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daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their father's brothers' sons:

† Heb. to some that were of the families.

12 *And* they were married † into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.

general to forbid every woman to marry into another tribe, as may be reasonably concluded from the practice of so many patriarchs, kings, priests, and other holy men, who have married women of other tribes, yea, sometimes of other nations, but restrained to heiresses, or such as were likely to be so. But if they had brethren, they were free to marry into any tribe, yet so that, if their brethren died, the inheritance

13 *These are* the commandments and the judgments, which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel <sup>k</sup> in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho.

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† Ch. 28. 3.  
& 30. 50.

went from them to the next a-kin of their father's tribe and family. And the principal reason why God was solicitous to preserve tribes and families unmixed was, that the tribe and family too, out of which the Messiah was to come, and by which he should be known, might be evident and unquestionable.

## THE

## FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES,

## CALLED

## DEUTERONOMY.

## ARGUMENT.

*THIS* last Book of MOSES, consisting, in a great measure, of a recapitulation of former laws, is therefore called by the Greek Interpreters, δευτερονομιον, DEUTERONOMY, (from δευτερος νομος,) a second law, or a second edition of the law, because it is a repetition of many of the laws, as well as of much of the history contained in the three foregoing Books. They to whom the first law was given were all dead, and a new generation was sprung up, to whom GOD would have his Laws repeated by Moses himself, that they might make a deeper impression upon them. However, the Laws contained here, are not to be considered as bare repetitions. They are attended with several additions, explications, and enlargements; and especially are enforced by the strongest and most pathetic motives to obedience. Moses here, with more than human energy, opens to the Israelites the true spirit and design of all these Laws; shews that true peace and happiness would most certainly arise from observing them; and, on the contrary, that disquiet and misery would as certainly be the consequence of departing from them to follow their own imaginations. In the strongest and most magnificent terms, he sets forth the glorious privilege and happiness of being under such a divine conduct as Israel was under; he seems to rise above himself in speaking of it, and to manifest that he wants words sufficiently expressive to

## DEUTERONOMY.

declare what he feels on this subject. He is particularly concerned to make the people conceive of GOD as a pure, invisible Spirit, of whom there neither is, nor can be any manner of likeness. He labours to raise their thoughts of the great JEHOVAH far above all that human error had conceived among the nations; above all the objects of sense and sight, whether on the earth, in the waters, or in the heavens: those glorious bodies, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, even all the host of heaven, then the great objects of worship among mankind, being only his creatures and servants, to execute his commands, and do his pleasure.

The Book begins with a brief rehearsal of the most remarkable events that had befallen them since they came from Mount Sinai. In the fourth chapter begins a pathetic exhortation to obedience: from the 12th to the 27th are repeated many particular Laws, enforced in the 27th and 28th, with promises and threatenings, which are formed into a Covenant in the 29th and 30th chapters. Care is taken, chapter 31, to perpetuate the remembrance of these things among them, particularly by a Song, chap. 32, concluded with a blessing, chap. 33.

Through the whole of this Book we may discern Moses to speak, as a person under the immediate influence of a Divine inspiration, and towards the conclusion of it, as evidently guided by a prophetic spirit, and having his mind enlightened to discern the state and condition of the Israelites in ages to come. What he utters on this occasion, is with all the majesty and confidence of one who had a Divine commission, and knew with certainty, that what he foretold, however remote the time, would surely come to pass. And, accordingly, the greater part of these predictions we see accomplished in the world at this present time.—Upon the whole, such is this BOOK of DEUTERONOMY, so different from the Writings of every other Law-giver, so evidently treating the Subjects of it with more than human understanding, and delivering them with more than human majesty, that whoever comes to the reading of it, with an unprejudiced mind, will feel, while he is reading, that it is indeed Divine.

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### CHAP. I.

The preface, fixing the time and place, ver. 1—5. Israel commanded to march, ver. 6—8. Judges provided, ver. 9—13. They come to Kadesh-barnea, ver. 19—21. Spies sent, their report, the people's murmuring, ver. 22—33. The sentence past upon them, ver. 34—40. They are smitten by the Amorites, and remain at Kadesh, ver. 41—46.

**T**HESE be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel

CHAP. I. Ver. 1. *These be the words which Moses spake*—In the last encampment of the Israelites, which was in the plains of Moab, there being now but two months before the death of Moses, and their passage into the land of Canaan. Moses spent this last part of his time in laying before them an account of their travels, and of the many singular providences, mercies, and judgments, which had attended them; in repeating and enlarging upon the several laws which God had prescribed for their civil and religious conduct in that promised country; and in the most pressing applications, and earnest persuasions, to a grateful and dutiful obedience. These things, here termed *words*, with his last prophetic blessing upon their tribes, constitute the subject of this book. *Unto all Israel*—Namely, by their heads or elders, who were to communicate these discourses to all the people. *In the wilderness—over against the Red Sea*—This is undoubtedly a wrong translation, for they were now at a vast distance from the Red Sea, and in no sense *over against* it. *Suph*, here rendered *Red Sea*, is, no doubt, the name of a town or district in the country of Moab, of which see Numb. xxi. 14. The Red Sea is never expressed by *Suph* alone, but always

\*on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against ||the Red Sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

2 (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir<sup>b</sup> unto Kadesh-barnea.)

3 And it came to pass<sup>c</sup> in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that

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<sup>a</sup> Josh. 9.  
1, 10. &  
29. 4, 7.  
Or, Zuph.

<sup>b</sup> Num. 15.  
26. Ch. 9.  
23.  
<sup>c</sup> Num. 33.  
33.  
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by *suph* *suph*, *Jam Suph*. This place seems to have been near the Dead Sea, and to have had its name *Suph*, a *rush*, from the many flags or rushes which grew there. *Between Paran*—This cannot well be meant of the wilderness of Paran, mentioned Num. x. 12, for that was far remote from hence, but of some place in the country of Moab, as *Suph* was, and the rest of the places which here follow. *And Dizahab*—Heb. *די זחב*, *Di zahab*, which the Vulgate renders, *Where there is much gold*, as the words signify. Perhaps it had its name from some mines of gold that were there; which circumstance seems to have determined the Seventy to render it *καταχυσια*, *golden places*, or *gold mines*.

Ver. 2. *There are eleven days' journey*—This is added, to shew that the reason why the Israelites, in so many years, were advanced no farther from Horeb than to these plains, was not the distance of the places, but because of their rebellions. *Kadesh-barnea*—Which was not far from the borders of Canaan.

Ver. 3, 4. *The eleventh month*—Which was but a little before his death. *All that the Lord had given him in command*—Which shews not only that what he now delivered



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Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the LORD had given him in commandment unto them;

d Num. 21.  
24, 33. 1.

4 After he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrei:

e Num. 2.  
33. Josh.  
13. 12.  
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5 On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying,

f Ex. 3. 1.

6 ¶ The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:

g Ex. 19. 1.  
Num. 10.  
11.

7 Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto † all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea-side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

† Heb. all his neighbour.

† Heb. given.

8 Behold, I have † set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers, <sup>h</sup> Abraham, Isaac, and

h Gen. 12.  
7. & 15.  
18. & 17.  
7, 8. & 26.  
4. & 25. 13.

Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.

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9 ¶ And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone:

i Ex. 18. 18.  
Numb. 11.  
14.

10 The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, <sup>k</sup> ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

k Gen. 15. 5.  
Ch. 10. 92.  
& 28. 67.

11 (The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, <sup>m</sup> as he hath promised you!)

l 2 Sam. 24.  
3.

12 How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

m Gen. 15.  
5. & 23.  
17. & 26.  
4. Ex. 22.  
15.  
1 Kings 3.  
8.

13 ¶ Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

n Ex. 18.  
21. Num.  
11. 16.  
† Heb. give.

14 And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.

15 So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and † made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over

p Ex. 18. 25.  
† Heb. gave.

was in substance the same with what had formerly been commanded, but that God now commanded him to repeat it. He gave this rehearsal and exhortation by divine direction: God appointed him to leave this legacy to the church. Og—His palace or mansion-house was at Astaroth, and he was slain at Edrei.

Ver. 6. *Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount*—They had stayed at Mount Sinai, or Horeb, almost a year, receiving the law, erecting the tabernacle, numbering the people, ranking them under their standards, &c. And so, being fitted for an orderly march, they were commanded to depart thence, and proceed to the nearest borders of Canaan.

Ver. 7, 8. *To the mount of the Amorites*—That is, to the mountainous country on the south part of Canaan, inhabited chiefly by the Amorites, ver. 19, 20, 44. The country to which Moses directed the spies to go up, Numb. xiii. 17. This order is not mentioned in the book of Numbers, nor a great many other things, for a knowledge of which we are indebted to this supplemental book of Deuteronomy. *Behold, I have set the land before you*—Heb. *Before your faces*; it is open to your view, and to your possession; there is no impediment in your way. And thus is the

heavenly Canaan, and the kingdom of grace which leads to it, laid open to the view and enjoyment of all believers. *Which the Lord sware unto your fathers*, Gen. xv. 18, and xvii. 7, and xxviii. 13. It is not indeed said in any of these places that God confirmed his promise with an oath, but he did what was equivalent thereto, he engaged his veracity by the solemn transaction of a covenant, which is called the oath of God, Gen. xxvi. 3.

Ver. 9. *I spake unto you*—Unto your fathers, who were alive at the time here referred to, but now dead, Numb. xxvi. 64. *At that time*—That is, about that time, a little before their coming to Horeb, see Exod. xviii. This was by the advice of Jethro his father-in-law.

Ver. 12, 13. *How can I alone bear your burden?*—The trouble of ruling and managing so perverse a people. *Your strife*—Your contentions among yourselves, for the determination whereof the elders were appointed. *Take ye wise men and understanding*—Persons of knowledge, wisdom, and experience. *Known among your tribes*—Heb. *to your tribes*; men had in reputation for ability and integrity; for to such they would more readily submit.

Ver. 15. *So I took the chief*—Not in authority, but in

fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

16 And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and <sup>q</sup> judge righteously between *every* man and his <sup>r</sup> brother, and the stranger *that is with him*.

17 <sup>s</sup> Ye shall not <sup>†</sup> respect persons in judgment; *but* ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for <sup>t</sup> the judgment *is* God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, <sup>u</sup> bring *it* unto me, and I will hear it.

18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

19 ¶ And when we departed from Horeb, <sup>x</sup> we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us; and <sup>y</sup> we came to Kadesh-barnea.

