revelations, are the mighty boast of the Church of Rome; the contrivances of an artful, cunning clergy, to impose upon an ignorant, credulous laity. Even *fire* is pretended to *come down from heaven*, as in the case of St. Anthony's fire, and other instances, cited by Brightman and other writers on the Revelation: and in solemn excommunications, which are called the *thunders* of the church, and are performed with the ceremony of casting down burning torches from on high, as symbols and emblems of *fire from heaven*. Miracles are thought so necessary, that they are reckoned among the notes of the Catholic Church. But if these miracles were all real, we learn from hence what opinion we ought to frame of them; and what then shall we say, if they are all fictions and counterfeits? They are indeed so far from being any proofs of the true church, that they are rather a proof of a false one; and, as we see, the distinguishing mark of antichrist.

The influence of the two-horned beast, or corrupted clergy, is further seen in persuading and inducing mankind to *make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live*.—That is, an image and representative of the Roman empire, which was wounded by the sword of the barbarous nations, and revived in the revival of a new emperor of the west. *He had also power to give life and activity unto the image of the beast*.—It should not be a dumb and lifeless idol, but should *speak* and deliver oracles, as the statues of the heathen gods were feigned to do, and should *cause to be killed as many as would not worship and obey it*.—This *image* and representation of the beast is, most probably, the pope. He is properly the idol of the church. He

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16 And he causeth all, both small A. M. 4100.
and great, rich and poor, free and A. D. 96.
bond, ^h to ⁵ receive a mark in their right hand,
or in their foreheads;

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or ⁱ the name of the beast, ^k or the number of his name.

18 ¹ Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count ^m the number of the beast: ⁿ for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

9; xix. 20; xx. 4.—⁵ Gr. to give them.—ⁱ Chap. xiv. 11.
^k Ch. xv. 2.—¹ Ch. xvii. 9.—^m Ch. xv. 2.—ⁿ Ch. xxi. 17.

represents in himself the whole power of the beast, and is the head of all authority, temporal as well as spiritual. He is nothing more than a private person, without power and without authority, till the two-horned beast, or the corrupted clergy, by choosing him pope, *give life* unto him, and enable him to *speak* and utter his decrees, and to *persecute even to death as many as refuse* to submit to him and to *worship him*. As soon as he is chosen pope, he is clothed with the pontifical robes, and crowned, and placed upon the altar, and the cardinals come and kiss his feet, which ceremony is called *adoration*. They first elect, and then they worship him; as in the medals of Martin V., where two are represented crowning the pope, and two kneeling before him, with this inscription, *Quem creant adorant, Whom they create they adore*. He is the principle of unity to the ten kingdoms of the beast, and causeth, as far as he is able, all who will not acknowledge his supremacy to be put to death. In short, he is the most perfect likeness and resemblance of the ancient Roman emperors, is as great a tyrant in the Christian world as they were in the heathen, presides in the same city, usurps the same power, affects the same titles, and requires the same universal homage and adoration. So that the prophecy descends more and more to particulars, from the Roman state or ten kingdoms in general, to the Roman Church or clergy in particular, and still more particularly to the person of the pope, the head of the state, as well as of the church, the king of kings, as well as bishop of bishops.

Other offices the false prophet performs to the beast in subjecting all sorts of people to his obedience, by imposing certain terms of communion, and excommunicating all who dare in the least article to dissent from him. *He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond*, of whatsoever rank and condition they be, to *receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads*.—We must remember, that it was customary among the ancients for servants to receive the mark of their master, and soldiers of their general, and those who were devoted to any particular deity, of the particular deity to whom they were devoted. These marks were usually impressed on *their right hand, or on their foreheads*; and consisted of some hieroglyphic characters, or of the name expressed in vulgar letters, or

of the name disguised in numerical letters, according to the fancy of the imposer. It is in allusion to this ancient practice and custom, that the symbol and profession of faith in the Church of Rome, as subserving superstition, idolatry, and tyranny, is called *the mark or character of the beast*; which character is said to be received *in their forehead* when they make an open profession of their faith, and *in their right hand* when they live and act in conformity to it. If any dissent from the stated and authorized forms, they are condemned and excommunicated as heretics; and in consequence of that they are no longer suffered to *buy or sell*—They are interdicted from traffic and commerce, and all the benefits of civil society. Thus Hovedon relates, that William the Conqueror would not permit any one in his power to *buy or sell* any thing, whom he found disobedient to the apostolic see. So the canon of the council of Lateran, under Pope Alexander the Third, made against the Waldenses and Albigenses, enjoins, upon pain of anathema, that “no one presume to entertain or cherish them in his house or land, or exercise traffic with them.” The synod of Tours, in France, under the same pope, ordered, under the like intermination, that “no man should presume to receive or assist them, no, not so much as to hold any communion with them in *selling or buying*, that, being deprived of the comfort of humanity, they may be compelled to repent of the error of their way.” So did Pope Martin V. in his bull after the council of Constance. In this respect the false prophet *spake as the dragon*: for the dragon Dioclesian published a like edict, that no one should sell or administer any thing to the Christians, unless they had first burned incense to the gods. Popish excommunications are therefore like heathen persecutions, and how large a share the corrupted clergy, and especially the monks of former, and the Jesuits of later times, have had in framing and enforcing such cruel interdicts, and in reducing all orders and degrees to so servile a state of subjection, no man of the least reading can want to be informed.

Verse 18. *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast*—In saying, *Here is wisdom*, the apostle shows that it is not a vain and ridiculous attempt to search into this mystery, but, on the contrary, that it is recommended to us on divine authority. *For it is the number of a man*—It is a method of numbering practised among men, as *the measure of a man* (xxi. 17) is such a measure as men commonly use. It was a practice among the ancients to denote names by numbers; of which many instances might be given, if it were necessary to prove it. It has likewise been the usual method in all God’s dispensations, for the Holy Spirit to accommodate his expressions to the customs, fashions, and manners of the several ages. Since then this art and mystery of numbers was so much used among the ancients, it is less wonderful that the beast also should have his number; and there was this additional reason for this obscure manner of characterizing him in the time of St. John, that no other manner would have been safe. Several names possibly might be cited, which

contain this number; but it is evident that it must be some Greek or Hebrew name, and with the name also the other qualities and properties of the *beast* must all agree. The name alone will not constitute an agreement; all other particulars must be perfectly applicable, and the name also must comprehend the precise number of *six hundred threescore and six*. No name appears more proper and suitable than that famous one mentioned by Irenæus, who lived not long after St. John’s time, and was the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John. He saith, that “the name *Lateinos* contains the number of six hundred and sixty-six; and it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are Latins who now reign: but in this we will not glory:” that is, as it becomes a modest and pious man in a point of such difficulty, he will not be too confident of his explication. *Lateinos* with *ei* is the true orthography, as the Greeks wrote the long *i* of the Latins, and as the Latins themselves wrote in former times. No objection therefore can be drawn from the spelling of the name, and the thing agrees to admiration. For after the division of the empire, the Greeks and other orientalists called the people of the western church, or Church of Rome, *Latins*: and they *Latinize* in every thing. Mass, prayers, hymns, litanies, canons, decretals, bulls, are conceived in Latin. The papal councils speak in Latin. Women themselves pray in Latin. Nor is the Scripture read in any other language under Popery than Latin. Wherefore the council of Trent commanded the vulgar Latin to be the only authentic version. Nor do their doctors doubt to prefer it to the Hebrew and Greek text itself, which was written by the prophets and apostles. In short, all things are Latin; the pope having communicated his language to the people under his dominion, as the mark and character of his empire. They themselves indeed choose rather to be called Romans, and, more absurdly still, *Roman Catholics*: and probably the apostle, as he hath made use of some Hebrew names in this book, as *Abaddon*, (ix. 11,) and *Armageddon*, (xvi. 16,) so might in this place likewise allude to the name in the Hebrew language. Now *Romiith* is the Hebrew name for the *Roman beast*, or *Roman kingdom*: and this word, as well as the former word *Lateinos*, contains the just and exact number of six hundred and sixty-six.

LATEINOS.	ROMIITH.
Λ ——— 30	Ϟ ——— 200
Α ——— 1	ϛ ——— 6
Τ ——— 300	Ϟ ——— 40
Ε ——— 5	ϛ ——— 10
Ι ——— 10	ϛ ——— 10
Ν ——— 50	Ϟ ——— 400
Ο ——— 70	—————
Σ ——— 200	666
—————	—————
666	

It is really surprising that there should be such a fatal coincidence in both names in both languages. And perhaps no other word, in any language whatever, can be found to express both the same *number* and the same *thing*. See Bishop Newton.

CHAPTER XIV.

To comfort the church in her suffering condition during the reign of antichrist, (1.) A hundred and forty-four thousand are represented as faithfully adhering to Christ and his truths in that period, and praising God for their preservation from the general corruption, 1-5. (2.) While three angels prepare the way for antichrist's ruin, one by preaching the gospel, a second by proclaiming the downfall of Popery, and a third by denouncing terrible vengeance on its adherents, the Holy Ghost attests the happiness of all that die in the Lord, martyrs or others, 6-13. (3.) By the emblems of harvest, corn reaped, and vine clusters gathered and trodden, is represented the sudden and most terrible destruction of the antichristian kingdom and its subjects, 14-20.

A. M. 4100. **AND** * I looked, and lo, ^a a Lamb
A. D. 96. stood on the mount Sion, and
with him ^b a hundred forty and four thousand,
^c having his Father's name written in their
foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, ^d as the
voice of many waters, and as the voice of a

* *Innocent's* Day, epistle, verse 1 to verse 6.—^a Chap. v. 5.
^b Chap. vii. 4.—^c Chap. vii. 3; xiii. 16.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

"The description of the melancholy state of the church and world during this period, in the foregoing chapters, might be apt somewhat to discourage the faithful worshippers of God; for though God, by a spirit of prophecy, had before revealed this suffering state to the church, and so it was represented as what the wisdom of Divine Providence thought fit to permit, and what was therefore reconcileable to the goodness and power of the great Governor of the world; yet it was a very useful design of these revelations to subjoin proper principles of consolation and encouragement to such a melancholy representation of temptation, danger, and suffering. This seems the intention of this chapter, in which the scene of the prophetic vision is changed from earth to heaven; from a view of the church under the persecution of the beast, to a view of the church in the presence of the Lamb: delivered from the state of corruption and oppression so much to be expected from this evil world, and arrived at a state of complete and perfect happiness in the heavenly world. This vision, then, represents the sure destruction of the enemies of truth and righteousness in the end, however they may prevail for a time: it shows the very great reward of the faithful, and dreadful punishment of the apostates, who shall fall from the faith and purity of the Christian worship in the day of trial. Thus this part of the prophecy unites the strongest principles of warning, caution, encouragement, and hope, than which nothing could be more proper or useful for the church in such a state of providence; or to the general design of the whole prophecy, which is to exhort and encourage the constancy and patience of the saints in all their trials. When we consider this chapter in this view, it will show a more easy, natural, and proper connection between this vision and the foregoing than is usually observed; and make the whole plan and design appear more regular and exact than it is usually thought to be."—Lowman.

Verses 1-4. *I looked, and behold a Lamb*—The

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great thunder: and I heard the voice A. M. 4100.
of ^e harpers harping with their harps: A. D. 96.

3 And ^f they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song ^g but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

^d Chap. i. 15; xix. 6.—^e Chap. v. 8.—^f Chap. v. 9; xv. 3.
^g Verse 1.

Lord Jesus, in the form of a lamb, or as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, and not only with horns like a lamb; *stood on mount Sion*—Namely, the heavenly Sion; and *with him a hundred forty and four thousand*—The same select number that was mentioned chap. vii. 4, the genuine followers of the twelve apostles, apostolically multiplied, and therefore the number of the church, as six hundred and sixty-six is the number of the beast; and as the followers of the beast have the name of the beast, so these have the name of God, and, as some copies add, of Christ, *written in their foreheads*—As being the redeemed of God and of the Lamb, his now unalienable property, and as having been, when on earth, his professed servants, and the same as *the witnesses*. This prophecy often introduces the inhabitants of heaven as a kind of chorus, with great propriety and elegance. The church above, making suitable reflections on the grand events which are foretold in this book, greatly serves to raise the attention of real Christians, and to teach the high concern they have in them. Thus is the church on earth instructed, animated, and encouraged, by the sentiments, temper, and devotion of the church in heaven. *And I heard a voice*—Or *sound, from heaven*—Sounding clearer and clearer; first at a distance; *as the sound of many waters*—Or *thunders*; and afterward, being nearer, it was *as of harpers harping on their harps*—It sounded vocally and instrumentally at once. *And they sung*—With voices and instruments of music; *as it were a new song*—The Christian song, which they sung before, chap. v.; and *no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand*—Those who had been the true spiritual worshippers of the one true God, through the one true Mediator, Jesus Christ; all the rest of mankind offering up their devotions to other objects, and through other mediators; or not worshipping with a truly spiritual worship; *which were redeemed from the earth*—From this present evil world, being bought by the blood of Christ, and delivered from the guilt and

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A. M. 4100. 4 These are they which were not de-
A. D. 96. filed with women; ^h for they are vir-
gins. These are they ⁱ which follow the Lamb
whithersoever he goeth. These ^l were ^k redeem-
ed from among men, ^l being the first-fruits unto
God and to the Lamb.

5 And ^m in their mouth was found no guile: for
ⁿ they are without fault before the throne of God.

^b 2 Cor. xi. 2.—^l Chap. iii. 4; vii. 15, 17; xvii. 14.—^l Gr.
were bought.—^k Chap. v. 9.—^l James i. 18.—^m Psa. xxxii.
2; Zeph. iii. 13.—ⁿ Eph. v. 27; Jude 24.

power of sin by the word and Spirit of God. *These are they which were not*—Or, *had not been, defiled with women*—It seems that one kind of defilement, and the most alluring temptation, is put for every other. Or rather, the meaning is, that they had kept themselves pure from the stains and pollutions of spiritual whoredom, or idolatry, with which the other parts of the world were miserably debauched and corrupted. *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*—Who are nearest to him; or rather, the meaning is, who followed the Lamb in all things while on earth; who adhered constantly to the religion of Christ, in all conditions and in all places, whether in adversity or prosperity; whether in conventicles and deserts, or in churches and cities. *These were redeemed from among men*—Rescued from the corruptions prevalent among mankind, and consecrated as *the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb*—An earnest and assurance of a more plentiful harvest in succeeding times. *And in their mouth was found no guile*—They were as free from hypocrisy as from idolatry; for they were without fault before the throne of God—They resembled their blessed Redeemer, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, (1 Pet. ii. 22,) and were, as the apostle requires Christians to be, *blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, &c.*, Phil. ii. 15. But possibly it may be asked, Where did such a church ever exist, especially before the Reformation? To which it may be replied, That it hath existed, and not only in idea, history demonstrates; as it hath been before evinced that there hath been, in every age, some true worshippers of God, and faithful servants of Jesus Christ; and as Elijah did not know the seven thousand who had never bowed the knee to Baal, so there may have been more true Christians than were always visible.

Verses 6, 7. *And*—As a further motive to Christian patience and constancy, this vision of the happy state of faithful Christians was followed by another; *I saw another angel*—A second is mentioned verse 8; a third, verse 9. These denote great messengers of God, with their assistants. The first exhorts to the fear and worship of God, the second proclaims the fall of Babylon, the third gives warning concerning the beast. Happy were they who made a right use of these divine messages! *Fly*—Or *flying*, going on swiftly; *in the midst of heaven*—Through the air; *having the everlasting gospel to preach unto*

6 And I saw another angel ^o fly in the ^p midst of heaven, ^q having the everlast-
A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.
ing gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, ^r and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

7 Saying with a loud voice, ^s Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: ^t and worship him that made heaven,

^o Chap. viii. 13.—^p Eph. iii. 9–11; Tit. i. 2.—^q Chap. xiii. 7.—^r Chap. xi. 18; xv. 4.—^s Neh. ix. 6; Psa. xxxiii. 6; cxliv. 8; cxlvi. 5, 6; Acts xiv. 15; xvii. 24.

every nation and people—Both to Jews and Gentiles, even as far as the authority of the beast had extended. In the fourth and fifth verses the nature and character of the true Christian Church, in opposition to the wicked antichristian kingdom, were described; and here it is predicted that three principal efforts would be made toward a reformation at three different times, represented by the three angels appearing one after another. Or, that the gospel, here said to be *everlasting*, because, like its Divine Author, it is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*, should be preached during this period, in opposition to the novel doctrines of the beast and the false prophet, which should be *rooted up*, Matt. xv. 13. And the swiftness with which the gospel should be disseminated and spread over the world, is admirably represented by the swift flight of the first angel; and the nature of the doctrine, and the earnestness wherewith it should be especially inculcated, is set forth by the first clause of the next verse; *saying, with a loud voice*—That is, urging in the most zealous and forcible manner, *Fear God, and give glory to him, who made heaven, earth, the sea, &c.*—*Revere, stand in awe of, dread to offend, worship, and serve him; for the hour of his judgment is come*—It is now denounced with certainty, and in due time will be fully executed on the impenitent, unbelieving, and disobedient. “It is,” says Bishop Newton, “a solemn and emphatic exhortation to forsake the reigning idolatry and superstition, and such exhortations were made even in the first and earliest times of the beast. Besides several of the Greek emperors, who strenuously opposed the worship of images, Charlemagne himself held a council at Frankfort in the year 794, consisting of about three hundred French, and German, and Italian, and Spanish, and British bishops, who condemned all sorts of adoration or worship of images, and rejected the second council of Nice, which had authorized and established it. At the same time the *Caroline books*, as they are called, four books written by Charles himself, or by his authority, proving the worship of images to be contrary to the Scripture, and to the doctrine and practice of antiquity, were approved by the council, and transmitted to the pope. Lewis the Pious, the son and successor of Charles, held a council at Paris, in the year 824, which ratified the acts of the council of Frankfort, and the *Caroline books*, and affirmed that, according to the Scripture and the fathers, adoration

A. M. 4100. and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.
A. D. 96.

8 And there followed another angel, saying,

¹ Isaiah xxi. 9; Jer. li. 8; Chap. xviii. 2.—^a Jer. li. 7;

was due to God alone. Several private persons also taught and asserted the same Scriptural doctrines. Claude, bishop of Turin, declares, that 'we are not commanded to go to the creature that we may be made happy, but to the Creator himself; and therefore we should not worship dead men; they are to be imitated, not to be adored; let us, together with the angels, worship one God.' Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote a whole book against images, and says, that 'angels or saints may be loved and honoured, but not be served and worshipped; let us not put our trust in man, but in God, lest that prophetic denunciation should redound on us, *Cursed is the man who trusteth in man.*' Many other bishops and writers of Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany, and France, professed the same sentiments; and this public opposition of emperors and bishops to the worship of saints and images, in the eighth and ninth centuries, appears to be meant particularly by the loud voice of this first angel flying aloft, and calling upon the world to worship God. In another respect, too, these emperors and bishops resemble this *angel having the everlasting gospel to preach unto every nation*; for in their time, and greatly by their means, the Christian religion was propagated and established among the Saxons, Danes, Swedes, and many other northern nations.⁷

Verse 8. *And there followed another angel*—As the admonitions of the first angel had not the proper effect upon the kingdom of the beast, a second angel is commissioned to proclaim the fall of the capital city, *saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city*—By *Babylon* is meant Rome, including the antichristian kingdom, the papal hierarchy seated there. Rome, considered in this light, is called *Babylon*, upon many accounts. *Babylon* was magnificent, strong, proud, powerful. So was Rome also. *Babylon* was first, Rome afterward, the residence of the emperors of a great part of the world. What *Babylon* was to Israel of old, Rome hath been both to the literal and spiritual Israel of God. Hence the liberty of the ancient Jews was connected with the overthrow of the Babylonish empire. And when Rome is finally overthrown, then the people of God will be at liberty. Whenever *Babylon* is mentioned in this book, *the great* is added, to teach us that Rome then commenced *Babylon* when it commenced *the great city*; when it swallowed up the Grecian monarchy and its fragments, Syria in particular; and, in consequence of this, obtained dominion over Jerusalem, about sixty years before the birth of Christ. Then it began, but it will not cease to be *Babylon*, till it is finally destroyed. Its spiritual greatness began in the fifth century, and increased from age to age. It seems it will come to its utmost height just before its final overthrow. *Her fornication* is her idolatry, invocation of saints and angels, worship of images,

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¹ *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*
A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

Chap. xi. 8; xvi. 19; xvii. 2, 5; xviii. 3, 10, 18, 21; xix. 2.

human traditions, with all that outward pomp, yea, and that fierce and bloody zeal, wherewith she pretends to serve God. But with spiritual fornication, as elsewhere, so in Rome, fleshly fornication is joined abundantly. Witness the stewes there, licensed by the pope, which are no inconsiderable branch of his revenue. This is fitly compared to wine, because of its intoxicating nature. Of this *wine she hath*, indeed, *made all nations drink*—More especially by her later missions. We may observe, this *making them drink* is not ascribed to the beast, but to *Babylon*. For Rome itself, the Roman *inquisitions, congregations, and Jesuits*, continually propagate their idolatrous doctrines and practices, with or without the consent of this or that pope, who himself is not secure from their censure. But, as Bishop Newton observes, though Rome, with the antichristian power above described, was evidently here intended, it would not have been prudent to predict and denounce its destruction in open and direct terms; it was for many wise reasons done thus covertly under the name of *Babylon*, the great idolatress of the earth, and enemy of the people of God in former times. By the same figure of speech that the first angel cried, that *the hour of his judgment is come*, this second angel proclaims that *Babylon is fallen*; the sentence is as certain as if it was already executed. For greater certainty too it is repeated twice, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; as Joseph said, Gen. xli. 32, *that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, because the thing was established by God*. The reason then is added of this sentence against *Babylon*; *because she made all nations drink of the wine of her wrath, or rather, of the inflaming wine, of her fornication*—Hers was a kind of Circean cup with poisoned liquor, to intoxicate and inflame mankind to spiritual fornication. St. John, in these figures, copies the ancient prophets. In the same manner, and in the same words, did Isaiah foretel the fate of ancient *Babylon*, (chap. xxi. 9.) *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; and Jeremiah hath assigned much the same reason for her destruction, (li. 7.) *Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad*. As by the first angel calling upon men to worship God, we understand the opposers of the worship of images in the eighth and ninth centuries, so by this second angel proclaiming the fall of mystic *Babylon* or Rome we understand particularly Peter Valdo, and those who concurred with him among the Waldenses and Albigenses; who were the first heralds, as I may say, of this proclamation, as they first of all, in the twelfth century, pronounced the Church of Rome to be the apocalyptic *Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*; and for this cause not only departed from her communion themselves, but en-

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A. M. 4100. 9 And the third angel followed them, A. D. 96. saying with a loud voice, ² If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same ⁷ shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is ² poured out without mixture into ^a the cup of his indignation; and ^b he shall be tormented with ^c fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

^a Chap. xiii. 1-16.—⁷ Psa. lxxv. 8; Isa. li. 17; Jer. xxv. 15. ^b Chap. xviii. 8.—^c Chap. xvi. 19.—^d Chap. xx. 10.—^e Chap. xix. 20.—^f Isa. xxxiv. 10; Chap. xix. 3.

gaged great numbers also to follow their example, and laid the first foundation of the Reformation. Rome then began to fall; and as the ruin of Babylon was completed by degrees, so likewise will that of Rome; and these holy confessors and martyrs first paved the way to it.

Verses 9-12. *And the third angel followed*—At no great distance of time; *saying*—As the two former had done; *with a loud voice*—With authority and earnestness; *If any man worship the beast, &c.*—The commission of this angel reaches further than that of the preceding; it extends not only to the capital city, not only to the principal agents and promoters of idolatry, but to all the subjects of the beast, whom it consigns over to everlasting punishment. *If any man worship the beast*—That is, embrace and profess the religion of the beast; or, what is the same, the religion of the Papal hierarchy; *the same shall drink, &c.*—The worship against which judgment is here denounced, consists partly in an inward submission to the beast, a persuasion that all who are subject to Christ must be subject to the beast, or they cannot receive the influences of divine grace; or, as their expression is, “There is no salvation out of the church;” and partly in a suitable outward reverence to the beast and his image—the antichristian kingdom, and the pope that rules in it. *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God*—The wine of God’s indignation, tempered with various ingredients of wrath; *which is poured out without mixture*—Namely, of mercy, and without hope. Bishop Newton renders the expression, *the poisonous wrath of God*; observing, “His punishment shall correspond with his crime; as he drank of the poisonous wine of Babylon, so he shall be made to drink of the poisonous wine of God; *τὸ κεκρασμένον ἀκρατὴν, which is mixed unmixed*, the poisonous ingredients being stronger when mixed with merc, or unmixed wine;” *in the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone*—In the day of God’s future vengeance; *in the presence of the holy angels*—From hence some conjecture that possibly the torments of the damned may, at certain seasons, through eternal ages, become a spectacle to the inhabitants of the blessed world above; *and in the presence of the Lamb*—This signifies that their punishment shall

11 And ^d the smoke of their torment A. M. 4100. ascendeth up for ever and ever: and A. D. 96. they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

12 ^e Here is the patience of the saints: ^f here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, ^g Blessed are the dead ^h which die in the Lord ² from henceforth:

^e Chap. xiii. 10.—^f Chap. xii. 17.—^g Eccles. iv. 1, 2; Chap. xx. 6.—^h 1 Cor. xv. 18; 1 Thess. iv. 16.—ⁱ Or, *from henceforth saith the Spirit, Yea.*

not only be appointed by the infinite majesty of God, but approved moreover by men and angels, and by him also who loved us unto death, even Christ, our merciful and compassionate High-Priest. In all the Scriptures there is not another threatening so terrible as this. And God, by this greater fear, intended to arm his servants against the fear of the beast. *The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*—“When I seriously reflect on this text,” says Doddridge, “and how directly the force of it lies against those who, contrary to the light of their consciences, continue in the communion of the Church of Rome for secular advantage, or to avoid the terror of persecution, it almost makes me tremble.” By this third angel following the others with a loud voice, we may understand principally Luther and his fellow-reformers, who, with a loud voice, protested against the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and declared them to be destructive of salvation to all who obstinately continued in the practice and profession of them. This would be a time of great trial, verse 12. *Here is the patience of the saints*—Manifested in suffering all things, rather than receive this mark of the beast, the badge of their devotedness to him, and making an open profession of his religion; *who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*—The character of all true saints. It is very well known that this was a time of great trial and persecution; the Reformation was not introduced and established without much bloodshed; there were many martyrs in every country, but they were comforted with a solemn declaration from heaven in the next words.

Verse 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven*—This is most seasonably heard when the beast is in his highest power and fury; *saying unto me, Write*—He was at first commanded to write the whole book. Whenever this is repeated, it denotes something peculiarly observable. *Blessed*—Μακάριοι, *happy, are the dead which die in the Lord*—In the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, in consequence of that faith, in a state of vital union with him, he being thereby made of God unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and thereby imparting unto them, 1st, A satisfactory knowledge of the nature and greatness of their future felicity, in their

A. M. 4100. Yea, saith the Spirit, ⁱ that they may
A. D. 96. rest from their labours; and their
works do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold, a white
cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat ^k like
unto the Son of man, ^l having on his head
a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp
sickle.