20 And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us.

21 Behold, the LORD thy God

hath set the land before thee: **go up** and possess *it*, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; <sup>z</sup> fear not, neither be discouraged.

22 ¶ And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

23 And the saying pleased me well: and <sup>a</sup> I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe:

24 And <sup>b</sup> they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought *it* down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, <sup>c</sup> *It is* a good land which the LORD our God doth give us.

26 <sup>d</sup> Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God:

27 And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD <sup>e</sup> hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver

endowments for governing. *And officers*—Inferior officers, that were to attend upon the superior magistrates, and to execute their decrees.

Ver. 16. *The stranger*—That converseth or dealeth with him. To such God would have justice equally administered as to his own people, partly for the honour of religion, and partly for the interest which every man hath in matters of common right.

Ver. 17. *Respect persons*—Heb. *Not know*, or *acknowledge faces*; that is, not give sentence according to the outward qualities of the person, as he is poor or rich, your friend or enemy, but purely according to the merit of the cause. For which reason some of the Grecian law-givers ordered that the judges should give sentence in the dark, where they could not see men's faces. *The judgment is God's*—It is passed in the name of God, and by commission from him by you, as representing his person, and doing his work; who therefore will defend you therein against all your enemies, and to whom you must give an exact account.

Ver. 18. *I commanded you, &c.*—I instructed you in your duty, by delivering to you, and especially to your judges, the laws, statutes, and judgments revealed unto me by the Lord in Horeb.

Ver. 19. *Great and terrible wilderness*—Great, because it extended a great way, and terrible, because mostly desolate, or only inhabited by wild beasts. *By the way of the mountain of the Amorites*—All the way you went towards that mountain.

Ver. 24, 25. *Eshcol*—That is, *grapes*, so called from the goodly cluster of grapes which they brought from thence. *It is a good land*—So they said unanimously, Numb. xiii. 27. Only they added, that they were not a match for the inhabitants of it, as is intimated ver. 28.

Ver. 27. *Because the Lord hated us*—This shews what dishonourable and unworthy thoughts they had entertained of God, to imagine him capable of being actuated by hatred to his own creatures. Their sins, indeed, he could not but view with hatred; just as every good and wise parent must

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q Ch. 16. 18.  
John 7. 24.

r Lev. 24.  
24.

s Lev. 19.  
15. Ch. 16.  
19. 1 S. un.  
16. 7.  
Prov. 24.  
25. Jam.

† Heb. *acknowledge faces*.

t Chro. 19.  
6.

u Ex. 18. 22.  
26.

1490.

x Num. 10.  
13. Ch. 9.  
15. Jer.  
2. 6.

y Num. 13.  
26.

z Josh. 1. 9.

1490.

a Num. 13.  
2.

b Num. 13.  
22, 24.

c Num. 13.  
27.

d Num. 14.  
1, 4. Ps.  
106. 24, 25.

e Ch. 9. 27.

<sup>A. M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1451.</sup> us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

<sup>† Heb. melted, Josh. 2. 11.</sup>  
<sup>† Num. 13. 25, 31, 32, 33. Ch. 9. 1, 2.</sup>  
<sup>† Num. 13. 25.</sup> 28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have †discouraged our heart, saying, 'The people *is* greater and taller than we; the cities *are* great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the <sup>†</sup>Anakims there.

29 Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them.

<sup>† Ex. 14. 14, 25. Neh. 4. 20.</sup> 30 <sup>†</sup>The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes:

31 And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God <sup>†</sup>bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

<sup>† Ex. 19. 4. Ch. 32. 11. 17. Is. 44. 2, 4. & 63. 9. Hos. 11. 3. Acts 13. 18.</sup>  
<sup>† Ps. 106. 24. Jude 5.</sup> 32 Yet in this thing <sup>†</sup>ye did not believe the LORD your God,

<sup>† Ex. 13. 21. Ps. 78. 14.</sup>  
<sup>† Num. 10. 33. Ez. 20. 6.</sup> 33 <sup>†</sup>Who went in the way before you, <sup>†</sup>to search you out a place to pitch your tents *in*, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

34 ¶ And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, <sup>†</sup>and sware, saying,

<sup>† Ch. 2. 14. 1491.</sup>  
<sup>† Num. 14. 22. Ps. 94. 11.</sup> 35 <sup>†</sup>Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see

that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers,

<sup>A. M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1451.</sup> 36 <sup>†</sup>Save Caleb the son of Jephuneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because <sup>†</sup>he hath <sup>†</sup>wholly followed the LORD.

37 <sup>†</sup>Also the LORD was angry <sup>†</sup>with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither.

38 <sup>†</sup>But Joshua the son of Nun, <sup>†</sup>which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither, <sup>†</sup>encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it,

39 <sup>†</sup>Moreover your little ones, which <sup>†</sup>ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day <sup>†</sup>had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

40 <sup>†</sup>But *as for* you, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.

41 ¶ Then ye answered and said unto me, <sup>†</sup>We have sinned against the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill.

dislike all evil dispositions and practices in his children: but God, infinitely good, can no more hate any thing that he has made, than a tender mother can be hardened against her sucking child.

Ver. 28. *The people is greater*—In number, and strength, and valour. *The cities are great, and walled up to heaven*—An hyperbole, signifying that their cities were fenced with very high walls, which Moses himself allows to be true, chap. ix. 1. But, however strong they were, the Israelites had no reason to fear, since they were assured of the divine protection and aid in the execution of his command.

Ver. 30. *Shall fight for you according to all that he did in Egypt*—This was one of the strongest arguments possible to beget in them a firm reliance on the protection and help of God; since they could not but own that the same power which had redeemed them out of Egypt, was no less able to bring them into Canaan: yet even this proved to be of no avail.

Ver. 31—34. *Bare thee*—Or, *Carried thee*, as a father carries his weak and tender child in his arms, through difficulties and dangers, gently leading you according as you were able to go, and sustaining you by his power and goodness. *Ye did not believe the Lord*—So they could not enter in, because of unbelief. It was not any other sin that shut them out of Canaan, but their disbelief of that promise which was typical of gospel-grace: to signify, that no sin will ruin us but *unbelief*, which is a sin against the *remedy*, and therefore without remedy. *Your words*—That is to say, your murmurings, your unthankful, impatient, distrustful, and rebellious speeches.

Ver. 36, 37. *Save Caleb*—Under whom Joshua is comprehended though not here expressed, because he was not now to be one of the people, but to be set over them as a chief governor: we are also to except Eleazar and some other Levites. *For your sakes*—Upon occasion of your wickedness and perverseness, by which you provoked me to speak unadvisedly.

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c Num. 14.  
49.

42 And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, <sup>c</sup> Go not up, neither fight; for I *am* not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies.

43 So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and <sup>† d</sup> went presumptuously up into the hill.

† Heb. ye were presumptuous and went up.  
d Num. 14.  
44.

44 And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, <sup>e</sup> as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, *even* unto Hormah.

e Ps. 118.  
18.

45 And ye returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.

f Num. 13.  
25. & 20.  
1. 29.  
Judg. 11.  
17.

46 <sup>f</sup> So ye abode in Kadesh many days according unto the days that ye abode *there*.

CHAP. II.

*Their march from Kadesh-barnea, ver. 1—3. A charge not to trouble the Edomites. ver. 4—8. Nor the Moabites, ver. 9—12. (They pass the river Zered, ver. 13—16.) Nor the Ammonites, ver. 17—23. A command to attack Sihon, ver. 24—26. The conquest of his kingdom, ver. 27—37.*

**T**HEN we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by

Ver. 44. *As bees*—As bees which, being provoked, come out of their hives in great numbers, and with great fury pursue their adversary and disturber.

Ver. 45, 46. *The Lord would not hearken to you*—Your sorrow not proceeding from a penitent mind, or from a concern that God was displeased with you, but from this, that you yourselves could not do as you desired, God would not listen to your cry, as he always doth to the cry of those, who pray to him in sincerity, and weep from genuine, godly sorrow. *Ye abode in Kadesh many days*—Near a whole year, not being now permitted to make any further progress towards Canaan.

CHAP. II. Ver. 1. *We compassed Mount Seir*—The mountainous part of Edom, or Idumea. *Many days*—Even for thirty-eight years, which time they spent in tedious marches to and fro, through that desert country, reaching from Kadesh to the Red Sea, and in various encampments, till that race of murmurers was quite extinct, and then orders

the way of the Red Sea, <sup>a</sup> as the LORD spake unto me: and we compassed Mount Seir many days.

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a Num. 14.  
25. Ch. 1.  
40.

2 And the LORD spake unto me, saying,

3 Ye have compassed this mountain <sup>b</sup> long enough: turn you northward.

b Ver. 7.  
14.

4 And command thou the people, saying, <sup>c</sup> Ye *are* to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore:

c Num. 20.  
14.

5 Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, <sup>†</sup> no, not so much as a foot breadth; <sup>d</sup> because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau *for* a possession.

† Heb. even to the treading of the sole of the foot.  
d Gen. 26.  
Josh. 24.  
4.

6 Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink.

7 For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: <sup>e</sup> these forty years the LORD thy God *hath been* with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.

e Ch. 2. 24.

8 <sup>f</sup> And when we passed by from

f Judg. 11.  
18.

were given them, to bend their course again towards Canaan, ver. 3.

Ver. 6. *Buy meat of them for money*—For though the manna did yet rain upon them, they were not forbidden to buy other meats when they had opportunity; but only were forbidden greedily to hunger after them, when they could not obtain them. *Buy water*—For water in those parts was scarce, and therefore private persons did severally dig pits for their particular use.

Ver. 7. *The Lord hath blessed thee*—By God's blessing thou art able to buy thy conveniencies, and therefore thy theft and rapine will be inexcusable, because without any pretence of necessity. *He knoweth*—Heb. *He hath known*, that is, observed or regarded with care and kindness, which that word often denotes. Which experience of God's singular goodness to thee, should make thee rely on him still, and not use any unjust practice to procure what thou wantest or desirest.

Ver. 8, 9. *We turned*—From our direct road, which lay

<sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1151.</sup> our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from <sup>5</sup>Elath, and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

9 ¶ And the LORD said unto me, <sup>Or, Use no hostility against Moab.</sup> Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given <sup>h Num. 21. 28. i Gen. 19. 36. k Gen. 14. 5.</sup> Ar unto <sup>h</sup>the children of Lot for a possession.

10 <sup>k</sup>The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as <sup>l</sup>the Anakims;

11 Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.

12 <sup>m Ver. 22. Gen. 14. 6. & 36. 20.</sup> <sup>† Heb. in-herited them.</sup> <sup>i Or, room.</sup> <sup>n Num. 21. 12. i Or, valley, Num. 13. 23.</sup> <sup>o Num. 13. 26.</sup> <sup>p Num. 14. 33. & 36. 64.</sup> <sup>n</sup>The Horims also dwelt in Seir before time; but the children of Esau <sup>†</sup>succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their <sup>||</sup>stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them.

13 Now rise up, *said I*, and get you over <sup>n</sup>the <sup>||</sup>Brook Zered. And we went over the Brook Zered.

14 And the space in which we came <sup>o</sup>from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the Brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; <sup>p</sup>until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the

host, <sup>q</sup>as the LORD sware unto them.

15 For indeed the <sup>r</sup>hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed.

16 ¶ So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people,

17 That the LORD spake unto me, saying,

18 Thou art to pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day:

19 And *when* thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon *any* possession; because I have given it unto <sup>s</sup>the children of Lot for <sup>r</sup>a possession.

20 (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them <sup>t</sup>Zamzummims;

21 <sup>u</sup>A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead:

22 As he did to the children of Esau, <sup>v</sup>which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed <sup>y</sup>the Horims from before them, and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day:

through Edom. *Ar*—The chief city of the Moabites, here put for the whole country which depended upon it. *The children of Lot*—So called, to signify this preservation was not for their sakes, for they were a wicked people, but for Lot's sake, whose memory God yet honoured.

Ver. 10—12. *The Emims*—Men terrible for stature and strength, as their very name imports, whose expulsion by the Moabites is here noted, as a great encouragement to the Israelites, for whose sake he would much more drive out the wicked and accursed Canaanites. *Which the Lord gave*—The past tense is here put for the future, *will give*, after the manner of the prophets.

Ver. 16, 17. *When all the men of war were consumed*—Israel is not called to march against and attack the Canaanites till the men most fit for war, and who probably had learned the art of it in Egypt, and had been used to hardship, were *all wasted and dead from among the people*, and only a host of new raised men, trained up in a wilderness were left, in whom, as being possessed of little knowledge, experience, or natural fortitude, no great dependance could be placed. Thus it became more fully manifest, that the *excellency of the power* which subdued the warlike Canaanites, was of *God and not of man*. On the same principle, and with the same design, long after this, were the following words

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<sup>a</sup> Josh. 13.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. 25.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. 10.

14. Amos  
9. 7.

23 And <sup>a</sup>the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, *even* unto <sup>a</sup>Azzah, <sup>b</sup>the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)

<sup>c</sup> Num. 31.  
13. Judg.  
11. 18, 21.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. *begin, possess.*

24 ¶ Rise ye up, take your journey, and <sup>c</sup>pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: <sup>†</sup>begin to possess *it*, and contend with him in battle.

<sup>d</sup> Ex. 15. 14.  
Ch. 11. 25.  
Josh. 2. 9.

25 <sup>d</sup>This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations *that are* under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 20. 10.

26 And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon <sup>e</sup>with words of peace, saying,

<sup>f</sup> Num. 21.  
11. 19.

27 <sup>f</sup>Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the high-way, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left.

28 Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give

me water for money, that I may drink: <sup>g</sup>only I will pass through on my feet;

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<sup>g</sup> Num. 20.

19.

29 (<sup>h</sup>As the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me;) until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which the LORD our God giveth us.

<sup>h</sup> Num. 20.  
18. Ch. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Judg.  
11. 17.

30 <sup>i</sup>But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for <sup>k</sup>the LORD thy God <sup>l</sup>hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as *appeareth* this day.

<sup>i</sup> Num. 21.  
23.

<sup>k</sup> Josh. 17.

<sup>l</sup> Ex. 4. 20.

31 And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have begun to <sup>m</sup>give Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land.

<sup>m</sup> Ch. 1. 8.

32 <sup>n</sup>Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.

<sup>n</sup> Num. 21.  
22.

33 And <sup>o</sup>the LORD our God delivered him before us; and <sup>p</sup>we smote him, and his sons, and all his people.

<sup>o</sup> Ch. 7. 2.  
& 20. 16.

<sup>p</sup> Num. 21.  
24. Ch. 20.  
7.

34 And we took all his cities at

spoken by the Lord to Gideon, *The people that are with thee, are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.* And thus to subdue the enemies of God's Church, and bring sinners to the obedience of the faith, he hath chosen the weak things of the world, and things that are despised, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh may glory in his presence.

Ver. 23. *And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim*—This is another instance of God's disposal of countries unto what people he pleases. The Avims are mentioned, Josh. xiii. 3, as the ancient inhabitants of Palestine. *The Caphtorims*—A people akin to, or a branch of, the Philistines, so called, probably, from their founder, who settled in Caphtor, a country in or about Egypt, see Gen. x. 14. By producing these instances of God's displacing one people, and setting another in their stead, Moses designed to strengthen the faith of the Israelites in the divine promise of giving them the victory over all their enemies, and settling them in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 25. *Upon the nations that are under the whole heaven*—That is, upon as many as shall hear of these conquests, for

to such the following words restrain the sentence; especially upon the Canaanites, whose courage would droop at the news of such an absolute victory gained so near them, Josh. ii. 10, 11.

Ver. 26. *I sent messengers unto Sihon*—To shew the prince of the Amorites that we were not aggressors, and offered no violence, and that, if he refused to grant us a passage through his land, his destruction would be of himself. *Kedemoth was a city of that tract* which fell to the lot of the Reubenites.

Ver. 28. *On my feet*—Or, *with my company who are on foot*, which is added significantly, because if their army had consisted as much of horsemen as many other armies did, their passage through this land might have been more mischievous and dangerous.

Ver. 29, 30. *As the children of Esau did*—They did permit them to pass quietly by the borders, though not through the heart of their land, and in their passage the people sold them meat and drink, being, it seems, more kind to them than their king would have had them; and therefore they here ascribe this favour not to the king, though they are now treating with a king, but to the people, *the children of Esau.* *Hardened his spirit*—That is, suffered it to be hardened.

Ver. 34. *Utterly destroyed*—By God's command, these

A. M. 2553  
B. C. 1451. that time, and <sup>q</sup>utterly destroyed <sup>†</sup>the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain :

Lev. 27.  
28. Ch. 7.  
2, 26.  
† Heb.  
every city  
of men,  
and wo-  
men, and  
little  
ones. 35 Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.

Ch. 3. 12.  
& 4. 48.  
Josh. 13.  
9. 36 <sup>r</sup>From Aroer, which *is* by the brink of the river of Arnon, and *from* the city that *is* by the river, even unto Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us: <sup>s</sup>the LORD our God delivered all unto us:

Ps. 44. 2. 37 Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not, *nor* unto any place of the river <sup>t</sup>Jabbok, nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor unto <sup>u</sup>whatsoever the LORD our God forbad us.

CHAP. III.

*The conquest of Og and his country, ver. 1—11. The distribution of it to the two tribes and a half, ver. 12—17; on condition of assisting their brethren, ver. 18—20. Joshua encouraged, ver. 21, 22. Moses prays that he may go into Canaan, ver. 23—25. But is refused, yet is permitted to see it.*

a Nam. 21.  
33, &c.  
Ch. 29. 7. **T**HEN we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and <sup>a</sup>Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle <sup>b</sup>at Edrei.

Ch. 1. 4. 2 And the LORD said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto <sup>c</sup>Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

Num. 21.  
35. 3 So the LORD our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: <sup>d</sup>and we smote him until none was left to him remaining.

4 And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, three-score cities, <sup>e</sup>all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

5 All these cities *were* fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; beside unvalled towns a great many.

6 And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king <sup>f</sup>of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children, of every city.

7 But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.

8 And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites the land that *was* on this side Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon;

9 (*Which* <sup>g</sup>Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion; and the Amorites call it <sup>h</sup>Shenir;)

10 All the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and <sup>k</sup>all Bashan, unto Salchah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

Ver. 8. *On this side Jordan*—So it was when Moses wrote this Book: but afterward, when Israel passed over Jordan, it was called the land beyond Jordan.

Ver. 9. *Sirion*—Elsewhere called Mount Gilead, and Lebanon, and here Shenir, and Sirion, which several names were given to this one mountain, partly by several people, and partly in regard of several tops or parts of it.

Ver. 10. *All Gilead*—Gilead is sometimes taken for all the Israelites' possessions beyond Jordan, and so it comprehends Bashan; but here for that part of it which lay in and near Mount Gilead, and so it is distinguished from Bashan and Argob.

being a part of those people who were devoted by the Lord of life and death, to utter destruction for their abominable wickedness.

Ver. 37. *Of Jabbok*—That is, beyond Jabbok: for that was the border of the Ammonites.

CHAP. III. Ver. 1. *Og, the king of Bashan, came out against us*—As a further encouragement to the Israelites to confide in the power and faithfulness of God, Moses proceeds to remind them of the wonderful success they had had against Og, who appears to have been the first aggressor, Numb. xxi. 33.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
1 Amos 2, 9.  
in Gen. 14.  
5.  
2 Sam. 14.  
26, Jer.  
49, 1. Ez.  
21, 20.

11 <sup>1</sup>For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of <sup>m</sup>giants; behold, his bedstead *was* a bedstead of iron; *is* it not in <sup>n</sup>Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits *was* the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

Ch. 2, 36.  
Josh. 12.  
2.  
Num. 32.  
32, Josh.  
12, 6, &  
13, 8, &c.

12 ¶ And this land, *which* we possessed at that time, <sup>o</sup>from Aroer, *which is* by the river Arnon, and half Mount Gilead, and <sup>t</sup>the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites.

Josh. 13.  
29.

13 <sup>q</sup>And the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, *being* the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants.

1 Chro. 2.  
22.  
Josh. 13.  
13, 2 Sam.  
3, 8, & 10.  
6.  
Num. 32.  
41.

14 <sup>r</sup>Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob <sup>s</sup>unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi; and <sup>t</sup>called them after his own name, Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day.

Num. 32.  
39.

15 <sup>u</sup>And I gave Gilead unto Machir.

2 Sam.  
24, 5.

16 And unto the Reubenites <sup>w</sup>and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Num. 31.  
24, Josh.  
12, 4.

even unto the river Arnon half the valley, and the border even unto the river Jabbok, <sup>x</sup>*which is* the border of the children of Ammon;

Num. 34.  
11.  
Ch. 4, 49.  
Num. 24.  
11, Josh.  
12, 3.  
Gen. 14.  
3.  
Or, under the springs of Pisgah, or, the hill.