ⁱ 2 Thess. i. 7; Heb. iv. 9, 10; Chap. vi. 11.—^k Ezek. i. 26;
Dan. vii. 13; Chap. i. 13.—^l Chap. vi. 2.

illumination; 2d, A title to it, in their justification; 3d, A meetness for it, in their sanctification; and, 4th, Bringing them to the enjoyment of it, in their complete redemption from all the consequences of the fall; *from henceforth*—Particularly, 1st, Because they escape the approaching calamities, or are *taken away from the evil to come*, as the expression is, Isa. lviii. 1, 2, to which passage there seems to be an allusion here; 2d, Because they already enjoy so near an approach to, and indeed an anticipation of, glory—the glory to be conferred at the second coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the dead; for *they rest*—No pain, no purgatory follows; but pure and unmixed happiness; *from their labours*—And the more laborious their life was, the sweeter is their rest. How different is this state from that of those (verse 11) who *have no rest day nor night!* Reader, which wilt thou choose? *And their works*—Each one's peculiar works, done from a principle of faith and love, with a single eye to the glory of God, and in a spirit of humility before God, resignation to his will, and patience under all trials and sufferings; and in meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering toward those who oppose them in their Christian course of cheerfully doing good, and patiently suffering ill; *follow them*—And will be produced as evidences of their faith and love; or of the genuineness of their religion at the day of judgment. But the words, *τα εργα αυτων ακολουθει μετ' αυτων*, properly signify, *their works follow with them*, or follow them immediately; that is, the fruit of their works; they reap this, in some measure, immediately on their admission into paradise. Observe, reader, their works do not go before, to procure for them admittance into the mansions of joy and glory, but they follow or attend them when admitted. Bishop Newton accounts for the expression, *From henceforth, blessed are the dead, &c.*, by observing, that though from the time of the Reformation, “the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord hath not been enlarged, yet it hath been much better understood, more clearly *written* and promulgated than it was before, and the contrary doctrine of purgatory hath been exploded and banished from the belief of all reasonable men. This truth,” adds he; “was moreover one of the leading principles of the Reformation. What first provoked Luther's spirit was the scandalous sale of indulgences; and the doctrine of indulgences having a close connection with the doctrine of purgatory, the refutation of the one naturally leads to the refutation

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15 And another angel ^m came out of A. M. 4100.
the temple, crying with a loud voice to A. D. 96.
him that sat on the cloud, ⁿ Thrust in thy
sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee
to reap; for the harvest ^o of the earth is ³ ripe.

16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in
his sickle on the earth; and the earth was
reaped.

^m Chap. xvi. 17.—ⁿ Joel iii. 13; Matt. xiii. 39.—^o Jer. li.
33; Chap. xiii. 12.—³ Or, *dried*.

of the other; and his first work of reformation was his ninety-five theses, or positions, against indulgences, purgatory, and the dependant doctrines. So that he may be said literally to have fulfilled the command from heaven, of *writing, Blessed are the dead, &c.*, and from that time to this, this truth hath been so clearly asserted, and so solemnly established, that it is likely to prevail for ever.” But though what the bishop here states might be one reason of the expression, *from henceforth blessed, &c.*, yet the principal reason of its being used seems evidently to have been that above suggested, namely, to intimate that the sufferings which the people of God would be exposed to at this period, from the persecutions of the antichristian power, would be so great that those individuals who escaped them by being taken out of the world by death before they came, would have reason to think themselves happy.

Verses 14–16. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud*—An emblem of the equity and holiness, as also of the victory of him that sat upon it, over all adverse power; *and upon the cloud one like unto the Son of man*—By the majesty of his form, as represented in Daniel; *having on his head a golden crown*—Signifying his high dignity, his extraordinary authority and power; *and a sharp sickle in his hand*—As if going forth to reap some remarkable harvest. *And another angel came out of the temple—Which is in heaven*, (verse 17,) out of which came the judgments of God in the proper seasons; *crying*, by the command of God, *with a loud voice, Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come, &c.*—Namely, the appointed time of judgment, for which the world is ripe; the voices of the three warning angels, spoken of from verse 6–11, not having their due effect, it is here predicted that the judgments of God would overtake the followers and adherents of the beast, which judgments are represented in this paragraph under the figures of *harvest* and *vintage*, figures not unusual in the prophets, and copied particularly from the Prophet Joel, who denounced God's judgments against the enemies of his people in the like terms, chap. iii. 13, saying, *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow for their wickedness is great.*

“Having passed,” says Mr. Faber, “the epoch of the Reformation, we now advance into the times of God's last judgments upon his enemies, the days of the third wo-trumpet. Two remarkable periods of

A. M. 4100. 17 And another angel came out of
A. D. 96. the temple which is in heaven, he also
having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, 'Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

† Chap. xvi. 8.—‡ Joel iii. 13.—§ Chap. xix. 15.—¶ Isa. lxiii.

the most conspicuous of these judgments (the several steps of the whole of which are afterward described under seven vials) are here arranged under the two grand divisions figuratively styled the *harvest* and the *vintage*. In the days of Bishop Newton the third wo-trumpet had not begun to sound. Hence his lordship justly observed, 'What particular events are signified by this *harvest* and *vintage*, it appears impossible for any man to determine; time alone can with certainty discover, for these things are yet in futurity. Only it may be observed, that these two signal judgments will as certainly come, as *harvest* and *vintage* succeed in their season; and in the course of providence the one will precede the other, as in the course of nature the *harvest* is before the *vintage*; and the latter will greatly surpass the former, and be attended with a most terrible destruction of God's enemies.' But although both these signal judgments were future when Bishop Newton wrote, it has been our lot to hear the voice of the third wo, and to behold in the French revolution the dreadful scenes of the *harvest*. Still, however, a more dreadful prospect extends before us. The days of the *vintage* are yet future; for the time hath not yet arrived when the great controversy of God with the nations shall be carried on *between the two seas*, in the neighbourhood of the *glorious holy mountain*, in the blood-stained vale of *Megiddo*, in the land whose space extends one thousand six hundred furlongs." Mr. Faber, therefore, considers the *harvest* and the *vintage* here as predicting "two tremendous manifestations of God's wrath, two seasons of peculiar misery;" and that the apostle gives here only a general intimation of these, reserving a more particular account of them for future consideration under the pouring out of the seven vials, which are all comprehended under the *third wo*, and which he divides into three classes; the vials of the harvest, the intermediate vials, and the vials of the vintage.—*Dissertation on the Prophecies*, vol. ii. pages 378 and 382, edition 1810. Whether and how far these views of Mr. Faber appear to be just and consistent with the general tenor of this latter part of the prophecy, we shall be better able to judge when we come to consider the contents of the two next chapters.

Verses 17-20. *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven*—As the former had done; *he also having a sharp sickle*—To assist in

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

20 And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

3; Lam. i. 15.—† Chap. xi. 8; Heb. xiii. 12.—‡ Ch. xix. 14.

this execution, and finish the destruction of the enemies of the truth. *And another angel*, just at that instant, *came out from the altar*—Of burnt-offering, from whence the martyrs had cried for vengeance. *Which angel*, it is said, *had power over fire*—This, according to Daubuz, is spoken in allusion to the office of that priest who was appointed by lot in the temple-service to take care of the fire upon the altar, and who was therefore called the priest over the fire. Grotius interprets it, *habens ministerium iræ divinæ, having the office of God's vengeance. And he cried with a loud voice*—With great vehemence; *to him that had the sharp sickle*—Being sent to bring a message to him; *saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters, &c.*—Begin to put in execution the righteous judgments of God on this wicked generation; *for her grapes are fully ripe*—The time of God's vengeance, his appointed time, is fully come, for the iniquities of the inhabitants of the earth have made them fully ripe for destruction. *And the angel thrust in his sickle*—Immediately upon this order the angel began to cut down those wicked persons whose iniquities had made them ripe for destruction; *and gathered*—Or lopped off the grapes of the vine of the earth, and cast them into the great wine-press of the wrath of God—Which seemed to stand ready to receive them; that is, delivered them over to divine vengeance, which should press them hard with grievous afflictions, as grapes are pressed in a wine-press. *And the wine-press was trodden without the city*—The images in this vision are very strong and expressive. The largest wine-presses used to be in some places out of the city. This expression, therefore, seems to intimate the great numbers that should be involved in this general destruction. *And the blood came out of the wine-press even unto the horses-bridles, &c.*—Which is a strong hyperbolic expression, to signify a vast slaughter and effusion of blood; a way of speaking not unknown to the Jews, for the Jerusalem Talmud, describing the woful slaughter which the Roman Emperor Adrian made of the Jews at the destruction of the city of Bitter, saith, that "the horses waded in blood up to the nostrils." Nor are similar examples wanting even in classic authors; for Silius Italicus, speaking of Hannibal's descent into Italy, useth a like expression of "the bridles flowing with much blood." The stage where this bloody tragedy

is acted is *without the city, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs*, which, as Mr. Mede ingeniously observes, is the measure of *stato dello chiesa*, or the state of the Roman Church, or St. Peter's patrimony, which, reaching from the walls of Rome unto the river Po and the marshes of Verona, contains the space of two hundred Italian miles, which make exactly sixteen hundred furlongs.

CHAPTER XV.

Here the apostle, (1,) Has a vision of seven angels prepared to execute the divine judgments on the antichristian kingdom, and on all that uphold it, with the triumphant song of the church on that occasion, 1-4. (2,) Their coming forth out of the temple, and receiving vials full of divine wrath, which they were to pour out for that purpose, 5-8.

A. M. 4100. **AND** ^a I saw another sign in hea-
A. D. 96. ven, great and marvellous,
^b seven angels having the seven last plagues:
^c for in them is filled up the wrath of God.
2 And I saw as it were ^d a sea of glass
^e mingled with fire: and them that had gotten

^a Chap. xii. 1, 3.—^b Chap. xvi. 1; xxi. 9.—^c Chap. xiv. 10.
^d Chap. iv. 6; xxi. 18.—^e Matt. iii. 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

The prophecy proceeds, in this and the following chapters, to open further the appointed punishment of antichristian Rome for her oppression of the truth, and persecution of the saints. This chapter represents the solemn manner in which preparation is made for the execution of these judgments, as the next describes the actual execution of them. The happy state of God's faithful servants, and the joyful thanksgivings with which they celebrate the goodness of God in the protection of their cause, are very elegantly represented, to encourage their constancy and perseverance. God's judgments upon the kingdom of the beast, or antichristian empire, have been hitherto denounced, and described only in general terms, under the figures of *harvest* and *vintage*. A more particular account of them follows under the emblem of *seven vials*. These must necessarily fall under the seventh trumpet, and the four last of them, at least, under the third wo; so that as the seventh seal contained the seven trumpets, the seventh trumpet comprehends the seven vials. Not only the concinnity of the prophecy requires this order, for otherwise there would be great confusion, and the vials would interfere with the trumpets, some falling under one trumpet, and some under another; but, moreover, if these seven last plagues, and the consequent destruction of Babylon, be not the subject of the third wo, the third wo is nowhere described particularly, as are the two former woes. Before the vials are poured out, the scene opens with a preparatory vision, which is the subject of this chapter. As seven angels sounded the seven trumpets, so seven angels are appointed to pour out the seven vials, angels being always the ministers of Providence; and in order to show that these judgments are to fall upon the kingdom of the beast, the true worshippers of God and faithful servants of Jesus, who had escaped victors from the beast, are here

the victory over the beast, ^f and over
his image, and over his mark, and
over the number of his name, stand on the sea
of glass, ^g having the harps of God.

3 And they sing ^h the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

^f Chap. xiii. 15-17.—^g Chap. v. 8; xiv. 2.—^h Exod. xv. 1; Deut. xxxi. 30; Chap. xiv. 3.

described as praising God for their deliverance from its tyrannical power.

Verse 1. *And I saw a sign in heaven, great and marvellous*—Such as fixed my attention, and will demand that of the reader: *seven angels* (doubtless holy angels) *having the seven last plagues*—Hitherto God had borne with his enemies with much long-suffering, but now his wrath will go forth to the uttermost. But even after these plagues the holy wrath of God against his other enemies does not cease, chap. xx. 15.

Verses 2-4. *I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire*—It was before *clear as crystal*, (chap. iv. 6,) but is now *mingled with fire*—Emblematical of the judgments whereby God's enemies were about to be devoured; and *them that had gained*—Or *were gaining*, as τῶν νικητῶν rather means; *the victory over the beast and his image*—And not submitted to his tyranny or religion, having steadfastly refused, though at the expense of their property, liberty, and lives, amidst so many who were devoted to him, to receive *his mark*, and *the number of his name*—Expressions which seem to mean nearly the same thing; standing on the *sea of glass*—Which was before the throne; *having the harps of God*—Given by him, and appropriated to his praise. *And they sing, &c.*—Like unto the people of Israel after their deliverance and escape out of Egypt, when, having passed through the Red sea, they stood on the shore; and, seeing their enemies overwhelmed with the waters, sung the triumphant song of Moses. So these, having passed through the fiery trials of this world, stand on a sea of glass, and, seeing the vials ready to be poured out upon their enemies, sing a song of triumph for the manifestation of the divine judgments, which is called the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, because the words are, in a great measure, taken from the song of Moses and other parts of the Old Testament, and applied in a

A. M. 4100. ¹ Great and marvellous are thy works, A. D. 96. Lord God Almighty; ² just and true are thy ways, thou King of ³ saints.

4 ¹ Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou only art holy*: for ² all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

5 And after that I looked, and behold, ² the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

6 ⁰ And the seven angels came out of the

¹ Deut. xxxii. 4; Psa. cxi. 2; cxxxix. 14.—² Psa. cxlv. 17; Hos. xiv. 9; Chap. xvi. 7.—³ Or, nations, or, ages.—⁴ Exod. xv. 14-16; Jer. x. 7.—⁵ Isa. lxvi. 22.—⁶ Chapter xi. 19; Num. i. 50.

Christian sense; but chiefly because Moses was the minister and representative of the Jewish Church, as Christ is of the church universal: therefore it is also termed, *the song of the Lamb*. *Saying, Great and marvellous are thy works*—We acknowledge and know that all thy works, in and toward all the creatures, are great and wonderful; *just and true are thy ways*—With all the children of men, good and evil. *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord*—Stand in awe of thee, revere thy justice and thy power, and fear to offend thee; *and glorify thy name*—Honour and praise, love and serve thee; *for thou only art holy*—And in thy presence the holiness of all other beings disappears, as utterly unworthy to be mentioned. Or, as the words may be rendered, *thou only art gracious*, and thy grace is the spring of all thy wonderful works, even of thy destroying the enemies of thy people. Accordingly, in the 137th Psalm, that clause, *for his mercy endureth for ever*, is subjoined to the thanksgiving for his works of vengeance, as well as for his delivering the righteous. *For all nations shall come and worship before thee*—Shall serve thee as their king, and confide in thee as their Saviour with reverential joy: a glorious testimony this to the future conversion of all the heathen. The Christians are now a little flock; and they who do not worship God, an immense multitude. But all the nations, from all parts of the earth, shall come and worship him, and glorify his name. *For thy judgments shall be made manifest*—And then the inhabitants of the earth will, at length, learn to fear thee.

Verses 5-7. *After that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle*—In which was the ark of the testimony in heaven, was opened—Namely, the most holy place, disclosing a new theatre for the coming forth of the judgments of God, now made manifest. *And the seven angels came out of the temple*—From the immediate presence of God, to denote that their commission was immediately from him; *having the seven plagues*—Already mentioned; *clothed*—Like the high-priest, but in a more au-

temple, having the seven plagues, A. M. 4100.

² clothed in pure and white linen, and ³ having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7 ¹ And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, ² who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And ¹ the temple was filled with smoke ² from the glory of God and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

⁰ Verse 1.—¹ Exod. xxviii. 6, 8; Ezek. xliiv. 17, 18; Chap. i. 13.—² Chap. iv. 6.—³ 1 Thess. i. 9; Chap. iv. 9; x. 6. ⁴ Exod. xl. 34; 1 Kings viii. 10; 2 Chron. v. 14; Isa. vi. 4. ⁵ 2 Thess. i. 9.

gust manner; *in pure and white linen*—To signify the righteousness of these judgments; *and having their breasts girded*—To show their readiness to execute the divine commands; *with golden girdles*—As emblems of their power and majesty. *And one of the four living creatures*—The representatives of the church; *gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials*—Bowls, or censers; the Greek word signifies vessels broader at the top than at the bottom; *full of the wrath of God*—By which it is intimated that it is in vindication of the church and true religion that these plagues are inflicted; *who liveth for ever and ever*—A circumstance which adds greatly to the dreadfulness of his wrath, and the value of his favour; and that he is to be regarded as the most formidable enemy, as well as the most desirable friend, to immortal beings.

Verse 8. *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God*—In the same manner the tabernacle, when it was consecrated by Moses, and the temple, when it was dedicated by Solomon, were both filled with a cloud, and the glory of the Lord; which cloud of glory was the visible manifestation of God's presence at both times, and a sign of God's protection. But in the judgment of Korah, when the glory of the Lord appeared, he and his companions were swallowed up by the earth. So proper is the emblem of smoke from the glory of God, or from the cloud of glory, to express the execution of judgment, as well as to be a sign of favour. Both proceed from the power of God, and in both he is glorified. *And no man*—Not even those who ordinarily stood before God; *was able to enter into the temple*—As neither Moses could enter into the tabernacle, nor the priests into the temple, when the glory of the Lord filled those sacred places; a further proof of the majestic presence and extraordinary interposition of God in the execution of these judgments: *till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled*—Or were finished: till they had poured them out by the divine command.

CHAPTER XVI.

In this chapter is represented the pouring out of the seven vials of God's destructive vengeance upon antichrist: the first upon the earth, producing grievous sores, 1, 2; the second on the sea, turning it into blood, and killing the fish, 3; the third on the rivers and fountains, rendering the waters blood, to punish the Popish persecutions and murders, 4-7; the fourth upon the sun, causing him to scorch men with his heat, 8, 9; the fifth on antichrist's seat, darkening his kingdom, and tormenting his subjects, 10, 11; the sixth on the river Euphrates, followed by the ruinous battle of Armageddon, 12-16; and the seventh into the air, the seat of Satan's power, issuing in the universal and complete destruction of all antichristian enemies and opposition, 17-22.

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96. **AND** I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying ^a to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials ^b of the wrath of God upon the earth.

2 And the first went, and poured out his

^a Chap. xv. 1.—^b Chap. xiv. 10; xv. 7.—^c Chap. viii. 7.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

This chapter contains the judgments themselves, signified by the seven vials full of the wrath of God; and gives us a prophetic representation of each of them in their order, being an exact description of the greater and more eminent judgments of God on the inhabitants of the earth for their enmity to true religion, and persecution of the saints during this third and last period; and especially on the Papacy and its dominions, or the antichristian kingdom. For, as the events comprehended under the trumpets raised antichrist up, those that occurred under the vials must bring him down. And, as he began to be brought down in a particular manner at the first rise of the Reformation, and his power has declined more and more ever since; insomuch that the Protestant religion is now established in many of the countries of Europe, and in the United States of America, why may we not suppose that the vials, which are the appointed instruments of effecting this happy change, began to be poured out at that time? This view of the vials was given by Mr. Robert Fleming, in his "Apocryphical Key," entitled, "An extraordinary Discourse on the Rise and Fall of Papacy; or the Pouring out of the Vials in the Revelation of St. John, chap. xvi., containing Predictions respecting the Revolutions of France; the Fate of its Monarch; the Decline of the Papal Power: together with the Fate of the surrounding Nations; the Destruction of Mohammedanism; the Calling in of the Jews; the Restoration and Consummation of all Things," &c., &c., published in the year 1701; some particulars of which have been remarkably verified by the events which have since taken place. Of his scheme of interpretation, which is not here maintained to be, in all respects, the true one, but which certainly carries with it, in several points, some striking marks of probability, the substance is given below.

Verse 1. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple*—All things being prepared, the angels having received their instructions from the oracle, and the vials being filled with the wrath of God, by one of the four living creatures, (see on chap. xv. 7.) I heard the word of command given to the seven an-

b

gel upon the earth; and ^d there ^e fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men ^f which had the mark of the beast, and upon them ^g which worshipped his image.

^d Exod. ix. 9-11.—^e Chap. xiii. 16, 17.—^f Chap. xiii. 4.

gels to pour out their vials in their order, the inhabitants of the earth being ripe for those judgments which the justice of God had appointed for their punishment. The epistles to the seven churches are divided into three and four; the seven seals, and so the trumpets and vials, into four and three. The trumpets gradually, and in a long tract of time, overthrow the kingdoms of the world; the vials destroy chiefly the beast and his followers, and that with a more swift and impetuous force. The four former affect the earth, the sea, the rivers, the sun: the rest fall elsewhere, and are much more terrible.

Verse 2. *And the first poured out his vial upon the earth*—This, according to Mr. Fleming, denotes God's judgments upon the foundation of the Papal kingdom; the earth being that on which we walk, and by the fruits of which we are supported. By this, therefore, he understands the Popish clergy, and the Papal dominions and revenues, by which they were upheld. This vial, he thinks, began with the Reformation, and continued until the time when these agents of Popery were thrown out of as many countries of Europe as embraced the Reformation. And we may easily conceive what a mortification it was to that party, when the pretended sanctity of their bishops, priests, monks, and nuns was discovered to be a mere cheat, and their miracles nothing but lies or tricks; and when their tales of purgatory were exposed to public contempt, and their pardons and indulgences would sell no longer; and consequently, when the pope and his mitred officers saw themselves driven out from so great a part of their dominions, their seminaries for training up their advocates and defenders, of all denominations and orders, pulled down, and so much of their yearly revenues lost. Whence they are said to fall under a noisome and grievous *ελκος*, ulcer, or sore—Being by this means pained and vexed inwardly, and rendered contemptible to the whole world, which looked upon them as no better than the plagues of mankind. So that this vial began with the rise of Zuinglius and Luther, and the other reformers, in the years 1516 and 1517, and continued to the year 1566; that is, about forty or fifty years; for by that time all the reformed churches were settled, and had

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A. M. 4100. 3 And the second angel poured out
A. D. 96.

his vial ^g upon the sea; and ^h it became as the blood of a dead *man*; ⁱ and every living soul died in the sea.

4 And the third angel poured out his vial ^k upon the rivers and fountains of waters: and they became blood.

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, ^m Thou art righteous, O Lord, ⁿ which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6 For ^o they have shed the blood ^p of saints and

prophets, ^q and thou hast given them ^r blood to drink; for they are worthy. A. M. 4100
A. D. 96.

7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, ^r Lord God Almighty, ^s true and righteous *are* thy judgments.

8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial ^t upon the sun; ^u and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

9 And men were ^v scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of ^x God, which hath power over these plagues: ^y and they repented not ^z to give him glory.

^g Chapter viii. 8.—^h Exodus vii. 17, 20.—ⁱ Chapter viii. 9.
^k Chap. viii. 10.—^l Exod. vii. 20.—^m Chap. xv. 3.—ⁿ Chap. i. 4, 8; iv. 8; xi. 17.—^o Matt. xxiii. 34, 35; Chap. xiii. 15.
^p Chap. xi. 18; xviii. 20.—^q Isa. xlix. 26.

^r Chap. xv. 3.—^s Chap. xiii. 10; xiv. 10; xix. 2.—^t Chap. viii. 12.—^u Chapter ix. 17, 18; xiv. 18.—^v Or, *burned*.
^x Verses 11, 21.—^y Dan. v. 22, 23; Chap. ix. 20.—^z Chap. xi. 13; xiv. 7.

published their creeds and confessions of faith against Rome, in opposition to the determinations of the Popish council of Trent, published A. D. 1563, and the creed of Pope Pius IV., which added twelve antichristian articles to the twelve primitive Christian ones, A. D. 1564.

Verse 3. *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, &c.*—This, says the same pious author, must begin where the other ended, as to the period of time. Now I find that in the year 1566 the wars between the king of Spain and the states of the Netherlands began. The Spaniards, indeed, were often victorious at first, yet they were at length compelled to declare them free states. It was then that the sea became blood to the Romanists, their votaries being miserably defeated in their expectations. For after their cruelties under the duke of Alva, in the Low Countries, and their massacre of the Protestants, in France and other places, the scene was changed very quickly; so that, in the year 1588, the Spaniards lost their vast armada, and ever after declined in their power. And the duke of Guise, the inveterate enemy of the Protestants, was killed the same year; and A. D. 1598 Philip II. of Spain died, being eaten of vermin: the edict of Nantz was also issued the same year in France in favour of the Protestants. So that, as the Reformed interest was in peace everywhere, and conquered in Holland and England, the Popish party, on the other hand, saw Spain, the late terror of the Protestants, brought to a languishing condition, and all their allies weary of wars and persecutions. And as in the year 1609 the truce was made between the Spaniards and the Dutch, so the war, though renewed and carried on afterward, became languid and faint, so as hardly to be regarded by either party, especially the Dutch, who were generally victorious and successful. Hence, as the period of this vial began in 1566, so we may reckon it continued about fifty years, namely, till the year 1617, when the third vial began.

Verses 4–7. *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, &c.*—Or those territories of the Papacy which were as

necessary to it as rivers and fountains are to a country: the kind of plague under this vial being the same as that of the former. For, as the former destroyed the living creatures, or *living souls*, that were *in* or upon *the sea*, namely, the Spaniards, the great mariners of the world at that time, as to their maritime power, who after the year 1588 lost their former sovereignty of the seas, it being transferred to the English and Dutch; so this latter plague makes it difficult for the Popish party to subsist and maintain their ground, even in the inland countries, particularly in the several dominions of Germany and the neighbouring countries. For in the year 1617, Ferdinand being forced upon the Bohemians by the Emperor Matthias, and crowned king, the foundation of new quarrels was thus laid. For, a little while after, another most bloody religious war ensued, which shook all the empire, and excited the terror of all Europe. And, though the Protestants lost *Bohemia*, the *Palatinate* in part, and were driven out of Moravia, Austria, and Silesia, at this time, and were not only persecuted in many places, but were in danger of being extirpated and rooted out universally; yet the tide turned all on a sudden. For after the emperor had ruled Germany with a veteran army for a considerable time, Gustavus Adolphus entered it in the year 1630, and conquered everywhere. And though he was killed about two years afterward, yet his army continued to be victorious; until at length all things were settled at the peace of Munster, A. D. 1648; with which therefore the period of this vial, consisting of thirty-one years, must be supposed to end. Now, as this began with persecutions against, and cruelties upon the Protestants; so at length the angel of the waters is heard to give thanks to God for causing the enemies of his people at last to drink of their own blood. To which song of praise another angel says, *Amen*: all which seems to denote the joy of the Protestant states and churches on the success of the Swedish arms against the emperor.