17 The plain also, and Jordan, and the coast *thereof*, from <sup>y</sup>Chinnereth <sup>z</sup>even unto the sea of the plain, <sup>a</sup>*even* the salt sea, <sup>||</sup>under Ashdoth-pisgah eastward.

Num. 32.  
20, &c.  
Heb. sons of power.

18 ¶ And I commanded you at that time, saying, the LORD your God hath given you this land to possess it: <sup>b</sup>ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all *that are* <sup>†</sup>meet for the war.

19 But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (*for* I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you;

20 Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and *until* they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath given them beyond Jordan: and *then* shall ye <sup>c</sup>return every man unto his possession, which I have given you.

Ver. 11. *Only Og remained of the remnant of giants*—Viz. In those parts; for there were other giants among the Philistines, and elsewhere. When the Ammonites drove out the Zamzummims, mentioned chap. ii. 20, Og might escape, and so be said *to be left of the remnant of the giants*, and afterwards, fleeing to the Amorites, perhaps was made their king, because of his gigantic stature. *His bedstead was a bedstead of iron*—Bedsteads of iron, brass, and other metals, are not unusual in the warm countries, as a defence against vermin. *In Rabbath*—Where it might now be, either because the Ammonites, in some former battle with Og had taken it as a spoil; or because after Og's death, the Ammonites desired to have this monument of his greatness, and the Israelites permitted them to carry it away to their chief city. *Nine cubits*—So his bed was four yards and a half long, and two yards broad.

Ver. 14. *Unto this day*—This must be put among those passages which were not written by Moses, but added by those holy men, who digested the books of Moses into this order, and inserted some few passages to accommodate things to their own time and people.

Ver. 15, 16. *Gilead*—That is, the half part of Gilead.

*To Machir*—That is, unto the children of Machir, son of Manasseh, for Machir was now dead. *Half the valley*—Or rather, *to the middle of the river*: for the word rendered *half*, signifies commonly *middle*, and the same Hebrew word means both a *valley*, and a *brook*, or *river*. And this sense is agreeable to the truth, that their land extended from Gilead unto Arnon, and, to speak exactly, to the middle of that river; for as that river was the border between them and others, so one half of it belonged to them, as the other half did to others, see Josh. xii. 2, where the same thing is expressed in the same words in the Hebrew, though our translators render them there, *from the middle of the river*, and here, *half of the valley*.

Ver. 17. *The plain*—The low country towards Jordan. *The sea of the plain*—That is, that salt sea, which before that dreadful conflagration was a goodly plain.

Ver. 18. *I commanded you*—Namely, the Reubenites and Gadites. *All that are meet*—In such number as your brethren shall judge necessary. They were in all above a hundred thousand. Forty thousand of them went over Jordan before their brethren.



**A. M. 2553.**  
**B. C. 1451.**  
**d Num. 27.**  
**12.**  
21 ¶ And <sup>d</sup>I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall the LORD do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest.

**e Ex. 14. 14.**  
**Ch. 1. 30.**  
**& 20. 4.**  
22 Ye shall not fear them: for <sup>e</sup>the LORD your God he shall fight for you.

**f 2 Cor. 12.**  
**8.**  
23 ¶ And <sup>f</sup>I besought the LORD at that time, saying,

**g Ch. 11. 9.**  
**h Ex. 15. 11.**  
**2 Sam. 7.**  
**29. Ps. 71.**  
**19. & 96.**  
**8. & 69. 6.**  
**8.**  
24 O LORD God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant <sup>g</sup>thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for <sup>h</sup>what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

**i Ex. 3. 8.**  
**Ch. 4. 32.**  
25 I pray thee, let me go over, and see <sup>i</sup>the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.

**k Num. 20.**  
**12. & 47.**  
**14. Ch. 1.**  
**27. & 31.**  
**9. & 32.**  
**51. & 34.**  
**6. Ps. 106.**  
**32.**  
26 But the LORD <sup>k</sup>was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

**l Num. 27.**  
**12.**  
27 ¶ <sup>l</sup>Get thee up into the top of

**A. M. 2553.**  
**B. C. 1451.**  
**l Or, the hill.**  
Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold *it* with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

**m Num. 27.**  
**19. 24. Ch.**  
**1. 39. &**  
**31. 3. 7.**  
28 But <sup>m</sup>charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

**n Ch. 4. 46.**  
**& 24. 6.**  
29 So we abode in <sup>n</sup>the valley over against Bethpeor.

CHAP. IV.

*An exhortation to obedience, ver. 1—13. A warning against idolatry, ver. 14—28. A promise upon repentance, ver. 29—40. Cities of refuge appointed, ver. 41—43. The place where Moses repeated the law, ver. 44—49.*

**a Lev. 19.**  
**37. & 20.**  
**8. & 22.**  
**31. Ch. 5.**  
**1. & 5. 1.**  
**Ez. 20. 11.**  
**Rom. 10.**  
**5.**  
**b Ch. 12. 32.**  
**Josh. 1. 7.**  
**Prov. 30.**  
**6. Eccl.**  
**12. 13.**  
**Rev. 22.**  
**18.**  
**N**OW therefore hearken, O Israel, unto <sup>a</sup>the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

2 <sup>b</sup>Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall

Ver. 23, 24. *I besought the Lord*—We should allow no design in our hearts, which we cannot in faith offer unto God by prayer. *Thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness*—Lord, perfect what thou hast begun. The more we see of God's glory in his works, the more we desire to see. And the more affected we are with what we have seen of God, the better we are prepared for farther discoveries.

Ver. 25. *Let me go over*—For he supposed God's threatening might be conditional and reversible, as many others were. *That goodly mountain*—Which the Jews not improbably understood of that mountain on which the temple was to be built. This he seems to call *that mountain*, emphatically and eminently, that which was much in Moses's thoughts, though not in his eye.

Ver. 28. *He shall go over*—It was not Moses, but Joshua, or Jesus, that was to give the people rest, Heb. iv: 8. It is a comfort to those who love mankind, when they are dying and going off, to see God's work likely to be carried on by other hands when they are silent in the dust.

CHAP. IV. Ver. 1. *Now therefore, hearken, O Israel*—Having called to their remembrance the extraordinary dis-

pensations of Divine Providence towards them, both in the way of mercy and judgment, he now calls upon their whole assembly, in the most serious and earnest manner, to consider what influence these things ought to have upon their conduct, answerable to the design of such mercies and judgments; viz. to render them punctually obedient to the laws of God, and cautious of offending him; this being the very intent for which they were conducted to the promised land, and the absolute condition of their peaceful and happy enjoyment of it. We may observe Moses here to speak with all possible energy of language. The greatness of the subject he is upon, inspires him with more than usual warmth, and he cannot take a view of the extraordinary privilege and happiness bestowed upon his people, in having *divine statutes and judgments* to direct them, without rapture and admiration. He sees the happiness of their condition therein, and bestows all his zeal and spirit to make them sensible of it. He regards nothing but this only, as knowing this would be every thing to them, to make them great and happy. *The statutes*—The laws which concern the worship and service of God. *The judgments*—The laws concerning their duty to men. So these two comprehend both tables, and the whole law of God.

Ver. 2. *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command*

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ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

c Num. 25.  
4, &c.  
Josb. 22.  
17. Ps.  
106. 28.

3 Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of <sup>c</sup>Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you.

4 But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God *are* alive every one of you this day.

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

d Job 28. 28.  
Ps. 19. 7.  
& 111. 10.  
Prov. 1.  
7.

6 Keep therefore and do *them*; for this *is* <sup>d</sup>your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.

e 2 Sam. 7.  
23.  
f Ps. 46. 1.  
& 146. 18.  
& 148. 14.  
Is. 55. 6.

7 For <sup>e</sup>what nation *is there* so great, who *hath* <sup>f</sup>God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God *is* in all *things that we call upon him for?*

8 And what nation *is there* so great,

you—By desiring other doctrines, or ways of worship, than what I have taught or prescribed. For this were to accuse me of want of wisdom, or care, or faithfulness, in not giving you sufficient instructions for God's service. *Neither shall ye diminish ought from it*—By rejecting or neglecting any thing which I have commanded, though it seems ever so small; but take my word, as it is, for your sole rule and guide in things temporal and eternal.

Ver. 4, 5. *Are alive every one of you this day*—A singular providence watched over them, to preserve them in such good health, that not one of so many thousands was dead since that time. Nor in the war with the Midianites, did they lose so much as one man, Num. xxxi. 7—49.

Ver. 6. *In the sight of the nations*—For though the generality of heathens in the latter ages, did, through inveterate prejudices, condemn the laws of the Hebrews, yet it is certain, the wisest heathens did highly approve of them, so that they made use of divers of them, and translated them into their own laws and constitutions; and Moses, the giver of these laws, hath been mentioned with great honour for his wisdom and learning, by many of them. And particularly the old heathen oracle expressly said, "That the Chaldeans,

that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

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9 Only take heed to thyself, and <sup>g</sup>keep thy soul diligently, <sup>h</sup>lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but <sup>i</sup>teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

g Prov. 4.  
23.  
h Prov. 3.  
1, 3, & 4.  
31.

10 *Specially* <sup>k</sup>the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.

i Gen. 18.  
19. Ch. 6.  
7. & 11.  
19. Ps. 78.  
5. Eph. 6.  
4.  
k Ex. 19. 9.  
16. & 20.  
18. Heb.  
13. 15.

11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the <sup>l</sup>mountain burned with fire unto the <sup>m</sup>midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

l Ex. 19. 18.  
Ch. 5. 23.  
m Heb.  
heart.

12 <sup>n</sup>And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: <sup>n</sup>ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; <sup>o</sup>only ye heard a voice.

n Ch. 5. 4.  
22.  
o Ver. 23.  
36.  
p Ex. 20. 22.  
1 Kings  
19. 12.  
q Heb.  
saw a  
voice.

or Hebrews, who worshipped the uncreated God, were the only wise men."

Ver. 7, 8. *So nigh*—By glorious miracles, by the pledges of his special presence, by the operations of his grace, and particularly by his readiness to hear our prayers, and to give us those succours which we call upon him for. *So righteous*—Whereby he implies that the true greatness of a nation doth not consist in pomp and power, or largeness of empire, as commonly men think, but in the righteousness of its laws.