Verses 8, 9. *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun*—Namely, of the Papal kingdom; and power was given unto him—Unto the angel; to

scorch men with fire—Alluding to the heat of the sun, namely, the men who had the mark of the beast. *And they were scorched with great heat; nevertheless, they repented not to give glory to God, who had power over these plagues; but blasphemed his name the more*—“Now as this vial,” says Fleming, “must begin where the other ends, namely, at, or a little after, A. D. 1648, so I cannot see but it must denote, first, the French wars in Flanders, that followed the peace of Munster, inflamed, after they had been apparently quenched, by the seizure of Lorraine, the new conquests of the French in Burgundy and Flanders, the wars in Germany, and invasion of the Low Countries; to which may be added the French king’s quarrels with several popes, about the restitution of Castro, the rights of the duke of Modena, &c. Now, seeing the bombarding of towns and cities was chiefly made use of in these later wars, we may see how properly the *scorching*, or burning men from above, (as if the sun had sent down fire and heat from his own body,) is made use of to characterize the time of this vial. But the chief thing to be taken notice of here is, that *the sun*, and other luminaries of heaven, are the emblems of princes and kingdoms; therefore, the pouring out of this vial on the sun must denote the humiliation of some eminent potentates of the Romish interest, who cherished and supported the Papal cause. And these, therefore, must be principally the houses of Austria and Bourbon, though not exclusively of other Popish princes. Now it is not unusual with God to make his enemies crush and weaken one another, which has been done in that part of the vial which is already fulfilled, and will be perhaps more so afterward. [Reader, mark this: how manifestly has it been accomplished!] As, therefore, France was made use of, in the instances given, to vex and scorch the Austrian family, in both branches of it, so afterward the French king himself was vexed when he saw himself forced to leave Holland, which he was so near surprising, A. D. 1672; and especially when he was compelled to resign all his conquests in Flanders by the peace of Ryswick. The effect of this vial is also seen in darkening the glory of King James, (from whom the Papists expected new conquests,) by the hand of King William; by whom also God put a stop to the career of the French monarch in his conquests in Flanders and on the Rhine. And we see it further poured out by the eclipse of the Austrian family, in the loss of Spain and its dependant principalities. As to the remaining part of this vial, I do humbly suppose that it will come to its highest pitch about A. D. 1717; and that it will run out about the year 1794.” [Mr. Fleming states at large his reasons for this conjecture, which, however, cannot be inserted here.] “At which time I suppose the fourth vial will end, and the fifth commence, by a new mortification of the Papacy, after this vial has lasted one hundred and forty-eight years, which is indeed a long period in comparison of the former vials; but if it be considered in reference to the fourth, fifth, and sixth

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trumpets, it is but short, seeing the fourth lasted one hundred and ninety, the fifth three hundred and two, and the sixth three hundred and ninety-three years.” It seems probable, if Mr. Fleming had lived in our time, instead of fixing the termination of the fourth vial in the year 1794, he would have extended the period of it till after the battle of Waterloo, in the middle of the year 1815.

Mr. Faber, it may be observed, considers the French revolution, with all its consequences, as being comprehended in the fourth vial; for which he assigns the following reasons: “In the language of symbols, the *sun of a kingdom* is the government of that kingdom; and the *sun of an empire*, if it be a divided empire, is the government of the most powerful state within that empire. When the political sun shines with a steady lustre, and yields a salutary warmth, it is a blessing to a people. But when it glares with a fierce and unnatural heat, scorching all the productions of human industry with the intolerable blaze of a portentous tyranny, it is the heaviest curse which can befall a nation. Since the whole prophecy relates to the Roman empire, the *sun* mentioned under this vial must be the sun of the Roman firmament: since the pouring out of all the vials takes place long posterior to the division of the empire, this sun must be the sun of the divided empire; or the government of that state within the limits of the empire, which at the present era is the most powerful. The prediction then of the fourth vial obviously intimates, that the frantic scenes of the harvest should be succeeded by a systematic military tyranny, which should be exercised over the Roman empire by the government of the most powerful state then existing within its limits. The world, exhausted with the miseries of the symbolical harvest, and wearied with the wild struggles of licentious anarchy, should tamely submit to the lawless domination of an unrelenting despot. In pointing out the particular government intended by this scorching sun of the Latin or Papal firmament, the reader will doubtless have anticipated me. The present Popish states are France, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Naples, Sardinia, and Etruria. Of these, I apprehend, no one will be inclined to deny that France is by many degrees the most powerful, and consequently that its government must inevitably be esteemed the sun of the system. To observe then the accurate completion of the prophecy of the fourth vial, in which it is said that power was given to this sun to scorch men with fire, and that they were scorched with great heat, we have only to cast our eyes over the continent. A system of tyranny hitherto unknown in Europe, except in the worst periods of the Roman history, has been established, and is now acted upon, by him who styles himself emperor of the French: and the scorching rays of military despotism are at this moment felt, [namely, in 1804, when this was written,] more or less, throughout France, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and the west of Germany. A regular plan of making each man a spy upon his neighbour destroys all the comfort and all the confidence of social life: and France, with her degraded provinces,

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or, as they are termed, with diplomatic mockery, *allies*, groans under the weight of endless requisitions, levies, and extortions, at once tormented herself, and the savage tormentor of others. But the effect produced, both by these plagues and by the following ones, will only be blasphemy and hardness of heart, instead of a reformation of principles and practice. The earthquake which overthrew the tenth part of the city, (chap. xi. 13.) caused the remnant of the seed of the woman to give glory unto the Lord; but the effusion of the vials upon God's enemies produces not the least tendency to repentance. We must not therefore look for any further reformation from Popery; for the vials are instruments of God's wrath, not of mercy. France accordingly has nominally returned, like a dog to its vomit, to her old alliance with the blasphemous corruptions of Popery; but, according to every account of eye-witnesses, she still really and individually strengthens herself in the yet more blasphemous abominations of antichrist. Yet, although there will be no further reformation, it does not appear that the inspired writers give any intimations of some still more dreadful persecution of the witnesses than that which they have already undergone from the two Latin beasts; on the contrary, Scripture seems to me rather to lead to a directly opposite opinion. I mean not, indeed, to deny that individual Protestants, those, for instance, who reside in Popish countries, may experience persecution; these will continue to prophesy in sackcloth to the very end of the twelve hundred and sixty days: I would only be understood to intimate, that I can discover no warrant for expecting that Protestantism in general, as nationally professed, will ever be so far subdued by Popery as to undergo throughout the whole world a grand universal persecution resembling those of the pagan emperors, or the Roman pontiffs in the plenitude of their power."

But to return to Mr. Fleming. "Let the reader," says he, "call to mind what I premised to the consideration of these vials, namely, that seeing they suppose a struggle between the Popish and Reformed parties, every vial is to be looked upon as the event and conclusion of some new periodical attack of that first party upon the other, the issue of which proves at length favourable to the latter against the former. For if this be duly considered, it will convince us that a great declining of the Protestant interest for some time, and great and formidable advances and new degrees of increase in the Romish party, are very consistent with the state of both these opposite interests under the vials. For as Rome pagan was gradually ruined under the seals, under many of which it seemed to increase, and to become more rampant than before, when yet it was indeed declining, so must we suppose it will be with Rome Papal. For monarchies, as they rise gradually and insensibly, wear out so likewise. And therefore we must not entertain such chimerical notions of the fall of the Papacy, as if it were to be accomplished speedily or miraculously, as many have done. For as it rose insensibly, and step by step, so must it fall in like manner. For it is with the church

as it is with particular Christians, who are often sorely buffeted by Satan, and sometimes brought even to extremities by temptations; but do ever carry the victory at last. Who would have believed that the Christian Church was about to triumph over the Roman pagan empire when the dreadful persecutions under Dioclesian and his collegiate emperors was at its highest pitch? But the darkest time of the night ushers in the dawning of the church's day, in the usual way of God's providence. And this is very conspicuously to be observed in the period of the third vial. Who would have thought that the loss of Bohemia, and the Emperor Ferdinand's ruling all Germany with a formidable army, were likely to issue in the victories of the Swedish arms, and the future security of the Protestant interest through the empire and elsewhere? So that we must not wonder if for sixteen years [this was published in 1701] the house of Bourbon be raised up to be a further terror and scourge to the world, and to Protestant nations particularly. And, as a confirmation of this conjecture, let it be observed further, that it is something very extraordinary, and peculiar in some sense to this vial, 'that the sun, upon which it is poured out, should yet be made the executor of the judgment of it upon others at the same time that he is tormented with it himself.' So that whosoever is denoted by the *sun* here, (as I suppose the house of Bourbon principally is,) is made use of, as the devil is, both to torment others, and to be tormented himself in so doing. And if the king of France, therefore, be denoted by this principally, I fear he is yet to be made use of in the hand of God, as Nebuchadnezzar was of old against the Jews, namely, as a further severe scourge to the Protestant churches everywhere. And besides this characteristic mark, which seems to forebode his further exaltation and our humiliation, there is yet another thing that I cannot think upon but with dread and trembling of heart, namely, that it is further said, 'that while this sun of the Popish world is running his fatal and dreadful career, and scorching men with fire, they are so far from being bettered by these judgments, that they go on more and more to blaspheme the name of God, who has power over these plagues. And while this continues to be the state of the Protestant world, and while atheism, deism, socinianism, irreligion, profaneness, skepticism, formality, hatred of godliness, and a bitter persecuting spirit continue and increase among us, what can we expect but new and desolating judgments? For while we continue to walk thus contrary to God, we cannot but expect that he should walk contrary to us also. It is in vain for us to boast of our privileges, or plead exemption from judgments on this account. For where there is no national reformation and repentance, national sins are like to pull down miseries upon us so much the sooner and more certainly, in that we have been so singularly and peculiarly privileged. For we may in this case expect that God will say to us, as to the Israelites of old, (Amos iii. 2.) *You especially have I known of all the families, or nations, of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

A. M. 4100. 10 And the fifth angel poured out
A. D. 96. his vial ^aupon the seat of the beast;
^band his kingdom was full of darkness; ^cand
they gnawed their tongues for pain,

11 And ^dblasphemed the God of hea-
ven, because of their pains ^eand their

^a Chap. xiii. 2.—^b Chap. ix. 2.—^c Chap. xi. 10.—^d Verses
9, 21.—^e Verse 2.

And therefore if we go on in sin as we have hitherto done, let us take heed to ourselves lest vengeance be near. I pray God I may be mistaken in my fears, but I am afraid I have but too just reason to turn prophet here, by applying to ourselves what Peter said to those of his time, 1 Epist. iv. 17, &c., *The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.* Though I do also conclude with him, that if it begin at us, dreadful will be the end of our enemies at last: and *if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* Wherefore, if we be called to suffer for our holy religion, let us do so according to the will of God, committing the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Should it be asked, When will the tide turn for the Protestant Church? I answer, when they turn more universally to God, and no sooner. But if it be inquired further, Whether the sun of the Popish kingdom is not to be eclipsed himself at length? I must positively assert he will, else this vial were not a judgment upon him and the Romish party. But if yet again the question be, *When* this is to fall out, and *how*? I must say, I have nothing more to add to what I have said, as to the time. But as to the manner how this is to be done, our text lays a foundation of some more distinct thoughts. And we may suppose, lastly, that the French monarchy, after it has scorched others, will itself consume by doing so; its fire, and that which is the fuel that maintains it, wasting insensibly, till it be exhausted at last toward the end of this century, as the Spanish monarchy did before toward the end of the sixteenth age." Thus Mr. Fleming: and it is remarkable that in 1793 the French king was beheaded by the National Assembly; and great and unparalleled miseries fell upon the French nation, which nearly extinguished all their nobility, and brought about a war that has lasted twenty-three years, and has nearly ruined that country and all the nations of Europe.

Verses 10, 11. *And the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat, or throne, of the beast*—The reader will recollect that mention has been made of two beasts, (see chap. xiii. 1, 11,) the *secular* and the *ecclesiastical*; and, as Mr. Faber observes, "it might be doubted which of the two was here intended, were we not assisted in our inquiries by the general context of the whole prophecy. Whenever the beast is simply mentioned, by way of eminence, as it were, it will invariably be found that the ten-horned or secular beast is meant, not the two-horned or ecclesiastical beast. In addition to this general proof, the particular context of the present passage may be

sores, ^fand repented not of their A. M. 4100.
deeds. A. D. 96.

12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial
^gupon the great river Euphrates; ^hand the
water thereof was dried up, ⁱthat the way of
the kings of the east might be prepared.

^f Verse 9.—^g Chap. ix. 14.—^h Jer. l. 38; li. 36.—ⁱ Isa.
xli. 2, 25.

adduced. The angel pours his vial on *the throne of the beast*. Now the first beast is expressly said to have had a *throne* given him by the *dragon*; because, although nominally Christian, he exercised his secular authority like his predecessor, the pagan empire, in persecuting the church of God: (see chap. xii. 2:) whereas no mention is made of the *throne* of the second beast, and for this plain reason; the secular authority of the pope [and his clergy] was confined within the narrow limits of an Italian principality, and all the persecutions which he ever excited against the faithful were carried into effect by the first beast, through the instrumentality of his last head, or his ten horns. Hence it is manifest that the beast, upon whose throne the present vial is poured, is the first or secular beast. What is precisely meant by this judgment, it is impossible at present to determine with any certainty, inasmuch as it is yet future. If, however, we may argue from analogy, since *the great city* means the Roman empire, and since *the throne* means the authority exercised within that empire by its head, the pouring out of a vial upon *the throne of the beast*, so as to fill his whole kingdom with darkness, seems most naturally to mean some severe blow aimed directly at his authority, which should fill his whole kingdom with confusion." This judgment, which Mr. Fleming supposed would begin about A. D. 1794, (but which probably did not begin till after the termination of the horrors of the French Revolution by the battle of Waterloo, in the year 1815,) that pious divine thought would not expire till A. D. 1848. For, says he, "since the pope received the title of supreme bishop no sooner than the year 606, he cannot be supposed to have any vial poured upon his throne, so as to ruin his authority as signally as this judgment must do, until the year 1848, when the twelve hundred and sixty years in the prophetic account may be considered as ending. But yet we are not to imagine that this vial will totally destroy the Papacy, (though it will exceedingly weaken it,) for we find it still in being and active when the next vial is poured out." Bishop Newton thinks the judgment here intended will fall upon Rome itself, and will darken and confound the whole antichristian empire. But still the consequences of this plague are much the same as those of the foregoing one; for the sufferers, instead of repenting of their deeds, are hardened like Pharaoh, and still persist in their blasphemy and idolatry, and obstinately withstand all attempts of reformation."

Verses 12–14. *And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates*—Affected also

A. M. 4100. 13 And I saw three unclean ^a spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of ^b the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of ^c the false prophet.

14 ^d For they are the spirits of devils, ^e working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings

^a 1 John iv. 1-3.—^b Chap. xii. 3, 9.—^c Chap. xix. 20; xx. 10.—^d 1 Tim. iv. 1; James iii. 15.—^e 2 Thess. ii. 9; Chap. xiii. 13, 14; xix. 20.

by the sixth trumpet; and the water thereof was dried up—And of all the rivers that flowed into it. The Turkish empire seems to be here intended, lying chiefly on this side the Euphrates. The Romish and Mohammedan affairs ran nearly parallel to each other for several ages. In the seventh age rose Mohammed himself, and a little before him Boniface III., with his universal bishopric. In the eleventh, both the Turks and Gregory VII. carried all before them. In the year 1300 Boniface appeared with his two swords at the newly-erected jubilee. In the self-same year arose the Ottoman Porte; yea, and on the same day. And here the vial poured out on the beast is immediately followed by that poured out on the Euphrates; that is, as appears, on the Mohammedan antichrist, as the former were on the Papacy. And as the sixth trumpet brought the Turks from beyond the Euphrates, from crossing which river they date their rise, this sixth vial dries up their waves, and exhausts their power, as the means and way to prepare and dispose the eastern kings and kingdoms to renounce their heathenish and Mohammedan errors, in order to their receiving and embracing Christianity. To nearly the same purpose Mr. Faber interprets the effects of this vial. "Under the sixth trumpet," says he, "the four Turkish sultanies, the mystic waters of the Ottoman empire, issued from the river Euphrates: under the sixth vial the waters of the same Euphrates are to be dried up. We cannot, therefore, reasonably doubt that the symbolical Euphrates means, in both cases, the same power. Rivers typify nations; and when a particular river is specified, the nation immediately connected with that river is obviously intended. Such being the case, as the issuing forth of the four sultanies, those mystic waters of the Euphrates, which deluged the eastern empire, denotes the rise of the Turkish power, so the drying up of those waters must evidently denote its subversion." As a prelude to this, if we advert to the present state of the Turkish power we shall be convinced that, for several years, it has gradually been upon the decline; and the approaching termination of the Ottoman empire is so manifest, that even those whose attention is solely directed to politics, are sufficiently aware that the time of its extinction cannot be far distant. Of late it has been preserved rather by the jealousy of the great European powers than by any physical strength of its own; and it doubtless will be preserved by the hand of Providence, until his own appointed season shall approach for pre-

of the earth, ^p and of the whole world, ^q to gather them to ^r the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15 ¶ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, ^s lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

^p Luke ii. 1.—^q Chap. xvii. 14; xix. 19; xx. 8.—^r Matt. xxiv. 43; 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Chap. iii. 3.—^s 2 Cor. v. 3; Chap. iii. 4, 18.

paring a way for the kings of the east, and for gathering together the kings of the Latin world to the battle of the great day of God Almighty—By the kings of the east are probably meant the kings or kingdoms lying east from the Euphrates, namely, in Persia, India, and perhaps also China, for the conversion of whom to the Christian faith, it seems the removal of the Mohammedan empire will prepare the way. But though this seems probable, there can be no certainty of it; nor can the matters here predicted be more than the subjects of conjecture. Whoever these kings or kingdoms may be, they appear, Bishop Newton thinks, to threaten the ruin and destruction of the kingdom of the beast; and, therefore, the agents and emissaries of Popery, (verses 13, 14,) of the dragon, the representative of the devil, and of the beast, the representative of the antichristian empire, and of the false prophet, the representative of the antichristian church, (that is, as some think, the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits,) as disagreeable, as loquacious, as sordid, as impudent as frogs, are employed to oppose them, and stir up the princes and potentates of their communion to make their united and last effort in a religious war. These three unclean spirits, it is said, are the spirits of devils working miracles—Namely, pretended miracles, to impose upon the weak and credulous; which go forth to the kings of the earth—της οικουμένης ολης, of the whole Roman world, or empire, as the expression frequently means; to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. That is, they use all their evil arts and wicked policy to excite the princes and great men of the world to unite more firmly against all who aid and abet the cause of truth and righteousness, of God and religion.

Verses 15, 16. Behold, I come as a thief—Suddenly and unexpectedly. Observe the beautiful abruptness; I, Jesus Christ. Hear him! Thus, when it is foretold that these evil agents will use great art and address in support of their bad cause, the Spirit of wisdom adds a useful caution, warning the faithful servants of Christ to be on their guard against the emissaries of hell, lest they should be deceived to their own destruction. Blessed is he that watcheth—That looks continually for him that comes quickly; and keepeth his garments on him—Which men usually put off when they sleep; that is, that keepeth himself clothed with the robe of righteousness, the garment of salvation; lest he walk naked, and they see his shame—Lest he lose the graces which he

A. M. 4100. 16 ¹ And he gathered them together
A. D. 96. into a place called in the Hebrew
tongue, Armageddon.

17 And the seventh angel poured out his
vial into the air; and there came a great voice
out of the temple of heaven, from the throne,
saying, ² It is done.

18 And ³ there were voices, and thunders,
and lightnings; ⁴ and there was a great earth-
quake, ⁵ such as was not since men were
upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and
so great.

¹ Chap. xix. 19.—² Chap. xxi. 6.—³ Chap. iv. 5; viii. 5;
xi. 19.—⁴ Chap. xi. 13.—⁵ Dan. xii. 1.—⁶ Chap. xiv. 8;
xvii. 18.

takes no care to keep, and others see his sin and
punishment. *And he gathered them together*—The
true construction is, *And they gathered them to-
gether*; that is, the evil spirits and agents, before
mentioned, gather all the forces of the Popish
princes together; *into a place called, in the Hebrew
tongue, Armageddon*—That is, the mountain of de-
struction. Mageddon, or Megiddo, is a place fre-
quently mentioned in the Old Testament, well
known in ancient times for many memorable oc-
currences; in particular, the slaughter of the kings
of Canaan, related Judges v. 19. Here the narra-
tive appears to break off, but is resumed again chap.
xix. 19.

Verses 17–21. *And the seventh angel poured out
his vial into the air*—The seat of Satan's residence,
who is emphatically styled, (Eph. ii. 2,) *the prince
of the power of the air*, and is represented (ver. 13,)
as a principal actor in these latter scenes; so that this
last period will not only complete the ruin of the
kingdom of the beast, but will also shake the king-
dom of Satan everywhere. Upon the pouring out
of this vial, a solemn proclamation is made *from the
throne of God himself, It is done*—In the same
sense as the angel before affirmed, chap. x. 7, that
*in the days of the seventh trumpet the mystery of
God should be finished*. Of this vial, as indeed of
all the former, the completion is gradual; and the
immediate effects and consequences are, (verses 18–
21,) *voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an
earthquake, and great hail*—Events portending
great calamities. *Voices, and thunders, and light-
nings*, are the usual attendants of the Deity, espe-
cially in his judgments. *Great earthquakes*, in
prophetic language, signify great changes and revo-
lutions; and this is such a one as men never felt
and experienced before; *such as was not since men
were upon the earth*. Not only the great city is di-
vided into three parts, or factions, but the cities of
the nations fall from their obedience to her. Her
sins are remembered before God, and, like another
Babylon, she will soon be made to drink of the
bitter cup of his anger. Nay, not only the works of
men, the cities, fall, but even the works of nature;
the islands flee away, and the mountains are not

b

19 And ^a the great city was divided ^{A. M. 4100.}
into three parts, and the cities of the ^{A. D. 96.}
nations fell: and great Babylon ^b came in remem-
brance before God, ^c to give unto her the cup
of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20 And ^d every island fled away, and the
mountains were not found.

21 ^e And there fell upon men a great hail
out of heaven, every stone about the weight
of a talent: and ^f men blasphemed God be-
cause of ^g the plague of the hail; for the plague
thereof was exceeding great.

^b Chap. xviii. 5.—^c Isa. li. 17, 23; Jer. xxv. 15, 16; Chap.
xiv. 10.—^d Chap. vi. 14.—^e Chap. xi. 19.—^f Verses 9, 11.
^g Exod. ix. 23–25.

found; which is more than was said before, chap.
vi. 14, that they were moved out of their places;
and can import no less than an utter extirpation of
idolatry. *Great hail*, too, often signifies the judg-
ments of God, and these are uncommon judgments.
Diodorus, a grave historian, speaketh of hailstones
which weighed a pound and more; Philostorgius
mentions hail that weighed eight pounds; but these
are about the weight of a talent—Or about a hundred
pounds; a strong figure, to denote the greatness and
severity of these judgments. But still the men con-
tinue obstinate, and blaspheme God because of the
plague of the hail—They remain incorrigible under
the divine judgments, and shall be destroyed before
they will be reformed. This vial of consummation
was supposed by Mr. Mede to synchronize with the
vintage, mentioned chap. xiv. 18, 19, the conclusion
of the grand drama of one thousand two hundred and
sixty years, the time of the end.—When it shall be
poured out, says Faber, “the great controversy of
God with the nations will commence; his ancient
people will begin to be restored; and the sentence
of destruction will go forth against the beast and the
false prophet, even while they are in the midst of
their temporary success, and while they are vainly
flattering themselves with the hope of a complete
victory over the church of God. Such being its
contents, it is said to be poured out into the air, in
allusion to the dreadful storms of political thunder
and lightning which it will produce. Four import-
ant events are comprehended under it: the earth-
quake, by which the great city is divided into three
parts; the symbolical storm of hail; the overthrow
of Babylon, and the battle of Armageddon, to which
the kings of the earth had begun to gather them-
selves together under the preceding vial.” On these
particulars we may observe as follows: 1st, *The
earthquake*, by which the great city is divided into
three parts, manifestly signifies, according to the
usual import of prophetic language, some great re-
volution by which the Latin empire shall either be
divided into three sovereignties, or prefectures, like
the ancient Roman empire. But what the precise
meaning of this prediction is, and how the city will
be divided into three parts, time alone can discover.

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2d, *The hail-storm* seems to denote some northern invasion of the Roman empire. Since the northern incursions of the Gothic nations, under the first trumpet, are typified by a storm of hail, it is only natural to conclude, from analogy, that the hail-storm of this vial, which synchronizes with *the time of the end*, likewise typifies a northern invasion. 3d, The fall of the spiritual Babylon, described at large in chap. xviii., seems to be the same as the destruction of the little horn of Daniel's fourth beast; they both equally relate to the complete subversion of the Papacy. 4th, Exactly contemporary with the fall of the spiritual Babylon, or the adulterous Church of Rome, will be the overthrow of its supporter, the secular Babylon, or the ten-horned Roman beast. The power of both will be broken in the same battle of Armageddon, which is abundantly manifest from the concurring testimony both

of Daniel and St. John. Thus also Fleming: "This vial brings down thunder, lightning, hail, and storms; which, together with a terrible earthquake, destroys all the antichristian nations, and particularly Rome, or mystical Babylon. And as Christ concluded his sufferings on the cross with this voice, *It is finished*, so the church's sufferings are concluded with a voice out of the temple of heaven, and from the throne of God and Christ there, saying, *It is done*: and therefore with this the millennium, or thousand years of Christ's spiritual reign on earth, begins. Now how great and remarkable this last destruction of the Papal antichrist will be, we may guess by the representation given of it chap. xiv. 19, 20, (where see the note,) in which it is set forth under the emblem of the great wine-press of the wrath of God, which can refer to nothing so properly as the event of the seventh vial."

CHAPTER XVII.

This chapter contains an explanatory digression. (1.) One of the angels, who had the vials, to manifest the justness of the above fearful ruin of the Papal state, represents it by an awful, blasphemous, and infamous harlot, finely decked, drunk with the blood of the saints, and riding on a scarlet-coloured beast, all over marked with blasphemy, and having seven heads and ten horns, 1-6. (2.) He explains who and what she is, and what shall be her fate, 7-18.

A. M. 4100. A. D. 96. **AND** there came ^a one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; ^b I will show unto thee the judgment of ^c the great whore ^d that sitteth upon many waters;

2 ^e With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and ^f the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

^a Chap. xxi. 9.—^b Chap. xvi. 19; xviii. 16-19.—^c Nah. iii. 4; Chap. xix. 2.