Ver. 9, 10. *Only take heed*—Their only danger was lest they should grow careless and unmindful of all the wonderful things that God had done for them; for which reason he would have every Israelite to make these weighty concerns the subject of their most frequent study and intense meditation. *Especially the day*—When God delivered the law from Mount Sinai to them, with such awful appearances of divine majesty. *Thou stoodest*—Some of them stood there in their own persons, though then they were but young, the rest in the loins of their parents.

Ver. 11, 12. *The midst of heaven*—Flaming up into the air, which is often called heaven. *No similitude*—No resemblance, or representation of God, whereby either his essence,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
P Ch. 9. 9.  
11.  
Q Ex. 34. 28.  
R Ex. 34. 12.  
& 31. 18. 13 <sup>P</sup>And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *even* <sup>Q</sup>ten commandments; and <sup>R</sup>he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

R Ex. 31. 1.  
& Ch. 29.  
& Ch. 28. 14 And <sup>S</sup>the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.

T Josh. 23.  
11.  
U Is. 40. 18. 15 ¶ <sup>T</sup>Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw <sup>U</sup>no manner of <sup>U</sup>similitude on the day *that* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:

X Ex. 39. 7.  
Y Ex. 20. 4.  
Ver. 23.  
Ch. 5. 8.  
Z Rom. 1.  
23. 16 Lest ye <sup>X</sup>corrupt *yourselves*, and <sup>Y</sup>make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, <sup>Z</sup>the likeness of male or female;

17 The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air,

18 The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
A Ch. 17. 3.  
Job 31.  
26.  
B Gen. 2. 1.  
2 Kings  
17. 16. &  
21. 3.  
C Rom. 1.  
26.  
D Or, im-  
parted. 19 And lest thou <sup>A</sup>lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, *even* <sup>B</sup>all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to <sup>C</sup>worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath **||**divided <sup>D</sup>unto all nations under the whole heaven.

20 But the LORD hath taken you, and <sup>E</sup>brought you forth out of the iron furnace, *even* out of Egypt, <sup>F</sup>to be unto him a people of inheritance, as *ye are* this day.

21 Furthermore <sup>F</sup>the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance:

22 But <sup>G</sup>I must die in this land, <sup>H</sup>I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess <sup>I</sup>that good land.

23 Take heed unto yourselves, <sup>K</sup>lest ye forget the covenant of the

or properties, or actions were represented, such as were usual among the heathen.

Ver. 14. *To teach you statutes and judgments*—This relates to the rest of the laws which God gave to Moses, immediately after he himself had delivered to them the ten commandments, Exod. xxi, it being the people's desire that God would communicate to them the rest of his will by Moses.

Ver. 15. *Ye saw no similitude in Horeb*—God, who, in some other places and times, did appear in a human form, now in this most solemn appearance, when he came to give eternal laws for the direction of the Israelites in the worship of himself, and in their duty to their fellow creatures, purposely avoided all such representations, to shew that he abhors all worship by images, of what kind soever, because he is the invisible God, and cannot be represented by any visible image.

Ver. 16, 17. *Lest ye corrupt yourselves*—Corrupt your minds with mean thoughts of God, your hearts by suffering any creature to alienate your affections from him, or your ways by worshipping him in a corrupt manner, or by falling into idolatry. *And make you a graven image*—For worship, or for the representation of God; which he forbids under the penalty of his displeasure. *The likeness of any beast, &c.*—Dr. Chandler observes, that "This is the very picture of Egypt, which had gods of all sorts; dead persons deified, male and female, and numerous images of them; who wor-

shipped as deities, bulls, cows, sheep, goats, dogs, cats, birds, the ibis and hawk, serpents, crocodiles, river-horses, together with the sun, moon, and stars of heaven."

Ver. 19. *Lest thou shouldst be driven*—Strongly inclined *to worship them. Which the Lord hath divided unto all nations*—Which are not gods, but creatures, made not for worship, but for the use of men; yea, of the meanest and most barbarous people under heaven, and therefore cannot, without great absurdity, be worshipped, especially by *you*, who are so much advanced above other nations, in wisdom and in knowledge, and in this, that you are my peculiar people.

Ver. 20. *The Lord hath taken you*—Of his own free mercy, unmerited by you: and *brought you forth out of the iron furnace*—The furnace wherein iron and other metals are melted, to which Egypt is compared, from the torment and misery which the Israelites there endured. *To be unto him a people of inheritance*—His peculiar possession from generation to generation; and therefore for you to forsake God, and worship idols, would be wickedness and ingratitude to the highest degree.

Ver. 21. *That I should not go over Jordan*—And as God has granted you the favour which he has denied me, your obligation to him is greatly increased.

Ver. 23. *Lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God*—Lest you either disregard the knowledge of God's law,

**LORD** your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee.

**24** For <sup>m</sup>the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, <sup>n</sup>even <sup>a</sup>a jealous God.

**25** ¶ When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and <sup>o</sup>shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and <sup>p</sup>shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger:

**26** ¶ I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

**27** And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

**28** And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

**29** But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt

find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

**30** When thou art in tribulation, and all these things †are come upon thee, <sup>2</sup>even in the latter days, if thou <sup>y</sup>turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;

**31** (For the LORD thy God is <sup>2</sup>a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

**32** ¶ For <sup>a</sup>ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and <sup>b</sup>ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?

**33** Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

**34** Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, <sup>d</sup>by temptations, <sup>e</sup>by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and <sup>f</sup>by a mighty hand, and <sup>g</sup>by a stretched-out arm, <sup>h</sup>and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

or wilfully disobey it, now it is declared to you, and thereby bring misery and destruction upon yourselves.

Ver. 24. *A consuming fire*—A just and terrible God, who, notwithstanding his special relation to you, will severely punish you, if you provoke him. *A jealous God*—Who being espoused to you, will be highly incensed against you, if you follow after other lovers, or commit whoredom (so to speak) with idols, and will bear no rival or partner.

Ver. 25. *And shall corrupt yourselves*—This seems to be evidently a prediction of what Moses foresaw would take place; which that he did is still more manifest in ver. 30.

Ver. 28, 29. *Ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands*—You shall be compelled by men, and given up by me to idolatry. So that very thing which was your choice, shall be your punishment: it being just and usual for God to punish one sin by giving men up to another. *If from thence*

*thou seek the Lord*—Whatever place we are in, we may from thence seek him. There is no part of the earth which has a gulf fixed between it and heaven.

Ver. 30, 31. *In the latter days*—Either in general in succeeding ages and generations, or particularly in the days of the Messiah, commonly called in Scripture, *the latter, or, last days*. Here the apostasy and misery of the Jewish nation in the latter days is clearly foretold, as it is more at large in chap. xxviii. But the passage also gives encouragement to hope for their conversion and redemption; and that even in those times when their case should seem most desperate; when they should have forsaken God and rejected the Messiah towards the end of the world.

Ver. 32—34. *The one side of heaven*—That is, of the earth under heaven. Ask all the inhabitants of the world. *And live*—And was not overwhelmed and consumed by

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ver. 16.  
Ex. 20. 4.  
Ex. 24. 17.  
Ch. 9. 3.  
Is. 33. 14.  
Heb. 12.  
99.  
Ex. 20. 5.  
Ch. 6. 14.  
Is. 42. 9.  
Ver. 16.  
2 Kings 17. 17, &c.  
Ch. 30. 18.  
Is. 1. 2.  
Mic. 6. 2.  
Lev. 26.  
33. Ch.  
28. 63, 61.  
Neh. 1. 6.  
Ch. 28. 64.  
1 Sam. 26.  
19. Jer.  
16. 13.  
Ps. 115. 4.  
& 135. 15.  
Is. 44. 9.  
& 46. 7.  
Lev. 26.  
38. Ch.  
30. 1, 9.  
Chro. 15.  
4. Neh. 1.  
9. 14. 55.  
6. Jer. 29.  
12, 14.

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Heb. have found  
Ace, Ex.  
19. 8. Ch.  
31. 17.  
Gen. 49.  
1. Ch. 31.  
29. Jer.  
39. 20.  
Hos. 3. 5.  
y Joel 3. 12.  
2 Chro.  
30. 9. Neh.  
9. 31. Pa.  
116. 5.  
Jun. 4. 2.  
Job 8. 9.  
Matt. 24.  
31.  
Ex. 24. 11.  
& 33. 29.  
Ch. 5. 24.  
26.  
Ch. 7. 19.  
& 29. 3.  
Ex. 7. 2.  
Ex. 13. 3.  
Ex. 6. 6.  
Ch. 26. 5.  
& 24. 12.

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
i Ch. 39. 39.  
1 Sam. 2.  
2. Is. 45.  
3, 15, 99.  
Mark 12.  
29, 32.  
k Ex. 19. 9.  
19. & 20.  
15, 22. &  
24. 16.  
Heb. 12.  
15.

35 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; <sup>1</sup>there is none else beside him.

36 <sup>k</sup>Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

i Ch. 10. 14.  
m Ex. 13. 3.  
9, 14.

37 And because <sup>1</sup>he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and <sup>m</sup>brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

n Ch. 7. 1.  
& 9. 1, 4.

38 <sup>n</sup>To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

o Ver. 35.  
Josh. 2.  
11.

39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that <sup>o</sup>the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

p Lev. 23.  
31.

40 <sup>p</sup>Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, which I command thee this day, <sup>q</sup>that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.

r Num. 35.  
6, 14.

41 ¶ Then Moses <sup>r</sup>severed three cities on this side Jordan toward the sun rising;

s Ch. 13. 4.

42 <sup>s</sup>That the slayer might flee

thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live:

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
t Josh. 20. 8.

43 *Namely*, <sup>t</sup>Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country, of the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, of the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, of the Manassites.

44 ¶ And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel;

45 These are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt.

u Ch. 3. 29.

46 On this side Jordan, <sup>u</sup>in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel <sup>x</sup>smote, after they were come forth out of Egypt:

y Num. 21.  
21. Ch. 1.  
6.

47 And they possessed his land, and the land <sup>y</sup>of Og king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorites, which were on this side Jordan toward the sun rising;

z Ch. 2. 36.  
& 3. 12.

48 <sup>z</sup>From Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto Mount Sion, which is <sup>a</sup>Hermon,

a Ch. 3. 9.  
Ps. 108. 3.

49 And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, under the <sup>b</sup>springs of Pisgah.

such a glorious appearance. *By temptations*—Temptations is the general title, which is explained by the following particulars, signs, and wonders, &c. which are called temptations, because they were trials both to the Egyptians and Israelites, whether they would be induced to believe and obey God or not. *By terrors*—Raised in the minds of the Egyptians, or by terrible things done among them.

Ver. 37. *Brought thee out in his sight*—Keeping his eye, fixed on thee, as a father doth on his beloved child. He himself was present with thee, and marched along with thee in the pillar of cloud and fire. *With his mighty power*—

And not by any natural strength of thy own, thou wast delivered from that bondage in which all the thousands of Israel so long lived in Egypt.

Ver. 39. *Know and consider it in thine heart*—From all that thou hast seen, heard, and experienced. *That the Lord he is God*, &c.—Settle it in thine heart, that none but the Creator of all things could perform those mighty acts.

Ver. 44. *This is the law*—More particularly and fully expressed in the following chapter, to which these words are an introduction.

A. M. 2588.  
B. C. 1451.

CHAP. V.

The general intent of the Ten Commandments as a covenant between God and Israel, ver. 1—5. The Commandments, ver. 6—21. God writes them, and grants the people's request; that he would speak by Moses, ver. 22—28. Exhortations to obedience, ver. 29—33.

AND Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and † keep, and do them.

† Heb. keep to do them.

2 <sup>a</sup> The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. 19. 5. Ch. 4. 23.

3 The LORD <sup>b</sup> made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even us*, who are all of us here alive this day.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 13. 17. Heb. 8. 9.

4 <sup>c</sup> The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire :

<sup>c</sup> Ex. 19. 9, 19. & 20. 27. Ch. 4. 33, 36. & 34. 10.

5 (<sup>d</sup> I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the

<sup>d</sup> Ex. 20. 31. Gal. 3. 19.

word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount; saying,

A. M. 2588.  
B. C. 1451.  
<sup>e</sup> Ex. 19. 16. & 20. 18. & 24. 2.

6 ¶ I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of † bondage.

<sup>f</sup> Ex. 20. 2. Sc. Lev. 26. 1. Ch. 5. 4. Ps. 81. 10. Heb. 4. 7.

7 <sup>g</sup> Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

<sup>g</sup> Ex. 20. 2.

8 <sup>h</sup> Thou shalt not make thee *any* graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth :

<sup>h</sup> Ex. 20. 4.

9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, <sup>i</sup> visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

<sup>i</sup> Ex. 24. 7.

10 <sup>k</sup> And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>k</sup> Jer. 32. 18. Dan. 9. 4.



CHAP. V. Ver. 1. *Moses called all Israel*—Moses having in his first discourse, by a general recapitulation of the mercies and providences which had attended them, prepared the minds of the Israelites for farther impressions, summons them by their elders and representatives to a second meeting, in which, after repeating to the new generation the several laws which God had enjoined, he earnestly exhorts them to lay them to heart, and make them the rule of their spirit and conduct.

Ver. 3. *The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers*—That is, with our remote progenitors, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but with us their descendants: or if it be understood as spoken of their immediate parents, it means, according to the Hebrew idiom, *Not with our fathers only, but with us also*, as Gen. xxxii. 28, *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel*; that is, not only Jacob, but Israel, or Israel preferably to Jacob. Moses might truly say, God made this covenant with them then present before him; for a great part of them, even all who were under twenty years of age when God gave the law on Mount Sinai, were at Horeb: and, as God foreknew that their parents would die in the wilderness for their unbelief and murmuring, and would have comparatively little profit from that covenant, he especially intended it for those who should enter Canaan, and who, with their posterity, should be governed and benefitted by it from generation to generation.

Ver. 4. *The Lord talked with you face to face*—Personally and immediately, and not by the mouth or ministry of Moses; plainly and certainly, as when two men speak face to face;

freely and familiarly, so as not to overwhelm and confound you. It may also signify that they beheld a conspicuous symbol of the divine presence, and heard a divine voice speaking from thence clearly and distinctly.

Ver. 5. *Between the Lord and you*—As a mediator, according to your desire. *The word of the Lord*—Moses does not mean the ten commandments, which God himself had uttered, but the other statutes and judgments following them.

Ver. 6. *I am the Lord thy God*—The ten commandments, delivered Exod. xx. are here repeated, with some small difference of words, but the sense is perfectly the same. There being little said concerning the spiritual meaning of the ten commandments in the notes there, it may not be improper to add a few inquiries here, which the reader may answer between God and his own soul.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*—Hast thou worshipped God in spirit and in truth? Hast thou made him the end of all thy actions? Hast thou sought for any happiness in preference to the knowledge and love of God? Dost thou experimentally know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent? Dost thou love God? Dost thou love him with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; so as to love nothing else but in that manner and degree which tends to increase thy love of him? Hast thou found happiness in God? Is he the desire of thine eyes, the joy of thy heart? If not, thou hast other gods before him.

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt not make any graven image*—Hast thou

**11** 'Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

**12** "Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee.

**13** "Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:

**14** But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant

may rest as well as thou.

**15** <sup>p</sup>And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence <sup>q</sup>through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

**16** ¶ 'Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; <sup>s</sup>that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

**17** 'Thou shalt not kill.

**18** "Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

**19** <sup>x</sup>Neither shalt thou steal.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ex. 20. 7.  
Lev. 19.  
19. Matt.  
5. 33.

Ex. 20. 8.

Ex. 23. 12.  
& 35. 2.  
Ex. 30.  
12.

Gen. 2. 3.  
Ex. 16. 29.  
20. Heb.  
4. 4.

A. 1. 2. 3.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ch. 15. 16.  
& 16. 13.  
& 24. 15.  
22.

Ch. 4. 34.  
37.

Ex. 20. 12.  
Lev. 19.  
5. Ch. 37.  
16. Eph.  
6. 2. 3.  
Col. 3. 20.  
Ch. 4. 30.

Ex. 20. 12.  
Matt. 5.  
21.

Ex. 20.  
14. Luke  
18. 20.  
Jan. 2. 11.

Ex. 20.  
15. Rom.  
13. 9.

not formed any gross image of God in thy mind? Hast thou always thought of him as a pure Spirit, whom no man hath seen, nor can see? and hast thou worshipped him with thy body, as well as with thy spirit, seeing both of them are God's?

**Ver. 11.** *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*—Hast thou never used the name of God unless on solemn and weighty occasions? Hast thou then used it with the deepest awe? Hast thou duly honoured his word, his ordinances, his ministers? Hast thou considered all things as they stand in relation to him, and seen God in all? Hast thou looked upon heaven as God's throne? Upon earth as God's footstool? On every thing therein as belonging to the great King? On every creature as full of God?

**Ver. 12.** *Keep the Sabbath-day, to sanctify it*—Dost thou do no work on this day, which can be done as well on another? Art thou peculiarly careful on this day to avoid all conversation which does not tend to the knowledge and love of God? Dost thou watch narrowly over all that are within thy gates, that they too may keep it holy? and dost thou try every possible mean to bring all men, wherever thou art, to do the same?

**Ver. 16.** *Honour thy father and thy mother*—Hast thou not been irreverent or undutiful to either? Hast thou not slighted their advice? Hast thou cheerfully obeyed all their lawful commands? Hast thou loved and honoured their persons, supplied their wants, and concealed their infirmities? Hast thou fervently prayed for them? Hast thou loved and honoured thy prince, and avoided, as fire, all speaking evil of the ruler of thy people? Have ye that are servants done all things as unto Christ; not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart? Have ye who are masters behaved as parents to your servants, with all gentleness and affection? Have ye all obeyed them that watch over your souls, and esteemed them highly in love for their work's sake?

**Ver. 17.** *Thou shalt not kill*—Hast thou not tempted any one to what might shorten his life? Hast thou tempted none to intemperance? Hast thou suffered none to be intemperate

under thy roof, or in thy company? Hast thou done all thou couldst, in every place, to prevent intemperance of all kinds? Art thou guilty of no degree of self-murder? Dost thou never eat or drink any thing because it is pleasant and agreeable to thy taste, although thou hast reason to believe it is prejudicial to thy health? Hast thou constantly done whatever thou hadst reason to believe was conducive to it? Hast thou not hated thy neighbour in thy heart? Hast thou reproved him that committed sin in thy sight? If not, thou hast, in God's account, hated him, seeing thou didst suffer sin upon him. Hast thou loved all men as thy own soul, as Christ loved us? Hast thou done unto all men as, in like circumstances, thou wouldst they should do to thee? Hast thou done all in thy power to help thy neighbours, enemies as well as friends? Hast thou laboured to deliver every soul thou couldst from sin and misery? Hast thou shewed that thou lovedst all men as thyself, by a constant, earnest endeavour to fill all places with holiness and happiness, with the knowledge and love of God?

**Ver. 18.** *Neither shalt thou commit adultery*—If thou hast not been guilty of any act of uncleanness, hath thy heart conceived no unclean thought? Hast thou not looked on a woman so as to lust after her? Hast thou not betrayed thy own soul to temptation, by eating and drinking to the full, by needless familiarities, by foolish talking, by levity of dress or behaviour? Hast thou used all the means which Scripture and reason suggest, to prevent every kind and degree of unchastity? Hast thou laboured, by watching, fasting, and prayer, to possess thy vessel in sanctification and honour?

**Ver. 19.** *Neither shalt thou steal*—Hast thou seriously considered, that these houses, lands, money, or goods, which thou hast been used to call thy own, are not thy own, but belong to another, even God? Hast thou ever considered that God is the sole proprietor of heaven and earth; the true owner of every thing therein? Hast thou considered that he has only lent them to thee? That thou art but a steward of thy Lord's goods? And that he has told thee expressly the



A. M. 2555.  
B. C. 1451.y Ex. 20.  
16.e Ex. 20.  
17. Mic.  
9. 9. Hab.  
2. 9. Luke  
12. 15.  
Rom. 7.  
7. & 15. 9.

20 Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

21 Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's.

22 ¶ These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

a Ex. 24. 12.  
& 31. 18.  
Ch. 4. 12.b Ex. 20. 18.  
19.

23 And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, *even* all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

24 And ye said, Behold the LORD our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that

c Ex. 19. 16.

uses and purposes for which he intrusts thee with them; namely, for the furnishing first thyself and those dependant on thee, and then as many others as thou canst, with the things needful for life and godliness? Hast thou considered that thou hast no right at all to apply any part of them to any other purpose? and that if thou dost, thou art as much a robber of God as any can be a robber of thee?