^d Jer. li. 13; Verse 15.—^e Chap. xviii. 3.—^f Jer. li. 7; Chap. xiv. 8; xviii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

As the *seventh seal* and the *seventh trumpet* contained many more particulars than any of the former seals and former trumpets, so the *seventh vial* contains more than any of the former vials: and the more you consider, the more admirable you will find the structure of this book in all its parts. The destruction of the antichristian empire is a subject of such importance and consequence, that the Holy Spirit hath thought fit to represent it under a variety of images. Rome hath already been characterized by the names of *spiritual Egypt* and *Babylon*; and having seen how her plagues resemble those of *Egypt*, we shall now see her fall compared to that of *Babylon*. It was declared before in general, (chap. xiv. 8,) *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; but this is a catastrophe deserving of a more particular description, both for a warning to some and for a consolation to others. But before the description of her fall and destruction, there is premised an account of her state and condition, that there may be no mistake in the application. Rome was meant, as all, both Papists and Protestants, agree; and I think it appears, almost to demonstration, that not pagan but Christian, not imperial but Papal, Rome was here

intended; and the arguments urged to the contrary by the bishop of Meaux himself, the best and ablest advocate for Popery, prove nothing so much as the weakness and badness of the cause which they are brought to defend.

Verses 1, 2. *And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials*—Most probably this was the seventh angel; for, under the seventh vial, *great Babylon came in remembrance before God*, and now St. John is called upon to see her condemnation and execution; *saying, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great whore*—Which is now circumstantially described. This relation concerning the *great whore*, and that concerning the wife of the Lamb, (chap. xxi. 9, 10,) have the same introduction, in token of the exact opposition between them; *that sitteth as a queen, in pomp, power, ease, and luxury, upon many waters*—So ancient Babylon, which was seated upon the great river Euphrates, is described by Jeremiah, (chap. li. 13,) as *dwelling upon many waters*; and from thence the phrase is borrowed, and signifies, according to the angel's own explanation, (verse 15,) *ruling over many peoples and nations*. Neither was this an ordinary prostitute; she was *the great whore, with*

A. M. 4100. 3 So he carried me away in the spirit
A. D. 96. ^s into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit ^h upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of ⁱ names of blasphemy, ^k having seven heads and ^l ten horns.

^s Chapter xii. 6, 14.—^h Chapter xii. 3.—ⁱ Chapter xiii. 1.
^k Verse 9.—^l Verse 12.

whom the kings of the earth, both ancient and modern, have committed fornication—By partaking of her idolatry, and various kinds of wickedness. So Tyre is described, Isa. xxiii. 17, as *having committed fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth*. Nay, not only the kings, but inferior persons, *the inhabitants of the earth*, the common people, *have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*—No wine can more thoroughly intoxicate those who drink it, than false zeal does the followers of the great whore. Thus it was said of ancient Babylon, *The nations have drunk of her wine, therefore the nations are mad*. Fornication, in the usual style of Scripture, is idolatry; but if it be taken even literally, it is true that modern Rome openly allows the one as well as practises the other. Ancient Rome doth, in no respect, so well answer the character; for she ruled more with a rod of iron than with the wine of her fornication. Her ambition was for extending her empire, and not her religion. She permitted even the conquered nations to continue in the religion of their ancestors, and to worship their own gods after their own rituals. She may be said rather to have been corrupted by the importation of foreign vices and superstitions than to have established her own in other countries.

Verse 3. *So he carried me away, &c.*—Namely, in the vision. As Ezekiel, while he was a captive in Chaldea, was conveyed by the Spirit to Jerusalem, (Ezek. viii. 3,) so John is carried away in the Spirit into the wilderness; for there the scene is laid, being a scene of desolation. When the woman, the true church, was persecuted and afflicted, she was said (chapter xii. 14) *to flee into the wilderness*: and, in like manner, when the woman, the false church, is to be destroyed, the vision is presented *in the wilderness*. For they are by no means, as some have imagined, the same woman, under various representations. They are totally distinct and different characters, and drawn in contrast to each other, as appears from their whole attire and behaviour, and particularly from these two circumstances,—that during the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, while the woman is *fed in the wilderness*, the beast and the scarlet whore are reigning and triumphant, and, at the latter end, the whore is *burned with fire*, when the woman, as *his wife, hath made herself ready for the marriage of the Lamb*. And *I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast*—The same which is described chap. xiii., but he was there described as he carried on his own designs only; here he is connected with the whore. A woman sitting upon a beast is a lively and significant emblem of a church or city directing and governing

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4 And the woman ^m was arrayed in A. M. 4100.
purple and scarlet-colour, ⁿ and ^l decked A. D. 96.
with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, ^o having a golden cup in her hand, ^p full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

^m Chap. xviii. 12, 16.—ⁿ Dan. xi. 38.—^l Gr. *gilded*.—^o Jer. li. 7; Chap. xviii. 6.—^p Chap. xiv. 8.

an empire. In painting and sculpture, as well as in prophetic language, cities are often represented in the form of women: and Rome herself is exhibited, in ancient coins, as a woman sitting upon a lion. Here the beast is a *scarlet-coloured beast*, bearing the bloody livery, as well as the person of the woman, called so for the same reason that the dragon (chap. xii. 3) was termed a *red dragon*, namely, to denote his cruelty, and in allusion to the distinguishing colour of the Roman emperors and magistrates. The beast is also *full of names of blasphemy*—He had before a name of blasphemy upon his heads, (chap. xiii. 1,) now he has many: from the time of Hildebrand, the blasphemous titles of the Roman pontiff have been abundantly multiplied; *having seven heads*—Which reach in a succession from his ascent out of the sea to his being cast into the lake of fire; and *ten horns*—Which are contemporary with each other, and belong to his last period. So that this is the very same beast which was described in the former part of chap. xiii.: and the woman, in some measure, answers to the two-horned beast, or false prophet; and consequently the woman is not pagan, but Christian Rome; because Rome was become Christian before the beast had completely *seven heads and ten horns*; that is, before the Roman empire experienced its last form of government, and was divided into ten kingdoms.

Verses 4, 5. *And the woman was arrayed*—With the utmost pomp and magnificence; *in purple and scarlet*—Which were the colours of the imperial habit,—the purple in times of peace, and the scarlet in times of war: and the scarlet is the colour of the popes and cardinals, as it used to be that of the Roman emperors and senators. Nay, the mules and horses which carry the popes and cardinals are covered with scarlet cloth, so that they may properly be said to ride upon a scarlet-coloured beast. The woman is also *decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls*—And who can sufficiently describe the pride, and grandeur, and magnificence of the Church of Rome in her vestments and ornaments of all kinds? One remarkable instance of this we have in Paul II., whose mitre was set with diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, chrysolites, jaspers, and all kinds of precious stones: and another conspicuous instance is in the lady of Loretto; the riches of whose holy image, and house, and treasury are far beyond the reach of description. There silver can hardly find an admission, and gold itself looks but poorly among such an incredible number of precious stones. Moreover, the woman, like other harlots, who give filters and love-potions to inflame their lovers, hath a golden cup in her hand, like the ancient Babylon, Jer. li. 7,

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A. M. 4100. 5 And upon her forehead *was* a
A. D. 96. name written, ^a MYSTERY, BA-
BYLON ^rTHE GREAT, ^sTHE MOTHER
OF ²HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS
OF THE EARTH.

^q2 Thess. ii. 7.—^r Chap. xi. 8; xiv. 8; xvi. 19; xviii. 2, 10, 21.
^s Chap. xviii. 9; xix. 2.

full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication—Signifying the specious and alluring arts wherewith she bewitches and incites men to idolatry, which is an abomination, and spiritual fornication, and to many other abominable doctrines as well as practices. *And upon her forehead a name written*—Whereas the saints have the name of God and the Lamb on their foreheads. The allusion here seems to be to the practice of some notorious prostitutes, who had their names written in a label upon their foreheads, as we may collect from ancient authors; (see Seneca, Book i. contr. 2; Juvenal, Sat. vi. lin. 122;) MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT—This name *mystery* can imply no less than that she dealeth in *mysteries*; her religion is a *mystery*,—a mystery of iniquity; and she herself is mystically Babylon the Great. Benedict XIII., in his proclamation of the jubilee, A. D. 1725, explains this sufficiently. His words are, “To this holy city, famous for the memory of so many holy martyrs, run with religious alacrity! Hasten to the place which the Lord hath chosen. Ascend to this new Jerusalem, whence the law of the Lord, and the light of evangelical truth, hath flowed forth into all nations, from the very first beginning of the church: the city most rightfully called The Palace; placed for the pride of all ages; the city of the Lord; the Sion of the Holy One of Israel. This catholic and apostolical Roman Church is the head of the world, the mother of all believers, the faithful interpreter of God, and mistress of all churches.” But God varies the style: he terms her *the mother of harlots*—The parent, ring-leader, patroness, and nourisher of many daughters, that closely copy after her; and *abominations*—Of every kind, spiritual and fleshly; *of the earth*—In all lands. In this respect she is indeed *catholic*, or *universal*.

The Papists would fain persuade us that pagan Rome is here intended: but, as Bishop Newton justly observes, “The title of *mystery* is in no respect proper to her more than any other city, and neither is there any mystery in substituting one heathen, idolatrous, and persecuting city for another; but it is indeed a mystery that a city, called Christian, professing and boasting herself to be the city of God, should prove another Babylon in idolatry and cruelty to the people of God. She glories in the name of *Roman Catholic*, and well therefore may she be called, *Babylon the Great*. She affects the style and title of our *holy mother* the church, but she is in truth the mother of fornications and abominations. Neither can this character, with any propriety, be applied to ancient Rome, for she was

6 And I saw ^tthe woman drunken A. M. 4100.
^u with the blood of the saints, and A. D. 96.
^v with the blood of ²the martyrs of Jesus: and
when I saw her, I wondered with great admira-
tion.

^wOr, *fornications*.—^x Chap. xviii. 24.—^y Chap. xiii. 15; xvi. 6.
^z Chap. vi. 9, 10; x. 11.

rather a learner of foreign superstitions than the mistress of idolatry to other nations; as appears in various instances, and particularly from that solemn form of adjuration which the Romans used when they laid siege to a city, calling forth the tutelary deities of the place, and promising them temples, and sacrifices, and other solemnities at Rome. It may be concluded, therefore, that this part of the prophecy is sufficiently fulfilled, though there should be reason to question the truth of what is asserted by some writers, that the word MYSTERY was formerly written in letters of gold upon the forepart of the pope's mitre. Scaliger affirms it upon the authority of the duke de Montmorency: Francis le Moynes and Brocardus confirm it, appealing to ocular inspection: and when King James objected this, Lessius could not deny it. If the thing be true, it is a wonderful coincidence of the event with the letter of prophecy. It is, however, much more certain, and none of that communion can deny it, that the ancient mitres were usually adorned with inscriptions.

Verses 6, 7. *I saw the woman, &c.*—Infamous as the woman is for her idolatry, she is no less detestable for her cruelty, which are the two principal characters of the antichristian empire. *She is drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs*—Or witnesses; *of Jesus*—So that Rome may well be called, *the slaughter-house* of the martyrs. “This may indeed be applied both to pagan and to Christian Rome, for both have in their turns cruelly persecuted *the saints and martyrs of Jesus*; but the latter is more deserving of the character, as she hath far exceeded the former both in the degree and duration of her persecutions. It is very true, as it was hinted before, that if Rome pagan hath slain her thousands of innocent Christians, Rome Christian hath slain her ten thousands. For not to mention other outrageous slaughters and barbarities, the croisades against the Waldenses and Albigenses, the murders committed by the duke of Alba in the Netherlands, the massacres in France and Ireland, will probably amount to above ten times the number of all the Christians slain in all the ten persecutions of the Roman emperors put together. St. John's admiration also plainly evinces that Christian Rome was intended: for it could be no matter of surprise to him that a heathen city should persecute the Christians, when he himself had seen and suffered the persecution under Nero: but that a city, professedly Christian, should wanton and riot in the blood of Christians, was a subject of astonishment indeed; and well might he, as it is

A. M. 4100. 7 And the angel said unto me, A. D. 96. Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8 The beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen,

¹ Chapter xi. 7; xiii. 1.—² Chapter xiii. 10; Verse 11. ³ Chapter xiii. 3.—⁴ Chapter xiii. 8.—⁵ Chapter xiii. 18. ⁶ Chap. xiii. 1.—⁷ Verse 8.

emphatically expressed, *wonder with great wonder.* And the angel said, *Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery*—It was not thought sufficient to represent these things only in vision, and therefore the angel, like the *αγγελος*, *nuntius*, or messenger, in the ancient drama, undertakes to explain the mystery, the mystic scene or secret meaning, of the woman, and of the beast that carries her: and the angel's interpretation is indeed, as Bishop Newton observes, the best key to the Revelation, the best clew to direct and conduct us through this intricate labyrinth.

Verses 8-14. *The beast that thou sawest, &c.*—The mystery of the beast is first explained, and the *beast* is considered first in general, (verse 8,) under a threefold state or succession, as existing, and then ceasing to be, and then reviving again, so as to become another and the same. He *was, and is not*—*καίπερ ἔτιν, and yet is*, or, according to other copies, *καὶ παρῆται, and shall come, shall ascend out of the bottomless pit*—A *beast* in the prophetic style, as we before observed, is a tyrannical idolatrous empire; and the Roman empire was idolatrous under the heathen emperors, and then ceased to be so for some time under the Christian emperors, and then became idolatrous again under the Roman pontiffs, and so hath continued ever since. It is the same idolatrous power revived again; but only in another form; and all the corrupt part of mankind, whose names were not enrolled as good citizens in the registers of heaven, are pleased at the revival of it; but in this last form it *shall go into perdition*—It shall not, as it did before, cease for a time and revive again, but shall be destroyed for ever.

After this general account of the beast, follows an explanation of the particular emblems, with a short preface, intimating that they are deserving of the deepest attention, and are a proper exercise and trial of the understanding. *Here is the mind which hath*

and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

¹ Dan. vii. 20; Zech. i. 18, 19, 21; Chap. xiii. 1.—² Chap. xvii. 14; xix. 19.—³ Deut. x. 17; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Chap. xix. 18. ⁴ Jer. l. 44, 45; Chap. xiv. 4.

wisdom, verse 9—As it was said upon a former occasion, xiii. 8, *Here is wisdom: let him that hath understanding count, &c.* The *seven heads* have a double signification: they are, primarily, *seven mountains on which the woman sitteth*—On which the capital city is seated; which all know to be the situation of Rome. It is observed too, that new Rome, or Constantinople, is situated on seven mountains: but these are very rarely mentioned, and mentioned only by obscure authors in comparison of the others; and besides the seven mountains, other particulars also must coincide, which cannot be found in Constantinople. It is evident, therefore, that the city *seated on seven mountains* must be Rome; and a plainer description could not be given of it without expressing the name, which there might be several wise reasons for concealing.

As the *seven heads* signify *seven mountains*, so they also signify *seven kings* reigning over them. And they are *seven kings*—Or *kingdoms*, or *forms of government*, as the word imports, and hath been shown to import in former instances. *Five are fallen*—Five of these forms of government are already past; and *one is*—The sixth is now subsisting. The *five fallen are kings, and consuls, and dictators, and decemvirs, and military tribunes with consular authority*; as they are enumerated and distinguished by the two greatest Roman historians, Livy and Tacitus. The *sixth* is the power of the *Cesars or emperors*, which was subsisting at the time of the vision. An end was put to the imperial name, A. D. 476, by Odoacer, king of the Heruli. He and his successors, the Ostrogoths, assumed the title of kings of Italy; but though the name was changed, the power still continued much the same. This, therefore, cannot well be called a new form of government; it may rather be considered as a continuation of the imperial power, or as a renovation of the kingly authority. *Consuls* are reckoned but one form of

A. M. 4100. 15 And he saith unto me, ^k The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, ^l are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, ^m these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate ⁿ and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and ^o burn her with fire.

^k Isa. viii. 7; Verse 1.—^l Chap. xiii. 7.—^m Jer. i. 41, 42; Chap. xvi. 12.—ⁿ Ezek. xvi. 37-44; Chap. xviii. 16.

government, though their office was frequently suspended, and after a time restored again: and in the same manner *kings* may be counted but one form of government, though the name was resumed after an interval of so many years. A new form of government was not erected till Rome fell under the obedience of the eastern emperor, and the emperor's lieutenant, the exarch of Ravenna, dissolved all the former magistracies, and constituted a duke of Rome, to govern the people, and to pay tribute to the exarchate of Ravenna. Rome had never experienced this form of government before; and this was, perhaps, the other which, in the apostle's days, was not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue a short space—For Rome was reduced to a dukedom, tributary to the exarch of Ravenna, by Longinus, who was sent exarch A. D. 566 or 568; and the city revolted from the eastern emperor to the pope, A. D. 727; which is a short space, in comparison of the imperial power, which preceded, and lasted above five hundred years; and in comparison of the Papal power, which followed, and hath now continued about one thousand years. But still it may be doubted whether this is properly a new form of government, Rome being still subject to the imperial power, by being subject to the Greek emperor's deputy, the exarch of Ravenna: and, according as you determine this point, the beast that was, and is not—Was, while idolatrous, and was not, while not idolatrous, will appear to be the seventh or eighth. If you reckon this a new form of government, the beast that now is, is the eighth; if you do not reckon this a new form of government, the beast is of the seven; but whether he be the seventh or eighth, he is the last form of government, and goeth into perdition—It appears evidently that the sixth form of government, which was subsisting in St. John's time, is the imperial; and what form of government hath succeeded to that in Rome, and hath continued for a long space of time, but the Papal? The beast, therefore, upon which the woman rideth, is the Roman government in its last form; and this, all must acknowledge, is the Papal, and not the imperial.

Having thus explained the mystery of the seven heads, the angel proceeds to the explanation of the ten horns, (verses 12-14,) which, says he, are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet—And consequently they were not in being at the time of the vision; and indeed the Roman empire was not divided into ten kingdoms till some time after it was become Christian. But they receive power as

17 ^p For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, ^q until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

18 And the woman which thou sawest ^r is that great city, ^s which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

^o Chap. xviii. 8.—^p 2 Thess. ii. 11.—^q Chap. x. 7.—^r Chap. xvi. 19.—^s Chap. xii. 4.

kings one hour—Or rather, at the same time, or for the same length of time; with the beast—It is true in both senses, they rise and fall together with the beast; and consequently they are not to be reckoned before the rise and establishment of the beast. Kingdoms they might be before, but they were not before kingdoms or horns of the beast, till they embraced his religion, and submitted to his authority; and the beast strengthened them, as they again strengthened the beast. It is upon the seventh or last head of the beast that the horns were seen growing together, that is, upon the Roman empire in its seventh or last form of government; and they are not, like the heads, successive, but contemporary kingdoms. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast, verse 13—Which is easily understood and applied to the princes and states in communion with the Church of Rome. However they may differ in other respects, yet they agree in submitting implicitly to the authority of the Roman Church, and in defending its rights and prerogatives against all opposers. But where were ever ten kings or kingdoms who were all unanimous in their submissions to the Roman empire, and voluntarily contributed their power and strength, their forces and riches, to support and maintain it? These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, verse 14—They persecute the true Church of Christ, but the true church shall in the end prevail and triumph over them; which particulars have been fulfilled in part already, and will be more fully accomplished hereafter.

Verses 15-18. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth are peoples, &c.—In the former part of this description, (verse 1,) the whore is represented like ancient Babylon, sitting upon many waters; and these waters are here, verse 15, said expressly to signify peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. So many words in the plural number fitly denote the great extensiveness of her power and jurisdiction; and it is a remarkable peculiarity of Rome, different from all other governments in the world, that her authority is not limited to her own immediate subjects, and confined within the bounds of her own dominions, but extends over all kingdoms and countries professing the same religion. She herself glories in the title of the catholic church, and exults in the number of her votaries, as a certain proof of the true religion. But notwithstanding the general current in her favour, the tide shall turn

against her; and the hands which helped to raise her shall also pull her down; *the ten horns shall hate the whore*, verse 16—That is, by a common figure of the whole for a part, *some of the ten kings*; for others (xviii. 9) *shall bewail her and lament for her*; and (xix. 19) shall fight and perish in the cause of the beast. Some of the kings, who formerly loved her, grown sensible of her exorbitant exactions and oppressions, shall *hate her*, shall strip, and expose, and plunder her, and utterly consume her with fire. Rome, therefore, will finally be destroyed by some of the princes who are reformed, or shall be reformed, from Popery; and as the kings of France have contributed greatly to her advancement, it is not impossible nor improbable that some time or other they may also be the principal authors of her destruction. And such a revolution may more reasonably be expected, because (verse 17) this infatuation of Popish princes is permitted by Divine Providence only for a certain period, *until the words of God shall be fulfilled*—And particularly the words of the Prophet Daniel, vii. 25, 26, *They shall*

be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time; but then, as it immediately follows, *the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end.*

Little doubt can remain after this, what idolatrous church was meant by *the whore of Babylon*; but for the greater assuredness it is added by the angel, verse 18, *the woman which thou sawest is that great city, &c.*—He hath explained the mystery of the beast, and of his seven heads and ten horns; and his explanation of the mystery of the woman is, *that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth*—And what city, at the time of the vision, *reigned over the kings of the earth*, but Rome? She hath, too, ever since *reigned over the kings of the earth*, if not with temporal, yet at least with spiritual authority. Rome, therefore, is evidently and undeniably *this great city*; and that Christian, and not heathen, Papal, and not imperial Rome was meant, hath appeared in several instances, and will appear in several more.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In this chapter, (1.) *A mighty and glorious angel proclaims the final fall and utter ruin of Rome, and of the Papal state, on account of her corrupting the nations with apostacy, idolatry, luxury, and unlawful traffic, 1-3.* (2.) *A voice from heaven admonishes the people of God to forsake her communion, lest, partaking of her sins, they should also partake of her fearful and expected plagues, 4-8.* (3.) *Her supporters, friends, and traders in indulgences, pardons, relics, and preferments, or even common merchandise, mournfully bewail her tremendous and sudden destruction, 9-19.* (4.) *Christ's glorified and militant saints and ministers are called to rejoice in her ruin, as sudden, furious, complete, and irretrievable, and a full punishment of her murdering the saints, 20-24.*

A. M. 4100. A. D. 96. **AND** ^a after these things I saw another angel come down from hea-

ven, having great power; ^b and the earth was lightened with his glory. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

^a Chap. xvii. 1.

^b Ezek. xliii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

In the former chapter the angel-interpreter, or messenger, has given us a key to the meaning of the prophecy, which describes this third and most lasting period, in which the saints were to suffer for their faith and constancy; that they might expect a time of temptation and suffering; that they might be more careful to confirm their faith and patience, and encourage their perseverance. This chapter represents another angel sent from heaven to reveal the sure judgments of God on these enemies of pure and genuine Christianity, to foretel their sure destruction, and in as eminent a manner as God ever appeared to punish Babylon or Tyre, the ancient enemies of true religion. This part of the prophecy is very fit and proper for the general design of it, to warn and caution true Christians against the corruption of the time and age in which they live, to give them consolation in all their sufferings, through hope in the protection of God, of deliverance in a proper time, and of a glorious reward in the end.

Verse 1. *And after these things*—After the angel-

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interpreter had so far explained the meaning of the vision, and mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns which carried her; *I saw another angel*—Termed *another*, with respect to him mentioned chap. x. 1; *come down from heaven*—To show the sure downfall of this antichristian power, which is here described in the same sublime figurative style as that in which Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel have foretold the fall of ancient Babylon and Tyre, the types and emblems of the spiritual Babylon; and, together with her punishment, the crimes which deserved it, her idolatry and wickedness; *having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory*—In this description of the angel there seems to be an allusion to the vision of Ezekiel, (chap. xliii. 2.) when he beheld the glory of the God of Israel, *and the earth*, it is said, *shined with his glory*. A bright and shining light, it seems, usually attended the appearance of angels; and it is likely the splendour of the appearance used to be greater in proportion as the angel appearing was more honourable. The sending an angel of superior

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A. M. 4100. 2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, ° Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and ° is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and ° a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For all nations ° have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with

° Isa. xliii. 19; xxi. 9; Jer. li. 8; Chap. xiv. 8.—^d Isa. xliii. 21; xxi. 8; xxxiv. 14; Jer. l. 39; li. 37.—^e Isa. xiv. 23; xxxiv. 11; Mark v. 2, 3.—^f Chap. xiv. 8; xvii. 2.

rank alludes to the custom of courts in employing persons of dignity, according to the weight and importance of the commissions they were to execute. We may observe here, if such be the lustre of the servant, in lightening the earth with his glory, what images can display the majesty of the Lord, who has thousands of thousands of those glorious attendants ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him!

Verses 2, 3. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice*—Proclaimed aloud with triumphant joy, in the words of Isaiah, chap. xxi. 9, *saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen*—As if he had said, What was prophesied formerly concerning the celebrated seat of the Chaldean empire, shall presently be verified in this mystical Babylon. Her fall was announced before, chap. xiv. 8, but is now declared at large; and *is become a habitation of devils, &c.*—Here it is foretold, that after her fall she should be made a scene of desolation, as the ancient Babylon was, according to the predictions of the prophet respecting ancient Babylon, Isa. xliii. 19, *Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah; it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there*; where the word שַׂעִירִים, which we translate *satyrs*, the LXX. render *δαίμονια*, *demons*, or devils, who were supposed sometimes to take the shape of goats, or satyrs, and to haunt forlorn and desolate places; and it is from the translation of the LXX. that the apostle hath borrowed his images and expressions. According to this prediction, how horrid were the inhabitants of desolate Babylon to be as long as the world shall stand! Of invisible beings, devils and unclean spirits; of visible beings, every unclean beast, every filthy and hateful bird. Suppose then Babylon to mean here heathen Rome, and the fall predicted in this chapter to have been effected by Totilas, king of the Ostrogoths, as Grotius would persuade us, or by Alaric, king of the Visigoths, as the bishop of Meaux contends, how can Rome be said ever since to have been the *habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*, unless they will allow

her, ° and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the ° abundance of her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ° Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5 ° For her sins have reached unto heaven, and ° God hath remembered her iniquities.

° Verses 11, 15; Isa. xlvii. 15.—¹ Or, *power*.—² Isa. xlviii. 20; liii. 11; Jer. l. 8; li. 6, 45; 2 Cor. vi. 17.—³ Gen. xviii. 20, 21; Jer. li. 9; Jon. i. 2.—⁴ Chap. xvi. 19.

the popes and cardinals to merit these appellations? *For all nations have drunk of the wine of her fornication, &c.*—She hath not only been guilty of idolatry herself, and with great wrath persecuted the true Christian faith, worship, and practice, but hath also corrupted the princes and nations of the earth, as if she had given them a cup of poisonous composition, to disorder their reason and inflame them into rage and fury, having prevailed upon them to commit the same sins of which she was guilty, and to propagate her corruptions by ambitious views, incitements to luxury, and prospects of gain. *And the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*—“The Romish clergy,” says Daubuz, “by trading in spiritual matters, have gotten vast wealth; these are the merchants of the earth, who by their Popish tricks and trinkets have gotten a good part of the wealth of the world into their hands. In short, Rome is a great mart; the Romish clergy are the merchants and factors; the secular, inferior clergy, the monks and friars, are the pedlers and hawkers which retail the merchandise. As for the luxury of Rome, procured by this trade, it needs no proof.