Ver. 20. *Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour*—Hast thou not been guilty of evil-speaking; of needlessly repeating the real fault of thy neighbour? If we see a man do an evil thing, and tell it to another, unless from a full and clear conviction that it is necessary to mention it just then, for the glory of God, the safety or good of some other person, or for the benefit of him that hath done amiss; and unless we then do it only so far as is necessary to these ends, that is evil-speaking. O, beware of this! It is scattering abroad arrows, fire-brands, and death.

Ver. 21. *Neither shalt thou covet any thing that is thy neighbour's*—The plain meaning of this is, Thou shalt not desire any thing that is not thy own, any thing which thou hast not. Indeed, why shouldst thou? God hath given the whatever tends to thy one end, holiness. Thou canst not deny it without making him a liar; and when any thing else will tend thereto, he will give thee that also. There is, therefore, no room to desire any thing which thou hast not.

God doth talk with man, and he liveth.

A. M. 2555.

B. C. 1451.

d Ch. 4. 33.

Judg. 15.

29.

25 Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.

e Ch. 18. 16.

f Heb. add

to Acar.

26 For who is there of all flesh that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

f Ch. 4. 23.

27 Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.

g Ex. 20. 19.

Feb. 12.

19.

28 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

h Ch. 18. 17.

29 O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with

i Ch. 22. 29.

Ps. 51. 12.

Is. 48. 18.

Matt. 23.

St. Luke

19. 42.

Ch. 11. 1.

Ch. 4. 49.

Thou hast already every thing that is really good for thee; wouldest thou have more money, more pleasure, more praise still? Why this is not good for thee. God has told thee so, by with-holding it from thee. O give thyself up to his wise and gracious disposal!

Ver. 22. *Out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness*—This was a dispensation of terror, designed to make the Gospel of grace the more welcome, and to be a specimen of the terrors of the judgment-day. *He added no more*—He ceased for that time to speak immediately, and with that loud voice, unto the people; for the remaining precepts were delivered to Moses, and by him communicated unto them. This he did to shew the pre-eminence of that law above the rest, and its everlasting obligation.

Ver. 25. *Why should we die*—For though God hath, for this season, kept us alive, yet we shall never be able to endure any farther discourse from him in such a terrible manner, but shall certainly sink under the burden of it.

Ver. 26. *Flesh*—Is here put for a man in his frail, corruptible, and mortal state.

Ver. 29. *O that there were such an heart in them!*—A heart to fear God, and keep his commandments for ever! The God of heaven is truly and earnestly desirous of the salvation of poor sinners. He has given abundant proof that he is so. He gives us time and space to repent; by his mer-



A.M. 2583. B.C. 1451. them, and with their children for ever!

30 Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.

Gal. 3.19. 31 But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it.

Ch. 17. 20. & 25. 14. Josh. 1. 7. & 23. 6. Prov. 4. 27. Ch. 10. 12. Ps. 119. 6. Jer. 7. 25. Luke 1. 6. Ch. 4. 40. 32 Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

33 Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.

CHAP. VI.

A persuasive to obedience, ver. 1-3. The first truth, God is one; the first duty, to love him, ver. 4, 5. The means hereto, ver. 6-9. A caution not to forget God in prosperity, ver. 10-13. Not to worship idols, or tempt God, ver. 14-16. Exhortation to obedience, ver. 17-19. And to teach their children, ver 20-25.

cies he invites us to repentance, and waiteth to be gracious; he has sent his Son to redeem us, published a general offer of pardon, promised his Spirit to those that pray for it; and he has said, yea, and sworn, that he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner.

CHAP. VI. Ver. 4. Hear, O Israel!—The passage contained in this and the following verse, the Jews reckoned one of their choicest portions of Scripture. They wrote it on their phylacteries, (or slips of parchment bound on their foreheads, their necks, their breasts, or wrists,) and thought themselves not only obliged to repeat it twice every day, but very happy in being so obliged; having this saying among them, "Blessed are we who, every morning and evening, say, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!" Jehovah our God is one Jehovah—1, The God whom we worship is Jehovah; a Being infinitely and eternally perfect, self-existent, and self-sufficient. 2, He is the only living and true God, he only is God, and he is but one. The firm belief of this self-evident truth would effectually arm them against all idolatry, which was introduced by that fundamental error, that there are gods many. It is past dispute that there is one God, and that there is no other but he, Mark xii. 32. Let us, therefore, neither have, nor desire to have, any other.

NOW these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:

2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

Ver. 5. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—And is this only an external commandment? Can any then say that the Sinai covenant was merely external? With all thy heart—It is not only the external action, but the internal affection of the mind that God requires, an affection which influences all our actions, in secret as well as in public. We must love him, 1, With a sincere love; not in words and in tongue only, saying that we love him, when our hearts are not with him; but inwardly, and in truth, delighting ourselves with him. 2, With a strong love; the heart must be carried out towards him, with great ardour and fervency of affection. 3, With a superlative love; we must love God above any creature whatsoever, and love nothing beside him, but what we love for him, and in subordination to him. 4, With an intelligent love, or with all our understanding, as it is explained, Mark xii. 33: we must know him, and therefore love him, as those that see good reason for loving him. 5, With an entire and undivided heart, the whole stream of our affections running towards him, and being united in his love. O that this love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts!

Ver. 6. These words shall be in thine heart—Though the words alone, without the things expressed by them, will do us no good, yet as we are in danger of losing the things if we

A.M. 2583. B.C. 1451. Ch. 4. 1. & 5. 31. & 12. 1.

Heb. pass over.

Ex. 20. 9. Ch. 10. 12. 13. Ps. 111. 10. & 128. 1. Eccl. 12. 12.

Ch. 4. 40. Prov. 2. 1, 2.

Gen. 15. 5. & 22. 17.

Ex. 3. 8.

Is. 42. 8. Mark 12. 29, 32. John 17. 3. 1 Cor. 8. 4, 6.

Ch. 10. 12. Matt. 22. 37. Mark 12. 30. Luke 10. 27.

2 Kings 23. 25.

Ch. 11. 18. & 32. 46. Ps. 37. 37. & 40. 8. & 119. 11. 99. Prov. 3. 2. Is. 51. 7.

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

Ch. 4. 9.  
& 11. 19.  
Ps. 78. 4.  
5, 6. Eph.  
6. 4.  
† Heb.  
whet, or,  
sharpen.

† Ex. 13. 9.  
16. Ch. 11.  
18. Prov.  
3. 3. & 6.  
21. & 7. 3.

m Ch. 11.  
30. 16. 57.  
8.

n Josh. 24.  
13. Ps.  
103. 44.

7 And <sup>k</sup>thou shalt <sup>†</sup>teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 <sup>m</sup>And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, <sup>n</sup>which thou buildest not,

11 And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst

not, and vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; <sup>o</sup>when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

12 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of <sup>†</sup>bondage.

13 Thou shalt <sup>p</sup>fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and <sup>q</sup>shalt swear by his name.

14 Ye shall not <sup>r</sup>go after other gods, <sup>s</sup>of the gods of the people which are round about you;

15 (For <sup>t</sup>the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) <sup>u</sup>lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

16 <sup>v</sup>Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, <sup>w</sup>as ye tempted him in Massah.

17 Ye shall <sup>x</sup>diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your

A.M. 2663.  
B. C. 1451.

Ch. 5. 19.  
&c.

† Heb.  
bondmen  
or, ser-  
vants.

† Ch. 10. 12.  
20. & 13.  
4. Matt.  
4. 10.  
Luke 4.  
8.

q Ps. 63. 11.  
Is. 45. 23.  
& 65. 16.  
Jer. 4. 2.  
& 5. 7. &  
12. 16.

Ch. 8. 19.  
& 11. 28.  
Jer. 25. 6.  
Ch. 13. 7.

† Ex. 20. 5.  
Ch. 4. 24.  
Ch. 7. 4.

† 11. 17.

x Matt. 4.  
7. Luke  
4. 12.

y Ex. 17. 2.  
7. Num.  
20. 3. 4. &  
31. 4. 5.

1 Cor. 10.  
9.  
Ch. 11. 13.  
22. Ps.  
119. 4.

neglect the words; we must, therefore even lay the words up in our hearts. Our thoughts must be daily conversant with them, and employed about them, that thereby our whole soul may be brought under the influence and impression of them.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt teach them diligently*—Heb. *whet, or sharpen* them, so as that they may pierce deep into their hearts. This metaphor signifies the manner of instructing them, that it was to be done diligently, earnestly, frequently, discreetly. *To thy children*—They that love the Lord God themselves, will do what they can to engage the affections of their children to him, and so preserve the entail of religion in their families from being cut off. Bishop Patrick well observes here, that Moses thought his law so very plain and easy, that every father might be able to instruct his sons in it, and every mother her daughters. That good thing which is committed to us, we must carefully transmit to those that come after us, that it may be perpetuated. *Thou shalt talk of them*—With due reverence and seriousness, for the benefit, not only of thy children, but of thy other domestics, thy friends, and companions. *When thou sittest in thy house*—At work, or at meat, or at rest. *When thou walkest by the way*—For air and exercise, for conversation, or on journeys. *When thou liest down*—Art about to retire from thy family for sleep. *And when thou risest up*—Returnest again to thy family in the morning. Take all occasions to discourse with those about thee of divine things; not of unrevealed mysteries, or matters of doubtful disputation, but of the plain truths and laws of God, and the things belonging to their peace.

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand*—As at that time there were few written copies of the whole

law, and the people had it read to them only at the feast of tabernacles, God seems to have appointed, at least for the present, that some select sentences of the law, that were most weighty and comprehensive, should literally be written upon their gates and walls, or on slips of parchment, to be worn about their wrists, or bound upon their foreheads. The spirit of the command, however, and the chief thing intended, undoubtedly was, that they should give all diligence, and use all means, to keep God's laws always in remembrance, as men frequently bind something upon their hands, or put something before their eyes, to prevent forgetfulness of a thing which they much desire to remember.

Ver. 13. *Shalt swear by his name*—Not by idols, or any creatures, but only by his name, when thou hast a call and just cause to swear. But some think, from comparing this with other passages, the words rather mean, that they were to be steadfast in the acknowledgment and worship of the true God, and in professing that religion which he had instituted. Thus, Isai. xix. 18, *to swear to the Lord of hosts*, is to profess the true religion. And God's words by the same prophet, chap. xlv. 23, *Unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear*, are interpreted by St. Paul to mean, *Every tongue shall confess to God*, Rom. xiv. 11. Thus, Psal. lxxiii. 11, *Every one that sweareth by him*, signifies, every worshipper of the true God.