Verses 4–6. *And I heard another voice from heaven*—Probably the voice of Christ, graciously warning his people of their danger of being infected by the prevailing corruptions of the mystical Babylon, and, in consequence thereof, of being involved in her ruin; *saying, Come out of her, my people*—Immediately forsake the communion of so corrupt a church; *that ye be not partakers of her sins*—Which you surely will be if you do not separate yourselves from her; *and that ye receive not of her plagues*—That ye share not in that guilt which would render you liable to all the plagues and judgments with which she shall assuredly be punished. But, as Bishop Newton observes, “was there any such necessity of forsaking the Church of Rome in the days of Alaric or Totilas, before she had degenerated again into idolatry? Or, what were then her notorious crimes, deserving of such exemplary punishment, unless Rome Christian was to suffer for the sins of Rome pagan?” What a remarkable providence it was that this book of the Revelation was printed in the midst of Spain, in the Great Polyglot Bible, before the Reformation! Else how much easier had it been for the Papists to reject the whole book, than it is to evade these

A. M. 4100. 6¹ Reward her even as she re-
A. D. 96. warded you, and double unto her
double according to her works: "in the
cup which she hath filled, "fill to her dou-
ble.

7 °How much she hath glorified herself, and
lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow
give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a
"queen, and am no widow, and shall see no
sorrow.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come "in one

¹ Psa. cxxxvii. 8; Jer. l. 15, 29; li. 24, 49; 2 Tim. iv. 14;
Chap. xiii. 10.—² Chap. xiv. 10.—³ Ch. xvi. 19.—⁴ Ezek.
xxviii. 2, &c.—⁵ Isa. xlvi. 7, 8; Zeph. ii. 15.—⁶ Isa. xlvi.

striking parts of it! *For her sins have reached unto heaven*—When sins are ripe for judgment, they are said to reach unto heaven, or to come up before the face of Jehovah. So the angels speak who were sent to punish the sins of Sodom, Gen. xix. 13, *We will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxed great before the face of the Lord.* Thus God said to Jonah, *Cry against Nineveh, for their wickedness is come up before me:* and St. James uses a like expression concerning oppressors, *The cries of them which have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.* It seems to be an elegant allusion to the methods of justice in human courts, when criminals are actually prosecuted, and their crimes are brought to light before the court of judgment. *Reward her*—God speaks to the executioners of his vengeance; *even as she hath rewarded*—Others, in particular the saints of God; *and double unto her double*—This, according to the Hebrew idiom, implies only a full retaliation; *according to her works*—The injuries and evils with which she has oppressed the faithful servants of God. *In the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double*—Let her suffer whatever the laws of justice have made the punishment of such great offences. By the laws of the Jewish government some offences were punished by retaliation, or by inflicting on the offender that evil which he had injuriously done to his neighbour. It was therefore enacted by the Jewish law, that life should be given for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Exod. xxi. 23, &c. In other cases of damage it was enacted that the offender should pay double damages. Thus, in the case of theft, the law required the thief to restore double, (Exod. xxii. 4,) it being just that the thief should suffer for his offence, as well as make full restitution for the damage he had done. In allusion to these laws of the Jewish government, divine justice is represented as punishing Rome for her idolatry and persecution, by inflicting upon her, as an offender, such pains and penalties as the laws of equity direct, where injuries are so highly criminal.

Verses 7, 8. *How much she hath glorified herself*—By pride, and pomp, and arrogant boasting; and

day, death, and mourning, and fa- A. M. 4100
mine; and "she shall be utterly A. D. 96.
burned with fire: "for strong is the Lord God
who judgeth her.

9 And "the kings of the earth, who have
committed fornication and lived deliciously
with her, "shall bewail her, and lament for
her, "when they shall see the smoke of her
burning,

10 Standing afar off for the fear of her tor-
ment, saying, "Alas, alas! that great city Ba-

9: Verse 10.—¹ Chap. xvii. 16.—² Jer. l. 34; Chap. xi. 17.
³ Ezek. xxvi. 16, 17; Chap. xvii. 2; Verse 3.—⁴ Jer. l. 46.
⁵ Verse 18; Chap. xix. 3.—⁶ Isa. xxi. 9; Chap. xiv. 8.

lived deliciously—In all kinds of elegance, luxury, and wantonness; *so much torment and sorrow give her*—Proportioning the punishment to the sin; *for, or because, she saith in her heart*—As did ancient Babylon, Isa. xlvi. 8, 9; *I sit*—Her usual style. Hence those expressions, *the chair, the see of Rome.* She sat so many years as a queen, over many kings, "mistress of all churches; the supreme, the infallible, the only spouse of Christ; a church out of which there is no salvation:" *and am no widow*—But the spouse of Christ; *and shall see no sorrow*—From the death of my children, or any other calamity, for God himself will defend "the church." *Therefore*—As both the natural and judicial consequence of this proud security; *shall her plagues come in one day*—All at once, in full extremity; *death*—The death of her children, with an incapacity of bearing more; *mourning*—Πένθος, sorrow, or lamentation, instead of carnal pleasure and delights; *and famine*—In the room of luxurious plenty; the very things from which she imagined herself to be most safe; *and she shall be utterly burned with fire*—Even ancient Rome, which gloried in the name of *the eternal city*; *for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her*—Expressions these which, as Bishop Newton observes, "can imply no less than a total destruction by fire; but Rome hath never yet been totally destroyed by fire. The most that Alaric and Totilas did was burning some parts of the city: but if only some parts of the city were burned, it was not an event important enough to be ascribed to the Lord God particularly, and to be considered as a strong exertion of his judgment."

Verses 9-11. *And the kings of the earth, &c.*—Even the chief rulers and great powers of the world, who were formerly in league with her, and supported her in her corruptions, practised her idolatries, *and lived deliciously with her*—Shared in the pomp and luxury of her prosperous state; *shall bewail her, &c.*—Shall not be able to afford her any support or defence, or to do any more than fruitlessly condole with her, and lament her sad condition, when they shall behold all these calamities come suddenly upon her. *Saying, Alas, alas!*—Only expressing their astonishment at so great and wonderful a revo-

A. M. 4100. bylon, that mighty city ! ^a for in one hour is thy judgment come.

11 And ^a the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her ; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more :

12 ^b The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all ² thiyne-wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and oint-

^a Ver. 17, 19.—^b Ezek. xxvii. 27-36 ; Ver. 3.—^c Ch. xvii. 4.

lution, so little expected, so little thought of ; *that great city, that mighty city*—Rome was anciently termed by its inhabitants, *Valentia*, that is, *strong* ; and the word *Rome* itself, in Greek, signifies *strength*. This name was given to it by the Greek strangers. *For in one hour is thy judgment come*—How strange, how awful, that so great and mighty a city should be so suddenly, so utterly destroyed ! *And the merchants of the earth*—Her men of business, and those skilled in the affairs of life, who gained so much by her preferments, and by employments under her ; the men of riches and credit in the several nations which she had corrupted, and who were supported in their pride and luxury by her means, shall not be able to help in this hour of her distress, any more than the kings of the earth ; they can only weep and mourn for her misery, and for their own loss in her destruction. Now all commerce with her shall be utterly cut off ; and no man by her means shall obtain wealth, credit, or power, any more.

Verses 12-14. *The merchandise, &c.*—There is an end of all traffic or commerce with her, whether spiritual or temporal ; *of gold and silver, &c.*—Almost all the things here named are still in use at Rome, both in their idolatrous service and in common life ; *fine linen*—The sort of which here mentioned, *βυσσος*, is exceedingly costly ; *thiyne-wood*—A sweet-smelling wood, not unlike citron, used in adorning magnificent palaces. *Vessels of most precious wood*—Ebony in particular, which is often, as here, mentioned with ivory, the one excelling in whiteness, the other in blackness, and both in uncommon smoothness. *And cinnamon*—Bengelius adds, *και αμμουμ*, and *amomum*, a shrub whose wood is a fine perfume ; *and ointments*—*μυρον*, liquid and fragrant ointment ; *and beasts*—Cows and oxen ; *and chariots*—*Πεδον*, a word purely Latin, but here inserted in the Greek, doubtless, on purpose to show more fully the luxury of Rome ; *and slaves*—*Σωματων*, *bodies* ; a common term for s.aves ; *and souls of men*—For these also have been and are continually bought and sold at Rome. And this, of all others, is the most gainful merchandise to the Roman traffickers. *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after*—And for which alone thy degenerate nature had any remaining relish. From what was im-

ments, and frankincense, and wine, A. M. 4100. and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, ^a A. D. 96. and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and ³ slaves, and ^c souls of men.

14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

15 ^d The merchants of these things which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

^a Or, *sweet*.—^b Or, *bodies*.—^c Ezek. xxvii. 13.—^d Ver. iii. 11.

ported, the narrative proceeds to the domestic delicacies of Rome ; none of which is in greater request there than the particular sort of fruits here mentioned. The word *σπινα* properly signifies such fruit as pears, peaches, nectarines, and all the apple and plum kinds ; *and all things*—*Διπαρα και τα λαμπρα*—*dainty*—Or *delightful* to the taste ; *and splendid*—To the sight ; as clothes, buildings, furniture. “It is plain,” says Lowman, “this is designed to be a *figurative*, and not a *literal* description ; therefore readers seem to be at liberty to apply the figurative expressions to such literal meanings as will agree to the general and certain intention of them. But whether each of these wares is designed to point out some particular gainful corruption of Popery, may very well be questioned. It is sufficient, to answer the general intention of the prophecy, to observe, that Rome shall be deprived of all her wealth, which she procured by her management and intrigues, in the several places where her agents resided, who continually made her returns of great riches, and plentifully supplied her excessive pride and luxury. It is a pretty observation of Daubuz, “Rome receives all the luxurious wares mentioned, but she has so infatuated the world that she pays nothing for them but trumpery ; her money is her enchantments and sorceries. Her merchants, her superior clergy, engross the real wealth of the world to bring it to her ; and her returns and exportations are paper and bills drawn upon heaven and hell, never to be accepted ; however, they pass among the common people for payment, as if they were of real value. The merchant who finds means to get shut of them takes no care about their intrinsic value, finding gulls who take them off his hands for real wealth.” Whether these wares were designed to signify pardons, indulgences, dispensations, and the like trifles, with which Rome purchases gold, silver, and whatever ministers to pride and luxury, this is a plain and manifest meaning, that she shall be deprived of all her wealth and luxury at once, and of all the means by which she used to procure them.

Verses 15-21. *The merchants, ship-masters, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, weep and wail*—For they can no longer import or export commodities for her, or convey strangers to and fro, for

A. M. 4100. 16 And saying, Alas, alas! that
A. D. 96. great city, ° that was clothed in fine
linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with
gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

17 † For in one hour so great riches is come to
naught. And ‡ every shipmaster, and all the
company in ships, and sailors, and as many as
trade by sea, stood afar off,

18 † And cried when they saw the smoke of
her burning, saying, † What city is like unto
this great city!

19 And † they cast dust on their heads, and
cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas!
that great city, wherein were made rich all
that had ships in the sea by reason of her
costliness! † for in one hour is she made desolate.

20 † Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye
holy apostles and prophets; for † God hath
avenged you on her.

° Chap. xvii. 4.—† Verse 10.—‡ Isa. xxiii. 14; Ezek. xxvii. 29.—^h Ezek. xxvii. 30, 31; Verse 9.—ⁱ Chap. xiii. 4.
^k Joshua vii. 6; 1 Samuel iv. 12; Job ii. 12; Ezek. xxvii. 30.
^l Verse 8.—^m Isa. xlii. 23; xlix. 13; Jer. li. 48.—ⁿ Luke xi. 49, 50; Chap. xix. 2.

there is an end of all her gains, wealth, and glory. These lamentations are copied from the like lamentations over Tyre, (Ezekiel xxvi. and xxvii.,) and are equal to the most mournful strains of the Greek tragedians over Thebes or Troy. In all, they stand afar off—In a mixture of terror and grief, but absolutely incapable of giving her any relief, verses 10, 15, 17. In all, they cry, *Alas! alas!*—*Ovai, vai, wo, wo*, (verses 10, 16, 19,) for this is the third wo before mentioned, chap. viii. 13; xi. 14. For, as the fall of the Othman empire is the end of the second wo, so the fall of Rome is the completion of the third wo. In all they lament the suddenness of her fall; for in one hour is her judgment come. At the same time, her destruction is matter of joy and triumph to the saints, apostles, and prophets; for it is added, verse 20, *Rejoice over her, thou heaven*—That is, all the inhabitants of heaven; *και οι αγιοι*, and ye saints; and among the saints, still more eminently, *the apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her*—For it is to avenge the cause of his church and faithful servants, that God so severely punishes this persecuting city. And a mighty angel, &c.—And further, to confirm the irrecoverable ruin of this persecuting place, another mighty angel appeared in my vision, and took up a stone, like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea—Using the same emblem by which Jeremiah foreshadowed the fall of the Chaldean Babylon; saying, *Thus with violence shall that great city, this mystical Babylon, be thrown down*—Shall sink never to rise again. Her utter desolation is further described in the two next verses, in phrases and expressions borrowed from the ancient prophets.

b

21 And a mighty angel took up a A. M. 4100.
stone like a great mill-stone, and cast A. D. 96.
it into the sea, saying, ° Thus with violence
shall that great city Babylon be thrown down,
and † shall be found no more at all.

22 † And the voice of harpers, and musicians,
and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no
more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of what-
soever craft he be, shall be found any more in
thee; and the sound of a mill-stone shall be
heard no more at all in thee;

23 † And the light of a candle shall shine no
more at all in thee; † and the voice of the bride-
groom and of the bride shall be heard no more
at all in thee: for † thy merchants were the
great men of the earth; † for by thy sorceries
were all nations deceived.

24 And † in her was found the blood of pro-
phets, and of saints, and of all that † were slain
upon the earth.

° Jer. li. 64.—^p Chap. xii. 8; xvi. 20.—^q Isa. xxiv. 8; Jer. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10; Ezek. xxvii. 13.—^r Jer. xxv. 10.
^s Jer. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10; xxxiii. 11.—^t Isa. xxiii. 8.
^u 2 Kings ix. 22; Nah. iii. 4; Chap. xvii. 2, 5.—^v Chap. xvii. 6.—^w Jer. li. 49.

Verses 22–24. *The voice of harpers*—Players on stringed instruments; and *musicians*—Skilful singers in particular; and *pipers*—Who played on flutes, chiefly on mournful, whereas *trumpeters* played on joyful occasions; *shall be heard no more at all in thee*; and *no craftsman*—Greek, *τεχνιτης ποσης τεχνης*, no artificer, of whatever art. Arts of every kind, particularly music, sculpture, painting, and statuary, were there carried to their greatest height. No, nor even the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard any more in thee—Not only the arts that adorn life, but even those employments without which it cannot subsist, will cease from thee for ever: all which expressions denote absolute and eternal desolation. There shall be no more musicians for the entertainment of the rich and great; no more tradesmen or artificers to employ those of the middle ranks, and to furnish the conveniences of life; no more servants or slaves to grind at the mill, prepare bread, and supply the necessaries of life. Nay, there shall be no more lights, no more bridal songs: that is, no more marriages, in which lamps and songs were known ceremonies; and therefore the city shall never be peopled again, but shall remain depopulated and desolate for ever. The desolation of Rome is therefore described in such a manner as to show that neither rich nor poor, neither persons of middle rank nor those of the lowest condition, should be able to live there any more. For thy merchants were the great men of the earth—A circumstance which was in itself indifferent, and yet led them into pride, luxury and numberless other sins. For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived—That is, poisoned by thy pernicious practices. So that the reasons assigned

for her utter desolation are her pride and luxury, her superstition and idolatry, with various other vices; and especially her cruel persecutions of God's saints and servants: for it is added, *In her was found the blood of prophets, &c.*—These seem to be the words of St. John: *and of all that were slain upon the earth*—As if he had said, Her punishment shall be as severe and exemplary as if she had been guilty of all the persecutions that ever were upon account of religion; for by her conduct she hath approved, and imitated, and surpassed them all. Certainly there is no city under the sun which has so clear a title to general blood-guiltiness as Rome. The guilt of the blood shed under the heathen emperors was not removed under the popes, but hugely multiplied. Nor is Rome accountable only for what hath been shed in the city, but for that shed in *all the earth*. For at Rome, under the popes, as well as under the heathen emperors, were the bloody orders and edicts given: and wherever the blood of holy men was shed, there were the grand rejoicings for it. And what immense quantities of blood have been shed by her agents! Charles IX. of France, in his letter to Gregory XIII., boasts that in, and not long after, the massacre of Paris, he had destroyed seventy thousand Huguenots. Some have computed that, from the year 1518 to 1548, fifteen millions of

Protestants perished by war and the inquisition. This may be overcharged; but certainly the number of them in those thirty years, as well as since, is almost incredible. To these we may add innumerable martyrs in ancient, middle, and late ages,—in Bohemia, Germany, Holland, France, England, Ireland, and many other parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Now this tyrannical cruelty exercised against God's saints, apostles, and prophets being considered, we cannot wonder that the sentence of so terrible a desolation and destruction should be passed on this persecuting city. But the reader must observe, Rome hath never yet been depopulated and desolated in this manner. She hath been taken indeed and plundered by Alaric, king of the Visigoths, in the year 410; by Genseric, king of the Vandals, in the year 455; by Totilas, king of the Ostrogoths, in the year 546; and by others since that time: but yet she is still standing and flourishing, and is honoured by many nations as the metropolis of the Christian world; she still resounds with *singers and musicians*; she still excels in *arts*, which serve to pomp and luxury; she still abounds with *candles*, and *lamps*, and *torches*, burning even by day as well as by night: and consequently this prophecy hath not yet been, but remaineth still to be, fulfilled

CHAPTER XIX.

Here, (1.) The saints in heaven and on earth are represented as triumphing and praising God for his righteous judgments on the mystical Babylon, and for their own and others' honourable espousals to Christ, particularly in the general conversion of Jews and Gentiles to him, 1-8. (2.) An angel pronounces those blessed who are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; and refuses the adoration which John offered him, 9, 10. (3.) Christ and his people are represented as going forth to make war against antichrist and his armies, which are utterly and miserably destroyed, 11-21.

A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96. **AND** after these things ^a I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia: ^b Salvation, and glo-

^a Chap. xi. 15.—^b Chap. iv. 11; vii. 10, 12; xii. 10.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

The prophecies relating to the third period concluded with a severe punishment of Rome, for her pride, luxury, superstition, and idolatry; and especially for her cruel persecution of all who were found faithful to their duty, in preserving the purity of the Christian doctrines and worship. When Rome thus fell, like ancient Babylon, to rise no more, the heavenly church is introduced as a chorus, to praise God for his righteous judgments and faithfulness. This excellent hymn of praise, sung by the united voices of angels and saints, the whole assembly of heaven, strongly represents to all Christians, and to every church on earth, what a grateful sense they ought to have of God's faithfulness in their protection, and of his righteous judgments in punishing the persecutors of truth and righteousness. Though for wise reasons, and for a limited time, God may permit the righteous and faithful to suffer many things from the

ry, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

² For ^c true and righteous are his judg-

^c Chap. xv. 3; xvi. 7.

enemies of true religion, and of its professors, yet the final event of things will surely show God's faithfulness in the blessing of his people, and justice in the punishment of his enemies; a sufficient reason for consolation, gratitude, and praise.—Lowman.

Verses 1-3. *And after these things*—After this affecting representation of the certain destruction of Babylon, as the seat of the antichristian kingdom; *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven*—A great chorus, who, with united voices, began to praise God on the occasion, *saying, Alleluia*—That is, *Praise ye Jehovah*, or, *He that is, and was, and is to come*; a title which, of all others, is the most peculiar to the everlasting God. *Salvation, glory, honour, and power* be ascribed unto the Lord our God—To whom only they belong. The *salvation* spoken of is opposed to the destruction which the great whore had brought upon the earth: his *power* and his *glory* appear from the judgment executed on

A. M. 4100. ments: for he hath judged the great
A. D. 96. whore, which did corrupt the earth
with her fornication, and ^d hath avenged the
blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, Alleluia. And ^e her
smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And ^f the four and twenty elders and the
four beasts fell down and worshipped God
that sat on the throne, saying, ^g Amen; Alle-
luia.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, say-

^d Deut. xxxii. 43; Chap. vi. 10; xviii. 20.—^e Isa. xxxiv. 10; Chap. xiv. 11; xviii. 9, 18.—^f Chap. iv. 4, 6, 10; v. 14.
^g 1 Chron. xvi. 36; Neh. v. 13; viii. 6; Chap. v. 14.—^h Psa. cxxxv. 1; cxxxv. 1.

her, and from the setting up of his kingdom to endure through all ages. *For true and righteous are his judgments*—His judgments show him to be righteous, true, and faithful; *for he hath judged the great whore*—His punishment of mystical Babylon, for her pride, superstition, and idolatry, declares his righteousness; and his truth and faithfulness to his promises are illustriously manifested in his avenging the blood of his servants on her, who so cruelly put them to death for their faith in his word and constancy in his religion. *And again they said, Alleluia*—With their hearts inflamed with gratitude and joy. *And her smoke rose up—Avabauei, rises up*, for they seem to be the words of the same heavenly chorus which praised in the preceding language. As if they had said, Let our God be glorified, who in this last judgment hath put an end to this persecuting power for ever. It shall not henceforth, as formerly, rise up again to afflict his saints. This city shall lie waste from generation to generation, never to be restored. Mr. Daubuz observes: "The two alleluias in this part of the hymn correspond to the messages of the two angels, one of which proclaims the fall of Babylon, and the other shows its destruction to be perpetual." The expression, *her smoke rose up, &c.*, intimated that Rome should be made as signal a monument of divine vengeance as Sodom and Gomorrah had been. It is taken from Isa. xxxiv. 9, 10, where by Edom the Jews understand Rome; and in the genuine editions of the Chaldee paraphrase it is, *And the rivers of Rome shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch:—it shall not be quenched night nor day: the smoke shall go up for ever.* And this tradition of the rabbins may receive some confirmation from this verse. Indeed, such an event must appear the more probable, when we consider that the adjacent countries are known to be of a sulphurous and bituminous soil: and that even at Rome there have been eruptions of subterraneous fire, which have consumed several buildings, according to Dion, (lib. lxvi.) on one occasion, even a considerable part of Rome; so that the fuel seems to be prepared, and to wait only for the breath of the Lord to kindle it.

b

ing, ^h Praise our God, all ye his ser- A. M. 4100.
vants, and ye that fear him, ⁱ both A. D. 96.
small and great.

6 ^k And I heard as it were the voice of a
great multitude, and as the voice of many
waters, and as the voice of mighty thunder-
ings, saying, Alleluia: for ^l the Lord God
omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour
to him: for ^m the marriage of the Lamb is come,
and his wife hath made herself ready.

^k Chapter xi. 18; xx. 12.—^l Ezekiel i. 24; xliii. 2;
Chapter xiv. 2.—^m Chapter xi. 15, 17; xii. 10; xxi. 22.
ⁿ Matthew xxii. 2; xxv. 10; 2 Corinthians xi. 2; Ephesians
v. 32; Chapter xxi. 2, 9.

Verses 4, 5. *The four and twenty elders and the four living creatures*—After the preceding chorus had ended their hymn, the representatives of the Jewish and Christian Churches prostrated themselves before Jehovah, saying, Amen—So be it: let God be ever praised for the displays now made of his infinite perfections. *And a voice came out of the throne*—From the glory, or the oracle; this shows the great authority and solemnity with which this order was published; saying, *Praise our God, &c.*—The occasion and matter of this song of praise seem to be somewhat different from those of the foregoing hymn: that hymn was to celebrate the praises of God principally on account of his *faithfulness* and *justice* manifested in the punishment of a persecuting power, that had long oppressed Christ's faithful servants. But this, as appears by what follows, is principally to praise God for the happy and glorious state of his church, about to take place in consequence of this punishment of its enemies; even that state of it, as appears, wherein it is said to live and reign with Christ a thousand years, and which is more particularly spoken of in the following chapter: for which wonderful display of the divine goodness all the truly pious are prepared by this hymn for solemnly and devoutly praising God.

Verses 6-8. *And I heard, &c.*—Upon this order from the oracle, the whole church, in obedience to it, began to praise God with loud voices; which might be compared to the sound of many waters, or of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent—The Almighty Maker and Upholder of universal nature; reigneth—Among men, more eminently and gloriously than ever before. *Let us be glad, &c.*—Χαίρομεν και αγαλλιωμεθα, let us rejoice and exult with transport, and ascribe to him the glory which is so justly due; for the marriage of the Lamb is come—Is near at hand, and will be speedily solemnized. His true church, his faithful servants, are now about to receive public and peculiar marks of his affection in a state of happiness and dignity suitable to their relation to him. The ancient prophets frequently express the favour of God to his people by the affection of a bridegroom to his spouse. See Isa. lxii. 5; Hos. ii. 19, 20; Zeph.

A. M. 4100. 8 And ^a to her was granted that
A. D. 96. she should be arrayed in fine linen,
clean and ¹white: ^ofor the fine linen is the
righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, ^pBlessed are
they which are called unto the marriage-supper
of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, ^qThese
are the true sayings of God.

10 And ^rI fell at his feet to worship him.

^a Psa. xiv. 13, 14; Ezek. xvi. 10; Chap. iii. 18.—^b Or,
bright.—^c Psa. cxxxii. 9.—^d Matt. xxii. 2, 3; Luke xiv. 15,
16.—^e Chap. xxi. 5; xxii. 6.

iii. 17. And the Church of Christ in the New Testa-
ment is often represented under the same simili-
tude of a bride. See Rom. vii. 4; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Eph.
v. 25, &c. And as marriages used to be celebrated
with great joy, this is a proper emblem to show the
state of prosperity and happiness to which God will
raise his church, after all its sufferings for the sake
of truth and righteousness. *And his wife hath made
herself ready*—Even while upon earth, being ac-
quitted from all guilt, purified from all pollution, and
adorned with all those graces and virtues which are
most excellent in themselves, and most agreeable to
him. As if he had said, She is not a harlot tainted
with idolatry, but a spouse prepared for her heav-
enly husband. *And to her was granted*—By God,
from whom all her good qualities proceed; *that she
should be arrayed in fine linen*—Expressive of her
purity and holiness; *for the fine linen is an emblem
of the righteousness of the saints*—Including both
their justification and sanctification. Thus St. Paul,
(Eph. v.,) *Christ gave himself for his church, that
he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to
himself a glorious church, not having spot, or
wrinkle, or any such thing.*

Verses 9, 10. *And he (the angel) saith unto me,
Write*—Record this as an important truth, in which
all that read this book in future ages will be greatly
concerned; *Blessed—Μακάριοι, happy; are they
which are called unto the marriage-supper of the
Lamb*—Who shall be living at this time, and shall
obey the invitation to this marriage-feast, and par-
take of all the privileges and blessings belonging to
it. *And he saith unto me, after a little pause, These
are the true sayings of God*—They are to be regard-
ed by thee, and all that read them, as declarations
infallibly true, and infinitely momentous. *And*—
While he was speaking to me in this kind and con-
descending manner, being overawed by his majestic
appearance, and in such a rapture and ecstasy at
these discoveries that I knew not, or did not con-
sider, what I did; *I fell at his feet*—Prostrated my-
self before him; *to worship him*—Or to do him ho-
mage, as though I had owed all these discoveries to
him. *And he said, See thou do it not*—Greek, *ωρα
μη, See not, with a beautiful abruptness.* It does not
appear that St. John intended to pay religious wor-
ship to this angel; for he could not but know that he
was only a creature, and that religiously to worship

And he said unto me, ^{*}See thou do it A. M. 4100.
not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of A. D. 96.
thy brethren ¹that have the testimony of Jesus :
worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the
spirit of prophecy.

11 ^aAnd I saw heaven opened, and behold,
²a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was*
called ³Faithful and True, and ⁴in righteous-
ness he doth judge and make war.

^a Chap. xxii. 8.—^b Acts x. 2.; xiv. 14, 15; Chap. xxii. 9.
^c 1 John v. 10; Chap. xii. 17.—^d Chap. xv. 5.—^e Chap. vi. 2.
^f Chap. iii. 14.—^g Isa. xi. 4.

any creature, however exalted, would be flat idola-
try. He seems only to have intended such civil re-
spect and reverence as the Asiatics were wont to
pay to superiors, and especially to persons in high
rank; which indeed is frequently all that is meant
by the word *προσκυνει*, here rendered *to worship*.
Thus Ruth complimented Boaz with this kind of
honour, when *she fell on her face, and bowed her-
self to the ground*, Ruth. ii. 10. Thus Abigail also
showed her respect for David: *she fell before him
on her face, and bowed herself to the ground*, 1 Sam.
xxv. 23. Indeed, the reason for which the angel
forbids this high act of respect, seems to intimate
that he did not understand it as an act of religious
honour, for he mentions nothing concerning the sin
or danger of idolatry, as implied in it: he only shows
that it was improper the apostle should pay such
respect to him, which he does, not by showing that
it was unlawful to give such respect to any created
being whatsoever, but because he was only a fellow-
servant with the apostle, and a servant of his breth-
ren, that had the testimony of Jesus. As if he had
said, I am now employed as your fellow-servant, to
testify of the Lord Jesus by the same Spirit which in-
spired the prophets of old. *Worship God*—Pay thine
homage, in such expressions of it, to God alone, to
whom alone thou owest these revelations. *The tes-
timony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*—That is,
the spirit of prophecy serves, in a glorious manner,
to confirm Jesus's divine mission, to all that know
and duly observe the circumstances of it; and that
which I now reveal to thee makes a considerable
article of the proof: or, this ability of foretelling
things to come is an argument or evidence of Christ's
speaking in and by me, as he does by thee.

Verses 11-16. *And I saw heaven opened*—This is
a new and peculiar opening of it, in order to show
the magnificent expedition of Christ and his attend-
ants against his great adversary; *and behold a white
horse*—Many paid little regard to Christ when he
came meek and lowly, *riding upon an ass*: but what
will they say or think, when he comes forth upon
his *white horse*, with the sharp sword of his mouth?
The *white horse*, on which Christ is represented as
riding, was intended to denote his justice and holi-
ness, and also that victory and triumph should mark
his progress. *And he that sat on him was called
Faithful*—In performing all his promises; *and*

A. M. 4100. 12 - His eyes *were* as a flame of
A. D. 96. fire, ^band on his head *were* many
crowns; ^cand he had a name written, that no
man knew but he himself.

13 ^dAnd he *was* clothed with a vesture dip-
ped in blood: and his name is called ^eThe
Word of God.

14 ^fAnd the armies *which were* in heaven
followed him upon white horses, ^gclothed in
fine linen, white and clean.

15 And ^hout of his mouth goeth a sharp
sword, that with it he should smite the nations:
and ⁱhe shall rule them with a rod of iron: and
^khe treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness
and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And ^lhe hath on *his* vesture and on his

^a Chap. i. 14; ii. 18.—^b Chap. vi. 2.—^c Chap. ii. 17;
Verse 16.—^d Isa. lxiii. 2, 3.—^e John i. 1; 1 John v. 7.
^f Chapter xiv. 20.—^g Matthew xxviii. 3; Chapter iv. 4; vii. 9.
^h Isa. xi. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Chap. i. 16; Verse 21.

True—In executing all his threatenings; and in
righteousness—With the utmost justice and equity;
he doth judge and make war—Often the sentence
and execution go together. *His eyes were as a
flame of fire*—Gloriously bright and piercing. He
is described in such characters as are appropriated to
him in this book, and in the ancient prophets; and
on his head were many crowns—In token of his num-
erous conquests, and the many countries now be-
come the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.
*And he had a name written upon them that no man
knew but himself*—The praise of his mediatorial
undertaking being ineffable and incomprehensible,
and his person mysterious and wonderful, Judg. xiii.
18; Isa. ix. 6. Hence we read, Matt. xi. 27, *No man
knoweth the Son but the Father. And he was clothed
with a vesture* of pure white, emblematical of his
holiness; and *dipped in blood*—In token of his suf-
ferings; or rather, as some think, of the blood of the
enemies already conquered. See Isa. lxiii. 1, &c.
And his name is called, The Word of God—Be-
cause he spoke every thing into being, and reveal-
eth his Father and his Father's will to mankind. In
other words, he has this name because he is that
glorious and Divine Person, said, John i. 1, 2, to have
been in the beginning with God, and to be himself
God; and who was the great medium of divine reve-
lation in all ages. *And the armies which were in
heaven*—The heavenly hosts; *followed him*—As
being most willingly and entirely under his com-
mand; *upon white horses*—All the inhabitants of
Heaven being pure and holy, and all in a state of joy
and triumph. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp
sword*—Signifying that his word is quick and pow-
erful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; *that
with it he should smite the nations*—That he was
now about to use it in a strict execution of justice on
his enemies; *and he shall rule them*—Who are not
slain by his sword; *with a rod of iron*—That is, if

thigh a name written, ^mKING OF ⁿA. M. 4100.
KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. ^oA. D. 96.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun;
and he cried with a loud voice, saying ^pto
all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven,
^qCome, and gather yourselves together unto the
supper of the great God;

18 ^rThat ye may eat the flesh of kings, and
the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty
men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that
sit on them, and the flesh of all *men, both free
and bond, both small and great.*

19 ^sAnd I saw the beast, and the kings of the
earth, and their armies, gathered together to
make war against him that sat on the horse,
and against his army.

^t Psa. ii. 9; Chap. ii. 27; xii. 5.—^u Isa. lxiii. 3; Chap. xiv.
19, 20.—^v Verse 12.—^w Dan. ii. 47; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Chapter
xvii. 14.—^x Verse 21.—^y Ezek. xxxix. 17.—^z Ezek. xxxix.
18, 20.—^{aa} Chap. xvi. 16; xvii. 13, 14.

they will not submit to his golden sceptre; see on
Psa. ii. 9; and *he treadeth the wine-press of the
fierceness*—*Τὸ θυμὸν, of the indignation; and wrath
of Almighty God*—Signified, probably, by the blood
which stained his garments. The metaphor signi-
fies that he shall subdue the proudest of his enemies
with as much ease as men crush grapes by treading
them under their feet. *And*—To the everlasting
confusion of his enemies, and the perpetual joy of
his friends and followers; *he hath on his vesture and
on his thigh*—Or on the part of the vesture which
was upon his thigh; *a name written*—Different from
that mentioned above; KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF
LORDS—To show that he was really possessed of a
just dominion over all the princes and kingdoms of
the earth; a dominion which the eastern monarchs,
and after them the Roman emperors, unjustly at-
tempted to acquire and establish, and a title which,
with great vanity, they assumed to themselves. It
was usual of old, for great personages in the eastern
countries to have magnificent titles inscribed on, or
affixed to, their garments.

Verses 17-19. *And I saw an angel standing in
the sun*—And therefore conspicuous to all; and *he
cried with a loud voice to all the fowls of heaven*—
To intimate the slaughter and desolation which were
soon to come upon the enemies of the church; *saying,
Come, gather yourselves together to the supper
of the great God*—To the great feast which his ven-
geance will soon provide; a strongly figurative
expression, taken from Ezek. xxxix. 17, denoting
the vastness of the ensuing slaughter. *And I saw
the beast*—Appearing again, as at the head of the
antichristian interest, see chap. xiii. 1, &c.; and *the
kings of the earth*—The ten kings mentioned chap.
xvii. 12, who aided and supported that persecuting
power, and had now drawn other kings of the earth
to them; and *their armies gathered together*—All
the forces they could collect, all the enemies of truth

A. M. 4100. 20 ^r And the beast was taken, A. D. 96. and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and ^u them that worshipped his image. ^v These both were cast alive into

^r Chap. xvi. 13, 14.—^s Chap. xiii. 12, 15.—^t Chap. xx. 10; Dan. vii. 11.

and righteousness; to make war against him that sat on the horse—To oppose the progress of his gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom. All beings, good and bad, visible and invisible, will be concerned in this grand contest.

Verses 20, 21. *And*—The issue was such as might be expected: Christ and his saints obtained a full and entire victory; a victory as complete as when the generals and all the chief officers of an enemy's army are made prisoners of war, and the rest are cut to pieces in the field of battle. *For the beast*—The idolatrous persecuting power represented thereby; and *the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him*—That, by pretended miracles and false doctrine, had supported the apostacy; that is, the antichristian tyranny, and the corrupt clergy, were taken, were made prisoners, and condemned to suffer the most exemplary punishment by the hands of justice. *These both were cast alive*—Without undergoing bodily death; *into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone*—And that, it seems, before the devil himself, chap. xx. 10. Here is the last of the *beast* and of the *false prophet*. After several repeated strokes of divine vengeance, they are represented as delivered to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. They are plunged at once into the extremest degree of torment, without being reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. Surely none but the beast and false prophet of Rome, the persecutors and deceivers of that antichristian kingdom, could have hardened themselves thus against the God they pretended to adore; or refused to have repented under such dreadful and repeated visita-

a lake of fire ^u burning with brimstone. A. M. 4100. A. D. 96.

21 And the remnant ^x were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: ^y and all the fowls ^z were filled with their flesh.

^u Chap. xiv. 10; xxi. 18.—^v Verse 15.—^w Verses 17, 18. ^x Chap. xvii. 16.

tions. *And the remnant*—Those of inferior rank and power, who had aided and abetted the apostacy, and concurred in opposing the truth and religion of Christ; *were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which proceeded out of his mouth*—That is, with the word of Christ, like the common soldiers of a conquered army, who fall in the field of battle, and are left there unburied, a prey to the fowls of the air, which feed on them, and are filled with their flesh—Their substance being seized for other persons, and other uses. A most magnificent description this of the final overthrow of the beast and false prophet, and all their adherents. It has, in particular, one exquisite beauty, that, after exhibiting the two opposite armies, and all the apparatus for a battle, (verses 11–19,) then follows immediately (verse 20) the account of the victory, without one word of an engagement or fighting. Here is the most exact propriety; for what struggle can there be between Omnipotence and the power of all the creation united against it? Every description must have fallen short of this admirable silence. The intelligent reader will easily observe, that the description is not only incomparably sublime, but strongly figurative; and that, speaking in plain language, its design is to show, in the most expressive manner, the complete downfall of Popery, with all its delusive and destructive abominations, and the triumphs of the pure and genuine religion of Jesus; the true word of God will in the end prevail over every species of superstition and idolatry: all the powers of antichrist shall be completely subdued: and the religion of Rome, as well as Rome itself, be totally destroyed.

CHAPTER XX.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The binding or restraining of Satan for one thousand years, during which the gospel greatly prevails, and the church of Christ flourishes exceedingly, 1–6. (2.) Satan, being loosed for a little season from his restraint, deceives the nations, and unites them in a furious, but the last, attempt to destroy the church. They are, however, disappointed in their expectations, and are miserably and irretrievably overthrown, 7–10. (3.) Hereupon Christ appears to the last judgment, and having gathered before him the quick and the dead, as from opened books of account he judges the world with infinite exactness, and, after passing a righteous sentence upon all, shuts up devils, and impenitent, unbelieving sinners, in hell, to be tormented for ever, 11–16.

A. M. 4100. **AND** I saw an angel come down
A. D. 96. from heaven, ^a having the key of
the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on ^b the dragon, that old
serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and
bound him a thousand years,

^a Chap. i. 18; ix. 1.—^b Chap. xii. 9; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

This chapter represents a new state of the church, upon its deliverance from the persecution and corruption of the third period, during the reign of the two beasts, or the twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days or years. That long state of oppression is to be followed by a long continuance of peace and prosperity. A fourth period is described, which, among other characters, is to last for one thousand years. The first two periods ended in a deliverance of the church; but those deliverances were of short continuance, and attended with considerable defects; but now, after the church shall have passed through this third trial of faith and patience, it is to attain a state of very great prosperity, and to remain in it for a considerable length of time. This is that happy state of the church which, from the continuation of it for one thousand years, is usually called *the millennium*, a term famous in the church. The description, however, which we have of it in this chapter is very short, being all contained in the first six verses. But interpreters have abundantly supplied what they thought wanting in the prophetic account; out of their own invention it is to be feared, rather than from sure and well-grounded principles of judgment. No wonder, then, that they have differed so much about the true meaning of a prophecy, in which they have mixed so many of their own imaginations. Let us then carefully endeavour to distinguish what the spirit of prophecy plainly intends, from what uncertain conjectures or doubtful reasonings may suggest to our minds, that we may obtain a more distinct and satisfactory account.—Lowman.

Verses 1-3. *And I saw an angel*—An especial minister of Providence; *come down from heaven*—With a commission from God; *having the key of the bottomless pit*—Invested with power to open or to shut it; see on chap. ix. 1; *and a great chain in his hand*—Emblematical of his power to perform the work here assigned him. *And he laid hold on the dragon*—Who, after the destruction of the beast and of the false prophet, (to whom he had delegated his power,) still remained; *that old serpent*—That ancient enemy of the human race, who, in the form of a subtle serpent, deceived the first parents of mankind, and brought sin and death into the world, with an incalculable train of evils attendant on them; *who is the Devil*—The malicious and false accuser of God's saints, as the word *διδολος*, so rendered, signifies; *and Satan*—The grand adversary both of God and man; *and bound him a thousand years*—That is, at least one thousand literal years; during which the light of the gospel shall be dif-

b

3 And cast him into the bottomless A. M. 4100.
pit, and shut him up, and ^d set a seal A. D. 96.
upon him, ^e that he should deceive the nations
no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season.

^d Dan. vi. 17.—^e Chap. xvi. 14, 16; Verse 8.

fused through all the world, and the reign of truth and righteousness be established universally among men. "I think," says Doddridge, "we must despair of being able to interpret any passage of Scripture upon the plainest principle of reason, if this do not signify that there shall be such a period as this, in which Satan shall be remarkably restrained, and the Christian interest shall prevail. But whether the one thousand years are here to be taken literally, as is most probable; or whether here [as elsewhere in this book] each day is put for a year, and consequently the whole period be three hundred and sixty thousand years, I will not pretend to determine. This thought has been very lately started by an ingenious and worthy person, who, I doubt not, hath intended the service of Christianity; though I am very apprehensive he has failed in some of the mediums by which he has endeavoured to prove this point." *And cast him into the bottomless pit*—His infernal prison; afterward he is cast into the lake of fire; *and shut him up therein, and set a seal upon him*—These are strong figures, to show the certain, strict, and severe restraint which he shall be laid under; *that he might deceive the nations no more*—During this whole period. One benefit only is here expressed as resulting from the confinement of Satan; but how many and great blessings are implied! For the grand enemy and opposer of truth and righteousness being removed, the kingdom of God holds on its uninterrupted course among the nations; and the great *mystery of God*, so long foretold, is at length fulfilled—Namely, when the beast and false prophet are destroyed, and Satan bound. This fulfilment approaches nearer and nearer, and contains things of the utmost importance, the knowledge of which becomes every day more distinct and easy. In the mean time, it is highly necessary to guard against the present rage and subtlety of the devil; remembering that the events which are to precede the binding of him, and the commencing of these one thousand years, are awful, and shortly to be expected, one after another, namely, the calamities implied in the vintage, (chap. xiv. 18,) the pouring out of the last three vials, the judgment of Babylon, the last raging of the beast and false prophet, and their destruction. How great things are these! and how short the time! What is needful for us? Wisdom, patience, faithfulness, watchfulness. Surely this is not a time for us to settle upon our lees. This, if it be rightly understood, will not be an acceptable message to the wise, the mighty, the honourable of this world. Yet that which is to be done shall be done: there is no counsel against

A. M. 4100. 4 And I saw ^f thrones, and they ^{A. D. 96.} sat upon them, and ^r judgment was given unto them: and I saw ^h the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and ⁱ which had not worshipped the beast, ^k neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and ^l reigned

^f Dan. vii. 9, 22, 27; Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30.—^r 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.—^h Chapter vi. 9.—ⁱ Chapter xiii. 12.—^k Chapter xiii. 15, 16.

the Lord. *After that he must be loosed*—So does the mysterious wisdom of God permit; for a little season—For a small time, comparatively: though, upon the whole, it cannot be very short, because the things that are to be transacted therein (see verses 8, 9) must take up a considerable space.

Verses 4-6. *And I saw thrones*—Such as were promised to the apostles, Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30; *and they*—Namely, the saints, whom St. John saw at the same time; *sat upon them, and judgment was given to them*—1 Cor. vi. 2. Error and sin being restrained, the reign of righteousness succeeds, and the administration of justice and judgment is *given to the saints of the Most High*, Dan. vii. 22. *And I saw the souls*—That is, the persons; *of them that were beheaded*—Namely, with the axe, as the word *πεπελεκισμένων* properly signifies: one kind of death, however, which was particularly inflicted at Rome, is mentioned for all kinds thereof: *for the witness*, or testimony, *of Jesus*—For testifying that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour, Lawgiver, and final Judge of the world, and especially of those who believe in him; *and for the word of God*—In general, or for some particular and peculiarly important truth of it; or for bearing witness to the great truths of the everlasting gospel; *and who had not worshipped the beast*—Had not made any acknowledgment of subjection to the antichristian power of the beast, nor yielded to the prevailing corruptions; *nor his image*—The pope and his corrupt hierarchy; but had persevered in the true Christian faith against all opposition. See on chap. xiii. 4-8, 11-17. *Neither had received his mark in their foreheads, or on their hands*—Had neither made an open profession of his corrupt religion, nor had secretly complied with its idolatries or superstitions. *And they lived*—Their souls and bodies being reunited; *and reigned with Christ*—It is not said, *on earth*. Doubtless the meaning is, that they ascended and reigned with him in heaven; *a thousand years*—Namely, before the rest of the dead, even the one thousand years during which Satan is bound, and truth and righteousness prevail over all the earth. Although the martyrs, when thus raised from the dead, shall not continue on earth, it is highly probable that, in proof of their resurrection, they will appear to pious individuals, in the places where they were so cruelly martyred, and where

with Christ a thousand years. A. M. 4100. 5 But the rest of the dead lived ^{A. D. 96.} not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such ^m the second death hath no power, but they shall be ⁿ priests of God and of Christ, ^o and shall reign with him a thousand years.

^l Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Chap. v. 10.—^m Chap. ii. 11, 21. 8.—ⁿ Isaiah lxi. 6; 1 Peter ii. 9; Chapter i. 6; v. 10. ^o Verse 4.

they are raised: as those saints who, at Jerusalem, rose with Christ, went into the city, and appeared to many, Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. And if so, it is likely this circumstance will tend greatly to confirm the faith and hope of believers respecting the resurrection of the dead, and will check vice and profaneness, and contribute much to the spread of the gospel. "The martyrs and confessors of Jesus," says Bishop Newton, "who are here represented as being raised from the dead, at least one thousand years before others, are not only those who were beheaded, or suffered any kind of death, under the heathen Roman emperors, but also those who refused to comply with the idolatrous worship of the beast and his image. All these have this peculiar prerogative above the rest of mankind: they all share in this first resurrection. And all of them the apostle here pronounces, *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*—He is *holy* in all senses of the word: *holy*, as separated from the common lot of mankind; *holy*, as endowed with all virtuous qualifications; and none but such are admitted to partake of this blessed state. *On such the second death has no power*—The *second death* is a Jewish phrase for the punishment of the wicked after death. The Chaldee paraphrase of Onkelos, and the other paraphrases of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, and of Jerusalem, on Deut. xxxiii. 6, *Let Reuben live, and not die, say, Let him not die the second death, by which the wicked die in the world to come*. The sons of the resurrection, therefore, shall not die again, but shall live in eternal bliss, and *be priests of God and Christ, and reign with him a thousand years*"—Before any others. For the Lord Jesus will not suffer any of his disciples to be, in the end, losers for their fidelity to him and his cause. These *loved not their lives unto death*, but voluntarily sacrificed them out of love to him; and he thus amply recompenses them. He gives each of them an infinitely better life than that given up for his sake—and this a thousand years before the other pious dead receive theirs. "Nothing is more evident," says Bishop Newton, "than that this prophecy of the millennium, and of the first resurrection, hath not yet been fulfilled, even though the resurrection be taken in a figurative sense. For reckon the thousand years from the time of Christ, or reckon them from the time of Conatantine, yet neither of these periods,

A. M. 4100. 7 And when the thousand years are
A. D. 96. expired, ^pSatan shall be loosed out of
his prison.

^p Verse 2.—^q Verses 3, 10.

nor indeed any other, will answer the description and character of the millennium, the purity and peace, the holiness and happiness of that blessed state. Before Constantine, indeed, the church was in greater purity; but was groaning under the persecutions of the heathen emperors. After Constantine, the church was in greater prosperity, but was soon shaken and disturbed by heresies and schisms, by the incursions and devastations of the northern nations, by the conquering arms and prevailing imposture of the Saracens, and afterward of the Turks; by the corruption, idolatry, and wickedness—the usurpation, tyranny, and cruelty, of the Church of Rome. If Satan was then *bound*, when can he be said to be *loosed*? Or how could *the saints and the beast, Christ and antichrist, reign at the same period*? This prophecy therefore remains to be fulfilled, even though the resurrection be taken only for an allegory, which yet the text cannot admit without the greatest torture and violence. For with what propriety can it be said, that some of the dead, *who were beheaded, lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished, unless the dying and living again be the same in both places, a proper death and resurrection*? Indeed the *death and resurrection* of the witnesses before mentioned, chap. xi., appears, from the concurrent circumstances of the vision, to be figurative; but the *death and resurrection* here mentioned must, for the very same reasons, be concluded to be real. If the martyrs rise only in a spiritual sense, then *the rest of the dead* rise only in a spiritual sense; but if *the rest of the dead* really rise, the martyrs rise in the same manner. There is no difference between them: and we should be cautious and tender of making the first resurrection an allegory, lest others should reduce the second into an allegory too, like those whom St. Paul mentions 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. In the general, that there shall be such a happy period is the plain and express doctrine of Dan. vii. 27; Psa. ii. 8; Isa. xi. 9; Rom. xi. 25, 26, and of all the prophets, as well as of St. John; and we daily pray for the accomplishment of it in saying, *Thy kingdom come*. But, of all the prophets, St. John is the only one who hath declared particularly, and in express terms, that the martyrs shall rise at the commencement of it, though, as has been observed, probably not to remain on earth, but to ascend and be with Christ in heaven; and that this happy state of the church shall continue for one thousand years. And the Jewish Church before him, and the Christian Church after him, have further believed and taught, that these thousand years will be the seventh millenary of the world. A pompous heap of quotations might be produced to this purpose, both from Jewish and Christian writers; but to enumerate only a few of both sorts: among the Jewish writers

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8 And shall go out ^a to deceive A. M. 4100.
the nations which are in the four ^{A. D. 96.}
quarters of the earth, ^rGog and Magog, ^tto

^r Ezek. xxxviii. 2; xxxix. 1.—^t Chap. xvi. 14.

are, Rabbi Ketina, and the house of Elias; among the Christian writers are, St. Barnabas in the first century, Justin Martyr in the second century, Tertullian in the beginning of the third, and Lactantius in the beginning of the fourth century. In short, the doctrine of the millennium was generally believed in the first three and purest ages of the church: and this belief was one principal cause of the fortitude of the primitive Christians: they even coveted martyrdom, in hopes of being partakers of the privileges and glories of the martyrs in the first resurrection. Afterward, this doctrine grew into disrepute, for various reasons. Some, both Jewish and Christian writers, have debased it with a mixture of fables. It hath suffered by the misrepresentations of its enemies, as well as by the indiscretions of its friends; it hath been abused to the worst purposes: it hath been made an engine of faction. Besides, wherever the influence and authority of the Church of Rome have extended, she hath endeavoured by all means to discredit this doctrine; and, indeed, not without sufficient reason, this kingdom of Christ being founded on the ruins of antichrist. No wonder, therefore, that this doctrine lay depressed for many ages; but it sprang up again at the Reformation, and will flourish together with the study of the Revelation. All the danger is, on the one side, of pruning and lopping it too short; and, on the other, of suffering it to grow too wild and luxuriant. Great caution and judgment are required to keep in the middle way. We should neither, with some, interpret into an allegory; nor, with others, indulge an extravagant fancy, nor explain too curiously the manner and circumstances of this future state. We must not imagine, as Fleming observes, that the appearance of Christ, to introduce this glorious state of the church, will be a personal one, any more than his appearance to destroy Jerusalem, and punish the Jewish nation by Titus, was such; *for the heavens must retain him until the time of the restitution of all things*. Nor are we to imagine that, in this prosperous state of the church, it shall be free from all mixture of hypocrisy, error, and sin, seeing that the sudden and general apostacy which will follow that period shows that all were not Israel that feigned themselves to be of it; otherwise it is not likely that God, in his equity and goodness, would suffer the enemies of his people so dreadfully to assault them as they are here represented to do. It is safest and best faithfully to adhere to the words of Scripture, and to rest contented with the general account, till time shall accomplish and eclaireise all the particulars.

Verses 7-10. The following verses of this chapter to verse 11 inform us that the happy days of the church, prophesied of in the foregoing vision, will at length have their period, though they are to continue for a long time, and are not to expire till after one

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A. M. 4100. gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 ' And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 ^u And the devil that deceived them was

¹ Isaiah viii. 8; Ezek. xxxviii. 9, 16.—² Verse 8.—³ Chapter xix. 20.

thousand years: yet then there shall be one attempt more against the purity of religion, and against the peace and prosperity of the church. Satan will be released for a little season, but in that little season he shall deceive many, and so far seduce them as to prevail upon them to join with him in his apostasy. This new attempt against truth and righteousness shall end in the utter ruin of the enemies of Christ and his religion; they shall be totally defeated, and their obstinate wickedness punished with everlasting destruction. This state of the church and world, so different from the preceding, deserves to be considered as a new period, which will therefore be the fifth in order.—Lowman. *And when the thousand years are expired, &c.*—“At the expiration of the thousand years the restraint shall be taken off from wickedness; *Satan shall be loosed out of his prison*—And make one effort more to re-establish his kingdom. As he deceived our first parents in the paradisiacal state, so he shall have the artifice to deceive the nations in this millennium kingdom, to show that no state or condition on earth is exempted or secured from sinning. The nations whom he shall deceive are described as living in the remotest parts of the world; *in the four quarters*—*Εν ταῖς τεσσαροῖς γωνίαις τῆς γῆς, in the four angles, or corners, of the earth*; and they are distinguished by the name of Gog and Magog, and are said to be as numerous as the sands of the sea. Gog and Magog seem to have been formerly the general name of the northern nations of Europe and Asia, as the Scythians have been since, and the Tartars are at present. In Ezekiel there is a famous prophecy concerning Gog and Magog, and this prophecy alludes to that in many particulars. Both that of Ezekiel and this of St. John remain yet to be fulfilled; and therefore we cannot be absolutely certain that they may not both relate to the same event, but it appears more probable that they relate to different events. The one is expected to take place before, but the other will not take place till after, the millennium. Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, are said expressly (xxxviii. 6, 15; xxxix. 2) to come from the north quarters and the north parts; but in St. John they came from the four quarters, or corners, of the earth. Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, bend their forces against the Jews resettled in their own land; but in St. John they march up against the saints and church of God in general. It may therefore be concluded that Gog and Magog, as well as Sodom, and Egypt, and Baby-

cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, ⁴ where the beast and the false prophet are, and ⁵ shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face ⁶ the earth and the heaven fled away; ⁷ and there was found no place for them.

¹ Chapter xiv. 10, 11.—² 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 11; Chapter xxi. 1. ³ Den. ii. 25.

lon, are mystic names in this book; and the last enemies of the Christian Church are so denominated, because Gog and Magog appear to be the last enemies of the Jewish nation. Who they shall be, we cannot pretend to say with any degree of certainty: but whoever they shall be, they shall come up from the four corners of the earth, on the breadth of the earth, and shall compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city—The new Jerusalem, with the saints encamped around it, as the Israelites encamped around the tabernacle in the wilderness. But they shall not succeed in their attempts; they shall not be able to hurt the church and city of God, but shall be destroyed in an extraordinary manner, by fire from heaven: and the devil himself, the promoter and leader of this new apostasy and rebellion against God and his Christ, shall not only be confined as before, but shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where he shall be punished together with the beast and the false prophet, who were cast in before him, and shall be tormented for ever and ever.

Verse 11. The course of these prophecies, after many important visions describing the state of the church and world in this present life, brings us at last to the great and final judgment, when the whole scene and mystery of Providence shall be finished. Then the great doctrine which runs through the whole of these prophecies will be fully verified, namely, that truth and righteousness shall surely prevail in the end, against error and all iniquity; eternal happiness shall be the reward of the faithful, and everlasting destruction the punishment of the wicked. This is represented as a sixth period of Providence, after which there will be in the seventh period an everlasting sabbath; a state of eternal rest and happiness for all the righteous, and of the most perfect worship of God, in the praises and devotions of the heavenly church.—Lowman. *And I saw*—A representation of the great day of the Lord; a great white throne—How great who can say? White—With the glory of God, and to show the holiness, justice, and equity of him that sits on it, the Lord Jesus. The apostle does not attempt to describe him here; he only adds that circumstance, far above all description; *from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away*—At least the aerial, if not also the starry heaven; and there was found no place for them—But they were wholly dissolved; the very elements melting with fervent heat. It is not said

A. M. 4100. 12 And I saw the dead, ^bsmall and
A. D. 96. great, stand before God; ^cand the
books were opened: and another ^dbook was
opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead

^b Chap. xix. 5.—^c Dan. vii. 10.—^d Psa. lxxix. 28; Dan. xii. 1;
Phil. iv. 3; Chap. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xxi. 27.

they were thrown into great commotions, but they *fell into dissolution*; not they removed to a distant place, but *there was found no place for them*: at least as to their present state; they ceased to exist, they were no more. See on 2 Pet. iii. 7-13. And all this, not at the strict command of the Lord Jesus, not at his awful presence, or before his fiery indignation, but at the *bare presence* of his Majesty, sitting with severe, but adorable dignity, on his throne.

Verse 12. *And I saw the dead, small and great*—Of every age and condition, rank and degree; as well those who perished at sea, and were buried in the waters, as those who died on land, and were buried in graves: all are raised, and *stand before* the judgment-seat of *God*, as also those who are found alive at Christ's second coming, and undergo a change equivalent to death, 1 Cor. xv. 51. All these stand before their Judge, whether they had been rich or poor, kings or subjects, in one grand assembly, waiting to receive their final doom from him who once stood at the bar of a weak and sinful mortal, by whom he was condemned to suffer the ignominious and painful death of crucifixion, but now, how unlike

The babe of Bethlehem! how unlike the man
That groan'd on Calvary! Yet he it is;
That Man of sorrows! O how changed!

And the books were opened—The records of the Divine Omniscience on the one hand, and those of the sinners' consciences on the other; and the book of the natural law, the rule by which those shall be judged who had not been favoured with the Holy Scriptures, and the book of the revealed law, including the Old Testament and the New: by which they shall be judged who were favoured, and as far as they were favoured, with these divine oracles. Human judges have their books written with pen and ink; but how different is the nature of these books, and how many hidden things will be brought to light when they are opened! And how many will have a quite different appearance, in the sight of men, from what they had before? With the book of God's omniscience that of conscience will exactly tally. It is not said *the books will be read*; the light of that day will make them visible to all: then particularly shall every man know himself, and that with the utmost exactness. This will be the first true, full, impartial, universal history that was ever published. And now, if these were the only books that will be opened, no flesh could be saved: for all heathen will be found to have violated the law of nature, or to have fallen short of its demands: all Jews to have transgressed the law of Moses, and to have contracted guilt thereby, though in different

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were judged out of those things which ^{A. M. 4100.}
were written in the books, ^{A. D. 96.} according
to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were

^a Jer. xvii. 10; xxxii. 19; Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; Chap. ii.
23; xxii. 12; Verse 13.

degrees; and all Christians, so called, to have deviated, more or less, from the spirituality and strictness of the law of Christ, at one time or another. But *another book was opened*—Wherein were enrolled all that had turned to God in true repentance and living faith, and had been *accepted in the Beloved*; had been both justified and sanctified through the mediation and grace of Christ, and had lived and died in the possession of that faith in God and his truth, which *worketh by love*. *Which is the book of life*—That is, without a figure, that divine wisdom or remembrance, whereby the Lord *knows them that are his*, namely, them that, in the days of their flesh, had been truly pardoned and renewed in the spirit of their minds; had been taken into God's favour, stamped with his image, possessed of communion with him, and had brought forth the genuine fruits of righteousness, *by a patient continuance in well-doing*. All these shall be acquitted at the bar of Christ, and acknowledged as his genuine followers. Nevertheless even these shall be *judged out of those things which were written in the books*—That is, in a manner agreeable to the tenor of them; *according to their works*—That is, according as their spirit and conduct, their intentions and affections, their tempers, words, and actions, had been agreeable or disagreeable to the discoveries which God had made to them of his will. In other words their reward shall be greater or less in proportion to the degrees of holiness which they had attained, the endeavours they had used to glorify God, and do good to mankind in their generation, and to the patience and resignation wherewith they had endured the various sufferings which, in the course of Divine Providence, they had been called to sustain for the trial of their grace, and to render them examples of patience to others. On the other hand, those who are *not found written in the book of life*, (verse 15,) who in the days of their flesh did not turn to God in repentance, faith, and new obedience, and therefore were not accepted of him through the mediation of his Son, are *cast into the lake of fire*, where they are punished in different degrees, according to their evil works; that is, according to the unholiness and unrighteousness of their tempers, words, and actions; their internal enmity against, or unlikeness to God, the dishonour they had done to him, and the evil they had done to their fellow-creatures by their iniquitous conduct, including their abuse of their time and talents, of the privileges afforded them, and the various means used in vain to reclaim and bring them to repentance.

Verses 13-15. *And*—That none might be exempt from being brought to judgment, the resurrection extended even to the waters; *the sea*—The lakes and rivers; *gave up the dead which were in them*,

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A. M. 4100. in it; and ^c death and ^d hell delivered
A. D. 96.

up the dead which were in them:
^e and they were judged every man according to
their works.

14 And ^b death and hell were cast into the

^f Chap. vi. 8.—^g Or, *the grave*.—^h Verse 12.—ⁱ 1 Cor. xv.

and, ο θανάτου και ο αἰῶνος, *death and hades*—Or, the state of separate souls, *delivered up the dead which were in them*—*Death* gave up all the bodies of men, and *hades* their souls, to be united to their bodies. *And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire*—That is, were abolished for ever. For neither the righteous nor the wicked were to die any more; their souls and bodies were to be no more separated. Consequently neither death nor hades could any more have a being. Such is the awful end of the whole human race: they are plunged into that flaming and eternal ruin signified by the lake of fire, or are received into those abodes of glory, which are described in the next two chapters under the figures of a new heaven and a new earth.

Here then we have before us a most affecting view of those important events in which we are all most intimately, yea, infinitely concerned; even the illustrious day of the passing away of the heaven and earth, and the final judgment of all mankind, whether small or great. Therefore let all the living, both small and great, seriously weigh these things; let them often look forward to the awful period when the glorious throne shall be set, the important volumes opened, and our whole lives, all our tempers, words, and works, which are now perfectly

lake of fire. ⁱ This is the second A. M. 4100.
death. A. D. 96.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life ^k was cast into the lake of fire.

26, 54, 55.—^l Verse 6; Chapter xxi. 8.—^m Chapter xix. 20.

known to God, shall be exhibited to the view of men, angels, and devils. Let us, therefore, judge ourselves impartially, that we be not condemned of the Lord; and, conscious how unable we shall be to stand in that judgment if he were to lay *justice to the line*, let us humbly and penitently apply to the throne of mercy, to the grace of the gospel covenant, through the blood of the Redeemer. So shall we find mercy of the Lord in that day, and reign with him, not a thousand years only, but for everlasting ages. In the mean time, let those who have no reverence for his majesty, nor esteem for his gospel, and who have never taken this awful alarm, have never fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them, tremble at these awakening views. Let them all, of every condition, both small and great, say in their hearts, *Who shall dwell with devouring flames, with everlasting burnings?* Shall we have our portion in this lake of fire, into which every one who is not found written in the book of life shall be cast? and shall we be those wretched victims of the divine justice, who shall be *tormented for ever and ever?* Nay, rather let us turn to God in sincerity and truth that our *souls may live*, and an entrance be administered unto us into his everlasting kingdom!

CHAPTER XXI.

Here we have, (1.) *A solemn introduction to the glorious vision of the new heaven and the new earth, with a declaration of the blessed state of those that are faithful unto death, and finally overcome their spiritual enemies, and of the misery to be inflicted on unbelieving and impious offenders, 1-8.* (2.) *A sublime and particular description of the splendour, glory, purity, and happiness, of the heavenly Jerusalem, 9-27.*

A. M. 4100. **AND** ^a I saw a new heaven and a
A. D. 96. new earth: ^b for the first heaven

^a Isa. lxxv. 17; lxxvi. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 13.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

We are now come, in the course of these prophecies, to the consummation of all things. This vision stands in the prophecy, after the last attempt of the enemies of religion had been defeated; after the dead, small and great, had appeared before God's judgment-seat, and were judged according to their works; after all the wicked were doomed to everlasting punishment, and all who were not found written in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire. This order of the prophecies seems to point

and the first earth were passed away; A. M. 4100.
and there was no more sea. A. D. 96.

^b Chap. xx. 11.

out to us, that the new heavens and new earth, represented in this vision, signify that state of unchangeable perfection and heavenly happiness to which the true and faithful servants of the living God shall be advanced, when all their trials and suffering in this life shall be ended. Nothing can be more proper to the useful design of these revelations than such a conclusion of them, with so affecting a representation of the final, complete, and everlasting happiness of all the true worshippers of God and faithful servants of Jesus. This is a powerful

A. M. 4100. 2 And I John saw ° the holy city,
A. D. 96. new Jerusalem, coming down from
God out of heaven, prepared ^d as a bride adorned
for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven,

^c Isa. lii. 1; Gal. iv. 26; Heb. xi. 10; xii. 22; xiii. 14; Chap. iii.
12; Verse 10.

motive to present patience, a firm foundation of present hope, a strong encouragement to zeal in the cause of true religion, and constancy in the incorrupt faith of Jesus. It is a very ancient observation, "that happiness is the reward of virtue in the end;" but here is a sure word of prophecy, which beforehand acquaints us what will be the last period and state of things. The present world for a few years, a very few in comparison of eternity, will be a state of various sorts of trials and troubles; of evils caused by wicked men, of evils wherewith the righteous Governor of the world punishes their wickedness; but the unchangeable purpose of God has appointed another state of things, when the dead shall be raised and judged according to their works. All the faithful servants of God and Christ will enjoy a state of eternal life in perfect peace and security, in complete prosperity and happiness. It is with great advantage this encouragement is given the church in such a prophecy. An observation of the faithful and punctual accomplishment of the former parts of this prophecy in times past, for several hundreds of years, serves much to confirm our faith and hope in as exact a performance of what remains. It must be owned, several interpreters of good reputation understand the following vision as a description of the happy state of the church during the thousand years in which it shall reign with Christ; or to describe the full and complete reformation of the Christian Church during the last period upon earth. But as there seems nothing in the prophetic description to confine it to this meaning, so the order of the prophecies, the chief and principal design of them, and the description itself, greatly favour the judgment of those learned writers, who understand these last visions of the future state of happiness in heaven, after the general resurrection and last judgment. Thus the seventh and last period concludes the whole plan of Providence, and finishes it in an endless sabbatism.—Lowman.

Verses 1-3. *And I saw*—So it runs, chap. xix. 11; xx. 1, 4, 11, in a succession. All these several visions follow one another in order, and this vision reaches into eternity; *a new heaven and a new earth*—That is, after the foregoing visions, in which I beheld a representation of the state of the church and world to the consummation of all things, I had the final happiness of the true worshippers of God, to be enjoyed after the resurrection and the general judgment, represented to me in a new vision, in which I beheld a perfectly new state of things; the heaven and earth, in which we now live, being quite passed away, melted with fervent heat and dissolved in fire, there was a new heaven and a new

saying, Behold, ° the tabernacle of A. M. 4100.
God is with men, and he will dwell A. D. 96.
with them, and they shall be his people, and
God himself shall be with them, *and be their*
God.

^d Isa. liv. 5; lxi. 10; 2 Cor. xi. 2.—^e Lev. xxvi. 11, 12; Ezek
xlili. 7; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Chap. vii. 15.

earth, in which I perceived one thing very remarkable, that *there was no more sea*—A circumstance which, whether it be effected by the means which the theorists of the earth (see Burnet's and Whiston's theory) have prescribed, or by any other, time, or rather eternity, must show; for it is evident from hence that this new heaven and earth are not designed to take place till after the general judgment; for at that judgment, (chap. xx. 13,) the sea gives up the dead which were in it. Many, however, understand the expression figuratively, that there shall be no troubles or commotions in the world; but it seems much more probable that it is to be understood literally. *And I saw the holy city*—The new heaven, the new earth, and the new Jerusalem, are closely connected. This city is wholly new, belonging, not to this world, not to the millennium, but to eternity. This appears from the series of the vision, the magnificence of the description, and the opposition of this city to the second death, chap. xx. 11, 12; xxi. 1, 2, 5, 8, 9; xxii. 5. *Coming down*—In the very act of descending; *from God*—Its maker and builder; *out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*—Prepared to meet him, with all her charms set out to the greatest advantage, and full of glory and splendour. At the commencement of the millennium it was said, (chap. xix. 7,) *the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready*. At the conclusion of the millennium, Gog and Magog went up against *the beloved city*; and here it is represented as the metropolis of the new heaven and the new earth. The new Jerusalem shall be the habitation of the saints of the first resurrection, and it shall also be the habitation of the saints of the general resurrection; the church of Christ shall endure through all times and changes of this world, and shall exist eternally in the world to come. It shall be glorious upon earth during the millennium, and it shall be more glorious still in the new earth after the millennium, to all eternity. Earth shall then become as heaven, or rather it shall be heaven on earth; God dwelling visibly among men, and sin and suffering being for ever done away! For the apostle adds, *I heard a great voice out of heaven*—A voice proceeding from the eternal Word and Son of the Father; *saying, Behold the tabernacle of God with men!*—So it is in the original, there being nothing for the verb *is*; *and he will dwell with them*—In token of his favour and great love to them; *and they shall be his people*—Protected and governed by him; *and God himself shall be with them*—Continually, as their Friend and Father; *and he shall be their God*—Their supreme good and final portion, their all in all.

A. M. 4100. 4 ^f And God shall wipe away all tears
A. D. 96. from their eyes; ^g and there shall be
no more death, ^h neither sorrow, nor crying, nei-
ther shall there be any more pain: for the for-
mer things are passed away.

5 And ⁱ he that sat upon the throne said,
^k Behold, I make all things new. And he said
unto me, Write: for ^l these words are true and
faithful.

6 And he said unto me, ^m It is done. ⁿ I am
Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
^o I will give unto him that is athirst of the
fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit ¹ all things;

^f Isa. xxv. 8; Chap. vii. 17.—^g 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54; Chap. xx.
14.—^h Isa. xxxv. 10; lxi. 3; lxxv. 19.—ⁱ Chap. iv. 2, 9; v.
1; xx. 11.—^k Isa. xliii. 19; 2 Cor. v. 17.—^l Chap. xix. 9.
^m Chap. xvi. 17.—ⁿ Chap. i. 8; xxii. 13.—^o Isa. xii. 3; lv.
1; John iv. 10, 14; vii. 37; Chap. xxii. 17.

Verses 4, 5. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*—Though here their tears have flowed plentifully, not one shall ever be found on the face of any of them; and there shall be no more death—This is a full proof that this whole description belongs to eternity and not to time. *Neither shall sorrow, or crying, or pain be any more*—Under the former heavens, and upon the former earth, there were death and sorrow, crying and pain; all which occasioned many tears. But now pain and sorrow are fled away, and the saints have everlasting life and joy; *for the former things*—All the mournful scenes, which were on earth so familiar to their eyes; *are passed away*—To return no more for ever. *And he that sat upon the throne said*—Not to St. John only; *Behold, I make all things new*—From the first mention of him that sat upon the throne, (chap. iv. 2,) this is the first speech which is expressly ascribed to him. He is the author of this second, as he was of the first creation; and he commands these things to be *written* for the edification, support, and consolation of his people, with a full assurance of their certainty and importance. *And he*—The same person; *saith to me, Write*—Namely, as follows: *These words are true and faithful*—This includes all that went before. The apostle seems again to have ceased writing, being overcome with ecstasy and the voice of him that spake.

Verses 6-8. *And he "that sat upon the throne" said to me, It is done*—All that the prophets have spoken is fulfilled. This is the consummation of all things: and now all the promises of God, and the desires of his faithful servants, shall be fully accomplished. *I am Alpha, &c.*—Greek, το αλφα, και το ωμεγα, the Alpha and the Omega; the beginning and the end—The latter clause explains the former; the everlasting. *I will give unto him that is athirst*—That sincerely and earnestly desires it; *of the fountain of the water of life*—Refreshing consolation, which shall abundantly satisfy his most en-

and ^p I will be his God, and he shall ^q be my son. A. M. 4100.
A. D. 96.

8 ^r But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in ^s the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

9 And there came unto me one of ^t the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee ^u the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away ^v in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me

¹ Or, these things.—^p Zech. viii. 8; Heb. viii. 10.—^q 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 19-21; Eph. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 9; Heb. xii. 14; Chapter xxii. 15.—^r Chapter xx. 14, 15.—^s Chapter xv. 1, 6, 7.—^t Chapter xix. 7; Verse 2.—^u Chapter i. 10; xvii. 3.

larged desires and most exalted expectations; happiness which shall ever flow in upon him, as water from a perpetually flowing fountain; *freely*—*Δωρεαν*, as a free, unmerited gift. *He that overcometh*—To do which is much more than to thirst; *shall inherit all things*—Which I have made: the whole creation shall be laid open to his enjoyment. *And I will be his God*—A source of complete and everlasting blessedness to him; *and he shall be my son*—And consequently mine heir: the inheritor of my eternal kingdom, yea, and a joint-heir with my only-begotten and well-beloved Son. *But the fearful and unbelieving*—Who have not courage to face the difficulties which an open profession of my religion requires, and therefore do not overcome; *and the abominable*—All who indulge themselves in abominable vices to gratify their lusts; *and murderers*—Of the bodies, souls, or reputation of their fellow-creatures; *and whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars*—All who allow themselves, in their words or actions, to violate the eternal and immutable laws of truth and righteousness; *shall have their part in the lake, &c.*—All these shall have their portion with Satan, to whose party they joined themselves, and whose will they obeyed; *and shall with him undergo the punishment of the second death*. Let this therefore be recorded, that every future generation of men may carefully peruse and seriously consider it; that every sincere believer, however weak, may be encouraged, and that every obstinate sinner may be terrified, and, if possible, awakened; and that none, in the day of my final judgment, may complain that they have not been warned and cautioned, with the greatest plainness and the greatest solemnity.

Verses 9-14. *And there came unto me one of the seven angels*—Most probably the same who had (chap. xvii. 1, &c.) showed John the mystic Babylon and her destruction, and now shows him, by way of contrast, the new Jerusalem and her glory. *And he carried me away in the Spirit*—The same ex-

A. M. 4100. ^athat great city, the holy Jerusalem,
A. D. 96. descending out of heaven from God,

11 ^γ Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, and had ^a twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

13 ^a On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.

^a Ezekiel xlviii.; Verse 2.—^γ Chapter xxii. 5; Verse 23.
^a Ezek. xlviii. 31-34.

pression as is used before, chap. xvii. 3; to a great and high mountain—Thus Ezekiel, chap. xl. 2, was brought in the visions of God, and set on a very high mountain: and showed me the holy city Jerusalem—The old city is now forgotten, so that this is no longer termed *the new*, but absolutely, *Jerusalem*. O how did St. John long to enter in! But the time was not yet come. Ezekiel also describes the *holy city*, and what belongs to it, (chap. xl.-xlviii.,) but a city quite different from the *old Jerusalem*, as it was either before or after the Babylonish captivity. The descriptions of the prophet and of the apostle agree in many particulars; but in many more they differ. Ezekiel expressly describes the temple and the worship of God therein, closely alluding to the Levitical service. But St. John saw no temple, and describes the city far more large, and glorious, and heavenly, than the prophet. His description, indeed, is an assemblage of the sublimest, richest imagery, not only of Ezekiel, but of other ancient prophets. *Having the glory of God*—For her light, verse 23; Isa. lx. 1, 2; Zech. ii. 5; and her light—Or the lustre thereof, as ο φως η αυτης may be rendered; was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper—For brightness; clear as crystal—The divine shechinah illuminating the whole city, which, as it was represented to St. John pendant in the air, shone with an elegant and amazing lustre, expressive of the perfect illumination, purity, and holiness of its happy inhabitants. *And had a wall great and high*—To show its strength and security under the almighty protection of its founder and preserver; and had twelve gates—With angels for guards, still waiting upon the heirs of salvation; and names written thereon—On the gates; of the twelve tribes of Israel—To signify that it was the dwelling of the Israel of God, and that such as had been faithful members of the true church had a right to be admitted, and to show also the great glory of that city, where angels were appointed to keep guard; an honour properly due only to the majesty of God's presence, and to the seat of it. *On the east, north, south, and west, three gates*—To show that people of all climates and nations may have access to it. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles*—Figuratively showing how

14 And the wall of the city had ^a twelve foundations, and ^b in them ^a the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he that talked with me ^c had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.

^a Ezek. xlviii. 31-34.—^b Matt. xvi. 18; Gal. ii. 9; Eph. ii. 20.
^c Ezek. xl. 3; Zech. ii. 1; Chap. xi. 1.

great dependance the church had on their testimony, what an influence the gospel which they preached had had on raising this divine structure, and that the inhabitants of it had built only on that faith which the apostles once delivered to the saints.

Verses 15, 16. *And he that talked with me had*—Like the angel who appeared in vision to Ezekiel; a golden reed, &c.—A measuring-rod, with this circumstance of illustrious distinction, that it was golden; to measure the city, &c.—In the several parts thereof; by which measure was signified the greatness and extent of the city, with the exact order and just proportion of every part: to show figuratively that this city was prepared for a great number of inhabitants, how small soever the number of real Christians may sometimes appear to be; and that every thing relating to the happiness of this heavenly state was prepared with the greatest care and exactness. *And the city lieth four-square*—Upon measuring it appeared that the city was an exact square, of equal length and breadth, and of a very large extent. For it appeared on measure to be twelve thousand furlongs—Or one thousand five hundred miles, not, it seems, in circumference, but on each of the four sides. Jerusalem was thirty-three furlongs in circumference; Alexandria thirty in length, ten in breadth; Nineveh is reported to have been four hundred furlongs round, Babylon four hundred and eighty. *The length, and the breadth, and the height of it*—That is, says Bishop Newton, of its walls and buildings; are equal—Are everywhere of the same beauty, strength, and proportion. For this equality, as Grotius observes, seems to belong to the walls and buildings compared with each other, not with the length and breadth of the city. For to understand the height of the city, whether of its walls or buildings, to be equal to the length or breadth of it, would make its houses and walls to be out of all proportion. For how large soever men may conceive the extent of the city, and of the contiguous buildings, houses twelve thousand furlongs high are beyond all propriety in the boldest figures. Or, if the twelve thousand furlongs be understood of the whole circumference of the city, the length of each of its four sides (it being an exact square) would be three hundred and seventy-five miles; and houses

A. M. 4100. 17 And he measured the wall thereof, of a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 ^d And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius;

^d Isa. liv. 11. — Chap. xxii. 2. — John iv. 23.

even of such a height would be out of all due proportion. Some interpreters, to avoid this difficulty, have included the height of the mountain on which the city is supposed to stand; but it is not said that the city itself was situated on a mountain, but only that John was called up to a mountain to view the model of it. Nor is it easy to say what end could be answered by making the height of the buildings so enormous, unless to render the city a perfect cube, for which no reason can be assigned; a perfect square rendering the emblem full as perfect. The truth is, the numbers themselves are evidently typical, taken from twelve, the number of the apostles, multiplied by one thousand. For as before, the number of the members of the Christian Church was represented by one hundred and forty-four thousand, the square number of twelve multiplied by one thousand; so this manner of numbering will very properly signify a city, of which true Christians are to be the happy citizens and settled inhabitants; a city which shall have incomparably greater extent, and more strength and beauty, than ancient Babylon, Rome, or any other seat of empire ever known in this world.

Verses 17, 18. *And he measured the wall thereof*—That is, Lowman thinks, the height of the wall; *one hundred and forty-four cubits*—The square of twelve: about seventy-two yards high, according to the lesser cubit, or about eighty-six yards according to the greater, a height sufficient to express the most perfect security against all attempts of any surprise by an enemy. Doddridge understands these cubits of the thickness of the wall, with the same view, namely, to signify the great strength of the city, and that it might defy all assailants. *According to the measure of a man*—A measure common among men; *that is, of the angel*—For such was the measuring-rod made use of by the angel. *And the building of the wall was of jasper*—The wall appeared to be built with unparalleled strength and magnificence, not of brick, or squared and polished stones, but of some precious stone, as solid, firm, and beautiful as a jasper. *And the city was of pure gold*—Namely, its houses and other buildings, separate from the wall; *like unto clear glass*—Or crystal. It

the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, A. M. 4100. beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, A. D. 96. a chrysopterus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 ^f And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 ^g And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the

^f Isa. xxiv. 23; lx. 19, 20; Chap. xxii. 5; Verse 11.

seems it is the city in general, and not the gold, which is represented as shining like glass or crystal. It is not easy to understand how pure gold should shine like crystal: but a city adorned with crystal, set in gold, may easily be supposed to shine in that manner.

Verses 19, 20. *And the foundations of the wall*—That is, the lower parts of it; *were garnished with all manner of precious stones*—Were inlaid quite round, and beautified with a great variety of them; or were beautifully formed of them. The precious stones on the high-priest's breast-plate of judgment were a proper emblem to express the happiness of God's church in his presence, and in the blessing of his protection. The like ornaments on the foundation of the walls of this city may express the perfect glory and happiness of all the inhabitants of it, from the most glorious presence and protection of God. The colours of these are remarkably mixed. A *jasper*—A precious stone as hard as marble, and of various colours, as of green, yellow, red, violet; a *sapphire*—Of a sky-blue, speckled with gold; a *chalcedony*—Or *carbuncle*, an elegant gem, whose colour is deep red, with an admixture of scarlet; an *emerald*—Of a bright green; a *sardonyx*—Red, streaked with white; a *sardius*—Or *sardine-stone*, of a deep red; a *chrysolite*—Of a gold colour, as the word signifies; a *beryl*—Sea-green; a *topaz*—A mixture of green and yellow; a *chrysopterus*—A beautiful mixture of gold and green; a *jacinth*—Of a red purple; an *amethyst*—A violet purple. *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls*—Each one being a pearl, entire and undivided, with all their beautiful pillars, arches, mouldings, and cornices. *And the street was pure gold*—And yet transparent, reflecting the light that shone upon it with a lustre equal to that which is the most highly polished.

Verses 22-27. *And I saw no temple therein*—The whole city being, properly speaking, a temple; *the Lord God and the Lamb* surrounding, filling, and sanctifying the whole, and being more intimately present in every part of it, and with every individual, saint or angel, than had ever been known on earth. *And the city had no need of the sun*—To give light to its inhabitants; *for the glory of God*—

A. M. 4100. glory of God did lighten it, and the
A. D. 96. Lamb is the light thereof.

24 ^b And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 ⁱ And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for ^k there shall be no night there.

^h Isa. lx. 3, 5, 11; lxvi. 12.—^j Isa. lx. 11.—^k Isa. lx. 20; Zech. xiv. 7; Chap. xxii. 5.—^l Verse 24.

Infinitely brighter than the shining of the sun; *did lighten it*—The illustrious manifestation of his presence rendered every other light unnecessary. It seems the whole city appeared to St. John like a luminous object, sending out rays on every side, which he knew to be the consequence of God's dwelling there in a peculiar sense. *And the nations of them which are saved*—From the guilt and pollution of sin before they leave this world; *shall walk in the light of it*—In a higher degree than they could possibly do on earth: for they shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but face to face; shall no longer *know in part*, but *shall know as they are known*. *And the kings of the earth*—Those of them who have a part there; *do bring their glory and honour into it*—Not their old glory, which is now supposed to be abolished, but such as becomes the new earth, and receives an immense addition by their entrance into this city. Or the sense may be, as Doddridge thinks, "If you were to conceive all the monarchs upon earth uniting all their treasures to

26 ^l And they shall bring the A. M. 4100.
glory and honour of the nations into it. A. D. 96.

27 And ^m there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's ⁿ book of life.

^m Isa. xxxv. 8; lii. 1; lx. 21; Joel iii. 17; Chap. xxii. 14, 15.
ⁿ Phil. iv. 3; Chap. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xx. 12.

adorn one single place, they could produce nothing comparable to the glory of this city." *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day*—That is, shall never be shut; *for there shall be no night there*. *And they shall bring the glory, &c., of the nations into it*—Whatever is most desirable among all nations seemed to meet together to adorn that place, where good men of all nations shall dwell and reign with God for ever. Or all that can contribute to make any city honourable and glorious shall be found in it; as if all that was rich and precious throughout the world was brought into one place. *And there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth*—Greek, *κοινον*, common; that is, unholy; or *that worketh abomination*—That is impure or vicious; or *maketh a lie*—Is chargeable with hypocrisy, falsehood, or deceit; *but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life*—Namely, true, holy, persevering believers. This blessedness is enjoyed only by such, and such as these only are registered among them who are to inherit eternal life.

CHAPTER XXII.

In this chapter, (1.) The description of the heavenly state is continued under the emblems of the water of life, and tree of life, and of the throne of God and the Lamb, 1-5. (2.) The conducting angel, who refuses adoration from John, and more especially Christ himself, attests the truth of the preceding revelations, and intimates that men would quickly be adjudged to everlasting happiness or misery, according as they improved or did not improve these revelations of God to them, 6-15. (3.) The Lord Jesus, after repeated declarations of his own dignity, intimations of his sudden coming to judge the world, and earnest invitation of sinners to receive his grace, denounces a solemn curse upon all such as should add to or take from the words of this prophecy, 16-20. (4.) The church and the apostle earnestly entreat Christ's gracious visits in time, and his glorious return to judgment, 20, 21.

A. M. 4100. AND he showed me ^a a pure river of
A. D. 96. water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 ^b In the midst of the street of it, and on

^a Ezek. xlvii. 1; Zech. xiv. 8.—^b Ezek. xlvii. 12; Ch. xxi. 21.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Verses 1, 2. *And*—Proceeding with his description of the heavenly city, the apostle observes, *he*—That is, the angel who condescended to be his guide on this occasion; *showed me a pure river of the water*

either side of the river, *was there* A. M. 4100
^c the tree of life, which bare twelve A. D. 96.
manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were ^d for the healing of the nations.

^c Gen. ii. 9; Chap. ii. 7.—^d Chap. xxi. 24.

of life—The ever fresh and fructifying influence of the Holy Spirit: see Ezek. xlvii. 1-12, where also the trees are mentioned which *bear fruit every month*, that is, perpetually. *Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb*—All things that the Fa-

A. M. 4100. 3 And ^a there shall be no more
A. D. 96. curse: ^f but the throne of God and
of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants
shall serve him:

4 And ^e they shall see his face; and ^b his
name shall be in their foreheads.

5 ⁱ And there shall be no night there; and
they need no candle, neither light of the sun;

^a Zech. xiv. 11.—^f Ezek. xlvi. 35.—^e Matt. v. 8; 1 Cor.
xiii. 12; 1 John iii. 2.—^b Chap. iii. 12; xiv. 1.—ⁱ Chap. xxi.
23, 25.

ther hath, saith the Son of God, are mine; even the
throne of his glory. In the midst of the street of it
—Here is the paradise of God, mentioned chap. ii.
7; and on either side of the river was the tree of
life—As this river ran through the chief street in the
midst of the city, so there were planted on each side
of it beautiful trees, not only to serve for ornament
and refreshment, but which, like the tree of life in
paradise, should make the inhabitants immortal; *which bare twelve manner of fruits*—Which pro-
duced a great variety of pleasant fruits, and in such
plenty, that ripe fruit was yielded every month—So
that all might freely partake of them at all seasons.
And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the
nations—That is, for the preserving, not the restor-
ing, of spiritual health; for no sickness or infir-
mity, of mind or body, is, or can be there: beneath
the salutary shade of these trees no disease can ever
invade any individual of the nations of the saved,
but perpetual health shall exist and flourish in them
all.

Verses 3-5. And then too there shall be no more
curse—As there is in this present world, and has
been ever since the fall of man; but only pure life
and blessing, every effect of the displeasure of God
for sin being now totally removed; but the throne
of God and of the Lamb shall be in it—That is, the
glorious presence and reign of God and the Lamb;
and his servants—The most honourable title in the
universe; shall serve him—The noblest employ-
ment. And they shall see his face—The blessed in-
habitants shall enjoy the so much talked of beatific
vision, a privilege not granted even to Moses. They
shall have the nearest access to, and the most free
intercourse with him. This is the strongest expres-
sion in the language of Scripture, to denote the most
perfect happiness of the heavenly state, 1 John iii. 2.
And his name shall be on their foreheads—Each of
them shall be openly acknowledged as God's own
property, and his glorious nature shall most visibly
shine forth in them. There seems in this expression
to be an allusion to the name of God being on the
golden plate which the Jewish high-priest wore on
his forehead. And there shall be no night there—
In this blessed state there shall be no interruption
of their happiness and joy, but they shall live in the
continual light of God's countenance. And they
need no candle, neither light of the sun—No in-
struction, aid, or comfort from any means of grace,

for ^k the Lord God giveth them A. M. 4100.
light: ^l and they shall reign for ever A. D. 96.
and ever.

6 And he said unto me, ^m These sayings are
faithful and true. And the Lord God of the
holy prophets ⁿ sent his angel to show unto
his servants the things which must shortly be
done.

^k Ps. xxxvi. 9; lxxxiv. 11.—^l Dan. vii. 27; Rom. v. 17;
2 Timothy ii. 12; Chapter iii. 21.—^m Chapter xix. 9; xxi. 5.
ⁿ Chap. i. 1.

ordinances of God, or any creature, as on earth; for
the Lord God giveth them light—Their knowledge
and wisdom, holiness and happiness, proceed imme-
diately from God himself, from his constant and
everlasting presence with them, and favour to them,
so that they shall enjoy the same unspeakable hap-
piness, without any interruption or diminution. And
they shall reign for ever and ever—What an en-
couragement is this to the patience and faithfulness
of these saints. That all their sufferings here on
earth shall work out for them an eternal weight of
glory! Observe, reader, the kingdom of God is
taken by force; but the prize is well worth all the
labour. What is high, amiable, or excellent in all
the honours, riches, pleasures, titles, dignities, mo-
narchies of the earth, has, if taken together, not the
weight or value of a grain of dust, compared to the
glory, riches, and felicity of the children of God.
God is not ashamed to be called their God, for
whom he hath prepared this city. But who shall
come up into this holy place? Who shall have a
right to the tree of life? They who, being justified
by grace, are made heirs according to the hope of it,
Tit. iii. 7; they who, having this hope in them, pur-
ify themselves as he is pure, 1 John iii. 3; they who
do his commandments, verse 14; and give diligence
to be found with him in peace without spot and
blameless, 2 Pet. iii. 14. Thus ends the doctrine of
the Revelation, in the everlasting happiness of all
the faithful. The mysterious ways of Providence
are cleared up, and all things issue in an eternal
sabbath, an everlasting state of perfect peace and fel-
licity, reserved for all who endure to the end.

Verses 6, 7. The glory and felicity set forth in the
preceding chapter, and continued in the five verses
we have just considered, being great above all ima-
gination, certain as the word of prophecy, and last-
ing without end, must, if duly considered, be a pow-
erful encouragement to us, and persuasive to constancy
in the profession and practice of pure Christian-
ity, whatever difficulties or dangers may attend
it. What follows, to the end, is the conclusion of
the whole book, or a sort of epilogue, which confirms
the truth of the prophecies contained in these reve-
lations, shows the importance and use of them, and
is well fitted to leave them with strong impressions
on the hearts of the readers, to preserve them from
complying with any corruptions of the Christian
faith and worship, and encourage their constancy in

A. M. 4100. 7 °Behold, I come quickly: ʳblessed
A. D. 96. *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the
prophecy of this book.

8 And I John saw these things, and heard
them. And when I had heard and seen, ʳI fell
down to worship before the feet of the angel
which showed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, ʳSee *thou do it*
not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy
brethren the prophets, and of them which keep
the sayings of this book: worship God.

10 ʳAnd he saith unto me, Seal not the say-

° Chap. iii. 11; Verses 10, 12, 20.—ʳ Chap. i. 3.—ʳ Chap.
xix. 10.—ʳ Chap. xix. 10.—ʳ Dan. viii. 26; xii. 4, 9; Chap.
x. 4.—ʳ Chap. i. 3.

the ways of truth and righteousness. *And he said, These sayings are true and faithful*—All the things which thou hast heard and seen shall be faithfully accomplished in their order, and are infallibly true. Thus the angel ratifies all the forementioned particulars, by a repetition of the same solemn assurance which he had before given, (chap. xix. 9; xxi. 5,) adding that he was commissioned by the same God who had inspired the ancient prophets, *to show the things which should shortly be done*—That is, which would very soon begin to be in part fulfilled, and would, in process of time, be completed. *Behold, I come quickly*—Here the angel speaks, not in his own person, but in the person and character of Christ, whose ambassador and representative he was. Christ is said to *come*, upon any notable and illustrious manifestation of his providence; and all these are but so many steps to prepare the way for his last coming to judgment. *Blessed, happy, is he that keepeth*, without adding to or diminishing from, *the sayings of the prophecy of this book*—And that is duly influenced by them. And, as Vitringa devoutly wishes, “May the Lord grant this favour to us who have bestowed some labour in meditating thereon, that we also may have some share in this blessing.”

Verses 8, 9. *And I John saw these things*—I, who have committed these revelations to writing for the constant use of the churches, do solemnly declare they are no invention of my own, but what I was an eye and ear witness to, having really seen and heard these things in the prophetic visions granted me, as I have faithfully related them. *And when I had heard, I fell down, &c.*—And now, my visions appearing to be at an end, I prostrated myself *before the angel* who had *showed me these things*—To express the great respect and gratitude I felt for a person who had laid me under such great obligations. See on chap. xix. 10. *Then saith he, See thou do it not*—The expression, as before, in the original is short and elliptical, as is usual in showing vehement aversion: as if the apostle had said, The angel hindered me again, as he had done once before, informing me that I should not consider him as the author of these prophetic visions, but as a fellow-servant of the prophets; and,

b

ings of the prophecy of this book: ʳfor A. M. 4100.
the time is at hand. A. D. 96.

11 ʳHe that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 ʳAnd behold, I come quickly; and ʳmy reward *is* with me, ʳto give every man according as his work shall be.

13 ʳI am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

ʳ Esek. iii. 27; Dan. xii. 10; 2 Tim. iii. 13.—ʳ Verse 7.
ʳ Isa. xl. 10; lxii. 11.—ʳ Rom. ii. 6; xiv. 12; Chap. xx. 12.
ʳ Isa. xli. 4; xlv. 6; xlviii. 12; Chap. i. 8, 11; xxi. 6.

as such, employed in the service of God with them: all the praise of the church should be therefore given to God alone, who only is to be acknowledged the author of these Revelations, and who only gives the Spirit of prophecy for the encouragement and consolation of the faithful.

Verses 10, 11. *And he saith unto me*—After a little pause; *Seal not the sayings of this book*—Conceal them not, like the things that are sealed up; *for the time is at hand*—When they shall begin to take place. *He that is unjust—Or unrighteous*; that is, who lives and dies unjustified, *let him be unjust*, or unrighteous, *still*—For after death his state can admit of no change, *he that is filthy*—Unholy, unsanctified, and dies in that condition; *let him, that is, he shall be, filthy, or unholy, still*; and *he that is righteous*—That lives and dies justified, or accounted righteous; *let him be, he shall be, righteous still*; and *he that is holy*—That is, renewed in the spirit of his mind, and stamped with the divine image, and perseveres until death in that state; shall *be holy still*—Shall be found so at the day of judgment, and shall remain so for ever. Dr. Doddridge’s paraphrase on the verse, connecting it with the preceding, is, “The time is just approaching when the last seal shall be put on the characters of men, and when it shall be said, on the one hand, *Let him that is unjust be unjust still, &c.*, for no more opportunities shall ever be granted for reforming what has been amiss, and recovering the unrighteous and polluted soul to rectitude and purity; and on the other hand, it shall be said, *Let him that is righteous be righteous still, &c.*; nothing shall ever happen to bring the virtues and graces of good men into any future danger, or under any cloud; but their righteousness and their holiness shall for ever shine, yea, shine with an increasing lustre.”

Verses 12–15. *And behold, I—Jesus Christ; come quickly*—To judge the world. *And my reward*—Both of grace and vengeance; *is with me*—The reward which I shall assign, both to the righteous and the wicked, shall be conferred at my coming; *to give to every man according as his work*—His spirit and conduct, his whole inward and outward behaviour,

A. M. 4100. 14 ^b Blessed are they that do his
A. D. 96. commandments, that they may have
right ^o to the tree of life, ^d and may enter in
through the gates into the city.

15 For ^e without are ^f dogs, and sorcerers, and
whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters,
and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 ^g I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify
unto you these things in the churches. ^h I am
the root and the offspring of David, *and* ⁱ the
bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and ^j the bride say, Come.

^b Daniel xiii. 12; 1 John iii. 24.—^c Verse 2; Chapter ii. 7.
^d Chap. xxi. 27.—^e 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 19-21; Col. iii. 6;
Chapter ix. 20, 21; xxi. 8.—^f Phil. iii. 2.—^g Chapter i. 1.
^h Chap. v. 5.—ⁱ Num. xxiv. 17; Zech. vi. 12; 2 Pet. i. 19;

shall be. And to confirm it further, I repeat it again, *I am Alpha, &c.*—Rather, *the Alpha and the Omega, &c.*—Who exist from everlasting to everlasting. How clear, incontestable a proof does our Lord here give of his divine glory! He is the Lord of the whole creation, by whom all things began to be formed, and by whom all things are to be finished; so that he will do all his pleasure, through all the ages of time, to the consummation of all things; and nothing can prevent or hinder the sure and full accomplishment of his word. Therefore, *blessed, happy, are they,* and they alone, *that do his commandments*—And so prepare for his important appearance; *that they may have a right*—Through his gracious covenant; *to the tree of life*—To all the blessings signified by it. When Adam broke his commandment, he was debarred from the *tree of life*. They who *keep his commandments*, who show their faith by their works, shall have access to it, and shall eat of it. *For without are dogs*—That is, the unclean, the contentious and quarrelsome, the fierce and rapacious. The sentence, in the original, is abrupt, as expressing abhorrence. The gates are ever open; but not for *dogs*. These are, and ever shall be, shut out, as also *sorcerers, &c.*—All that live in the violation of the known laws of God. See on chap. xxi. 8.

Verse 16. *I Jesus have sent mine angel*—It was not thought sufficient to represent the angel as speaking in the person of Christ, but Christ himself also is here introduced speaking in his own person, and confirming the divine authority of this book, and attesting it to be properly his revelation; *to testify unto you these things*—Primarily to you, the seven angels of the churches; then to those churches, and afterward to all other churches in succeeding ages. *I, as God, am the root*—And source; *and, as man, the offspring of David*—And his family; *and the bright and morning star*—Who wear a glory exceeding that of the most brilliant and celestial luminary, and who put an end to the night of ignorance, sin, and sorrow, and usher in an eternal day of light, purity, and joy.

And let him that heareth say, Come. A. M. 4100.

¹ And let him that is athirst come. A. D. 96.

And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, ^m If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book :

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, ⁿ God shall take away his part ¹ out of the book of life, and

Chap. ii. 28.—¹ Chap. xxi. 2, 9.—² Isa. lv. 1; John vii. 37; Chap. xxi. 6.—^m Deut. iv. 2; xii. 32; Prov. xxx. 6.—ⁿ Exod. xxxii. 33; Psa. lxxix. 28; Chap. iii. 5; xiii. 8.—¹ Or, *from the tree of life.*

Verse 17. *And the Spirit*—With which I inspire my servants; *and the bride*—The church, whom I have espoused, or the Spirit of adoption in the bride, says, with earnest desire and expectation, *Come*—And accomplish all the words of this prophecy. *And let him that heareth say, Come*—Let every one echo the invitation; and let my people, in all ages, consider it as their duty so to do; *and let him that is athirst*—That sincerely and earnestly desires the blessings of the gospel, whether the blessings of grace, or those of glory; *come*—And partake of those blessings. Let him apply to the Lord Jesus, in repentance and faith, to be pardoned and renewed; taken into God's favour, and stamped with his image here, and put in possession of eternal life hereafter, and he shall not apply in vain; *and whosoever will*—Here they also, who are farther off, are invited; *let him take of the water of life*—He may partake of spiritual and eternal blessings; *freely*—Yea, as freely as he makes use of the most common refreshments, as freely as he drinks of the running stream. Such a declaration of free grace seems to have been wisely inserted just in the close of the sacred canon, to encourage the hope of every humble soul that is truly desirous of the blessings of the gospel; and to guard against those suspicions of divine goodness, which the dark mind of man is so ready to imbibe. The word *λαμβάνω*, which we render *take*, often signifies *receive*; and the word *δωρεαν*, rendered *freely*, implies the same as *gratis*, namely, the perfect freedom of the gift, and may probably refer to the celebrated invitation, Isaiah lv. 1-3.

Verses 18, 19. *For I testify*—Here the Lord Jesus adds a solemn admonition, not only to the churches of Asia, but to all who should ever hear or read this book. To him that *adds to the things* contained in it, shall all the plagues mentioned in it be added; and from him that *takes away from the words of this prophecy* shall the blessings spoken of in it be taken. And doubtless this guilt is incurred by all those who lay hinderances in the way of the faithful, in order to prevent them from hearing their

A. M. 4100. out of ° the holy city, and from
A. D. 96. the things which are written in this
book.

20 He which testifieth these things saith,

° Chap. xxi. 2.— Verse 12.— 1 John xxi. 25.

Lord's words, *I come*, and answering, *Come, Lord Jesus*. This may likewise be considered as an awful sanction given to the whole New Testament; in like manner, as Moses guarded the law, (Deut. iv. 2; xii. 32,) and as God himself did, (Mal. iv. 4,) in closing the canon of the Old Testament. It is true, however, that this solemn caution particularly refers to this book of the Revelation. But, as Doddridge observes, "God forbid we should imagine every honestly mistaken criticism, where there is a question respecting receiving or excluding any particular verse, should affect a man's salvation, in consequence of what is here said. Such a passage, however, should make men very cautious, that they may not rashly incur any censure on this account; though, undoubtedly, the terror of the threatening is planted against any designed erasure or addition." It may be observed further on this verse, that since God threatens *the plagues written in this book*, and the loss of a *part in the holy city*, as what might be the portion of those who should presume to corrupt it, and such corruption might happen in any age of the church,—it is very evident that *the holy city* spoken of in the preceding chapter is a representation of *the heavenly state* to be enjoyed by all good men, how applicable soever it may seem to any glorious scene preceding the final judgment: and that Rev. xx. 11, 12, refers to the universal judgment.

Verse 20. *He which testifieth these things*—Even all that is contained in this book; *saith*—For the encouragement of the church in all her afflictions, and the warning of all her opposers and persecutors; *Surely I come quickly*—To judge and punish all my enemies, and the enemies of my cause and people; and to establish my church in a state of perfect and everlasting happiness. The apostle expresses his earnest desire and hope of this, by answering, *Amen*. *Even so, come, Lord Jesus*—Accomplish thy promises in order: and finally crown the faith, patience, and constancy of thy servants with eternal life.

Verse 21. *The grace*—The free love; *of our Lord Jesus Christ*—And all its fruits; *be with you all*—Who thus long for his appearing, and with all true Christians. The conclusion, as Bishop Newton says, is truly excellent, as well as all other parts of this book; and nothing could be contrived to leave these things with a stonger impression upon the mind of the reader. In the whole, from first to last, appears the majesty of the divine revealer—*The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the Author and Finisher of every good work*, and of this more especially. *This is the sure word of prophecy, whereunto Christians, as St. Peter saith, do well to*

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surely, I come quickly: Amen. A. M. 4100.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus. A. D. 96.

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be
with you all. Amen.

2 Tim. iv. 8.— Rom. xvi. 20, 24; 2 Thess. iii. 18.

take heed, and attend, 2 Pet. i. 16. Attention, then, to this book is recommended to us upon the authority of St. Peter, as well as of the writer, St. John: a double blessing, as we have seen in the book itself, is pronounced upon those who shall study and observe it; first in chap. i. 3, and here again chap. xxii. 7. Imboldened by which blessings, with Nehemiah, we would pray, *Remember us, O my God, concerning this also, and spare us, according to the greatness of thy mercy*, Neh. xiii. 22.

And now, to use the words of the pious and excellent Dr. Doddridge, "How sweetly and delightfully the canon of Scripture concludes, leaving, as it were, the music of heaven upon the attentive ear! O thou blessed root and offspring of David! O thou bright and morning star, impress on all our hearts these thy gracious words, which thou hast condescended to speak from the throne of thy glory; thereby, as it were, to aid the weakness of our faith in those which thou didst deliver while dwelling in mortal flesh! *Then* did the compassionate Saviour proclaim, from an eminence in the temple, to a crowded assembly, on a day of peculiar solemnity, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*, John vii. 37. And now, behold, he makes the same proclamation from the celestial temple: he points as it were, to the fountain-head of happiness, to the springs of the water of life, near the throne of God; and says, *Whoever will, let him come, let him take, let him freely take, of this living water*, verse 17. Yea, and not content with speaking this language by his Spirit only, he calls on his *bride* to lift up her melodious voice, to publish this kind invitation. He calls on every one who hears it to echo it back, as if the excess of his goodness overcame him; as if it were necessary to his happiness that men should accept of their own salvation!

"With what sacred observance should these books be guarded, which contain a message of such infinite importance! of what dreadful curses are they worthy who presume to *add* to what is already perfect, or to *take away*, from that which is in every part divine! verse 18. God forbid that any of us should ever presumptuously attempt to do it! And may we be preserved from those mistaken interpretations, in consequence of which we should teach the world, as by his authority, any thing which he has not dictated, or deny any thing which carries along with it the stamp of such an authority! Have pity, O Lord, upon our weakness! Impute not prejudices which thou knowest we do not allow; and give us a greater penetration of mind to understand the true sense of thy word; a simplicity of heart to receive it; an integrity, so far as the duty of our station requires, to declare it; and a zeal to inculcate and defend it.

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“While we are thus employed,—or employed in any other services which Providence may assign us;—whatever labours may exercise us, whatever difficulties may surround us, whatever sorrows may depress us, let us with pleasure hear our Lord proclaiming, *Behold, I come quickly*: I come to put a period to the labour and suffering of my servants; I come, and *my reward of grace is with me*; to recompense, with royal bounty, every work of faith and labour of love. I come to receive my faithful, persevering people to myself, to dwell for ever in that blissful world where the sacred volume, which contains the important discoveries of my will, shall

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be no more necessary; but knowledge, and holiness, and joy, shall be poured in upon their souls, in a more immediate, a more noble, and a more effectual manner. *Amen! even so, come, Lord Jesus!* Hasten the blessed hour to us, and to all the churches, so far as it may consist with thy wise and holy counsels. And, in the mean time, may thy *grace be with us*, to keep alive the remembrance of thy love, and the expectation of thy coming, in our hearts; and to animate us to a temper and conduct which may suit the blessings we have already received, and the nobler felicity after which thou hast taught us to aspire! *Amen and Amen!*”

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END OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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