Ver. 15—17. *Is a jealous God among you*—Heb. *In the midst of you*, to see and observe all your ways, and your turnings aside to other gods. *Ye shall not tempt*—Not provoke him, as the following instance explains. Sinners, especially presumptuous sinners, are said to tempt God; that is, to make a trial of God, whether he be so wise as to see

**A.M. 2553. B.C. 1461.** God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

**a Ex. 15. 26. Ch. 19. 28. & 13. 18.** 18 And thou <sup>a</sup> shalt do *that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD*: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers,

**b Num. 33. 58, 53.** 19 <sup>b</sup> To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken.

**c Ex. 18. 14. † Heb. tomorrow.** 20 ¶ And <sup>c</sup> when thy son asketh thee <sup>†</sup> in time to come, saying, *What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you?*

**d Ex. 3. 19. & 13. 2.** 21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt <sup>d</sup> with a mighty hand:

**e Ex. 7. & 8. & 9. & 10. & 11. & 12. Ps. 135. 9. † Heb. cruel.** 22 <sup>e</sup> And the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and <sup>†</sup> sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes:

23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers.

**A.M. 2553. B.C. 1451. r Ver. 9.** 24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, <sup>r</sup> to fear the LORD our God, <sup>s</sup> for our good always, that <sup>b</sup> he might preserve us alive, as *it is* at this day.

**Ch. 10. 13. Job 35. 7. S. Jer. 32. 39. h Ch. 4. 1. & 8. 1. Ps. 41. 9. Luke 10. 28. Lev. 18. 5. Ch. 24. 13. Rom. 10. 3, 9.** 25 And <sup>i</sup> it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments, before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

CHAP. VII.

*A command to destroy the Canaanites, with all pertaining to their idols, ver. 1—5. And to obey God, considering their relation to him, ver. 6—11. Promise to the obedient, ver. 12—15. A repetition of the command, utterly to destroy the Canaanites, with all the monuments of their idolatry, ver. 16—26.*

**a Ch. 31. 3. Ps. 44. 2. 3.** **WHEN** the <sup>a</sup> LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land, whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, <sup>b</sup> the Hittites, and the Gergashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations <sup>c</sup> greater and mightier than thou;

**b Gen. 18. 19. &c. Ex. 33. 9. c Ch. 4. 38. & 9. 1. d Ver. 22. Ch. 23. 14. e Lev. 37. 28, 29. Num. 22. 63. Ch. 30. 16, 17. Josh. 6. 17. & 8. 24. & 9. 24. & 10. 25, 40. & 11. 11, 12.** 2 And when the LORD thy God shall <sup>d</sup> deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* <sup>e</sup> utterly de-

their sins, so just, and true, and powerful, as to take vengeance on them, concerning which they are very apt to doubt, because of the present impunity and prosperity of many such persons. *Ye shall diligently keep*—Negligence will ruin us; but we cannot be saved without diligence.

**Ver. 25. It shall be our righteousness**—Heb. *Righteousness shall be to us.* We shall be owned, and pronounced by God to be righteous and holy persons, if we sincerely obey him; otherwise we shall be declared to be unrighteous and ungodly. Or, *mercy shall be to us, or with us.* For as the Hebrew word rendered righteousness is very often put for mercy, (as Psal. xxiv. 5; xxxvi. 10; li. 14; Prov. x. 2; xi. 4; Dan. ix. 16,) so this sense seems best to agree both with the Scripture use of this phrase, (in which righteousness seldom or never, but grace or mercy frequently, is said to be to us, or with us,) and with the foregoing verse and argument. God, saith he, ver. 24, commanded these things for our good, that he might preserve us alive, as it is this day. And, adds he in this verse, This is not all; for as he hath

done us good, so he will go on to do us more and more good, and God's mercy shall be to us, or with us, in the remainder of our lives, and for ever, if we observe these commandments. "Our sincere obedience," says Henry, (including in the term, repentance, faith, and love, with all other graces,) "shall be accepted through a Mediator, to denominate us, as Noah was, *righteous before God*, Gen. vii. 1; Luke i. 6; and 1 John iii. 7. The Chaldee reads it, *There shall be a reward to us if we observe to do these commandments.*"

**CHAP. VII. Ver. 1. Seven nations**—Ten are mentioned, Gen. xv. 19; but this being some hundreds of years after, it is not strange if three of them were either destroyed by foreign or domestic wars, or by cohabitation and marriage united with, and swallowed up in the rest.

**Ver. 2. Thou shalt smite and utterly destroy them**—That is, in case they continued obstinate in their idolatry, they were to be destroyed, as nations, or bodies politic. But if

A. M. 2563.  
B. C. 1481.  
Ex. 23, 32.  
& 34, 12.  
15, 16.  
Judg. 2.  
2. Ch. 20.  
10, &c.  
Josh. 2.  
14. & 9.  
18. Judg.  
1. 24.  
Joh. 32.  
12. 1 Kings  
11. 2.  
Ezra 9. 9.

stroy them; 'thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them :

3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

4 ¶ For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: <sup>b</sup>so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

5 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall <sup>i</sup>destroy their altars, and break down their <sup>†</sup>images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

6 ¶ <sup>k</sup>For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God: <sup>l</sup>the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye *were* <sup>m</sup>the fewest of all people :

Ch. 6. 15.

Ex. 23. 24.  
& 34. 13.  
Ch. 12. 2.  
3.

Heb. statues, or, pillars.

Ex. 19. 6.  
Ch. 14. 9.  
& 34. 10.  
Es. 50. 5.  
Jer. 9. 3.  
1 Ex. 19. 6.  
Amos 3.  
2. 1 Pet.  
2. 9.

Ch. 10.  
26.

they forsook their idolatry, and became sincere proselytes to the true religion, they would then be proper objects of forgiveness, as being true penitents. For, says God himself, by Jeremiah, chap. vii. 8, *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation to destroy it, if that nation turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil which I thought to do unto them. Thou shalt make no covenant with them*—See Exod. xxiii. 32, and xxxiv. 12. To make a covenant with, and to spare such incurable idolaters, would have been cruelty to themselves and their posterity.

Ver. 3. *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them*—From this prohibition it has been justly inferred, that the Canaanites, as individuals, might be spared upon their repentance, and reformation from idolatry. For on the supposition, that nothing that breathed was to be saved alive, but that all were to be utterly destroyed, there could be no occasion for this injunction. What end could it answer to forbid all intermarriages with a people supposed not to exist?

Ver. 4. *To serve other gods*—That is, there is manifest danger of apostasy and idolatry from such matches. Which reason doth both limit the prohibition to such of these as were unconverted, (otherwise Salmon married Rahab, Matt. i. 5,) and also enlarges it to other idolatrous nations, as appears from 1 Kings xi. 2; Ezra ix. 2; Neh. xiii. 23.

Ver. 5. *Their groves*—Which idolaters planted about the

8 But <sup>n</sup>because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep <sup>o</sup>the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, <sup>p</sup>hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 ¶ Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, <sup>q</sup>the faithful God, <sup>r</sup>which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations ;

10 And <sup>s</sup>repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: <sup>t</sup>he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

11 Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them.

12 <sup>u</sup>Wherefore it shall come to pass, <sup>v</sup>if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep <sup>x</sup>unto thee <sup>y</sup>the covenant and the

A. M. 2563.  
B. C. 1481.  
Ch. 10. 15.  
Ex. 23. 13.  
Ps. 105. 9.  
9. 10.  
Luke 1.  
85, 72, 73.  
Ex. 12. 2.  
16.

Is. 49. 7.  
1 Cor. 1.  
9. & 10.  
13. 9 Cor.  
1. 15.  
1 Thess.  
5. 24.  
2 Thess.  
3. 3. 7 Tim.  
2. 12.  
Heb. 11.  
11. 1 John  
1. 9.  
Ex. 20. 6.  
Ch. 5. 10.  
Neh. 1. 5.  
Dan. 9. 4.  
Is. 49. 18.  
Nah. 1. 9.  
1 Ch. 23. 35.

Lev. 22.  
5. Ch. 22.  
1.  
Heb.  
because.  
Ps. 105.  
8. 9.  
Luke 1.  
85, 72, 73.

temples and altars of their gods. Hereby God designed to take away whatsoever might bring their idolatry to remembrance, or occasion the reviving of it.

Ver. 7, 8. *The fewest*—To wit, at that time when God first declared his choice of you for his peculiar people, which was done to Abraham. For Abraham had but one son concerned in this choice and covenant, namely, Isaac, and that was not till he was in his hundredth year; and Isaac was sixty years old ere he had a child, and then had only two children; and though Jacob had twelve sons, yet it was a long time before they made any considerable increase. Nor do we read of any great multiplication of them until after Joseph's death. *The Lord loved you*—It was his free choice without any cause or motive on your part.

Ver. 10. *Them that hate him*—Not only those who hate him directly and properly, (for so did few or none of the Israelites to whom he here speaks,) but those who hate him by implication and consequence; those who hate and oppose his people and word; those who willfully persist in the breach of his commandments. *To their face*—That is, openly, and so as they shall see it, and not be able to avoid it. *Slack*—So as to delay it beyond the fit time or season for vengeance, yet withal he is long-suffering, and slow to anger.

Ver. 12, 13. *The covenant and the mercy*—That is, the covenant of mercy, which he, out of his own mere grace,

A.M. 2853.  
B. C. 1451. mercy, which he swore unto thy fathers :

y John 14.  
21. **13** And he will love thee, and z Ch. 28. 4. bless thee, and multiply thee : he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee.

a Ex. 23.  
26, &c. **14** Thou shalt be blessed above all people : there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.

b Ex. 9. 14.  
& 15. 26.  
Ch. 26. 27,  
30. **15** And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee ; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.

c Ver. 2. **16** And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee ; d Ch. 13. 9.  
& 19. 13.  
21. & 26.  
12. thine eye shall have no pity upon them : neither shalt thou serve their gods ; for that e Ex. 23. 33.  
Ch. 13. 20.  
Judg. 8.  
27. Ft. 106.  
36. will be a snare unto thee.

f Num. 33.  
32. **17** ¶ If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I ; how can I dispossess them ?

g Ch. 21. 6. **18** Thou shalt not be afraid of them : but shalt well remember what h Ps. 106. 6. the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt ;

i Ch. 4. 24.  
& 29. 3. **19** The great temptations which

thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched-out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out : so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.

k Ex. 23. 28.  
Josh. 24.  
12. **20** Moreover the LORD thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed.

**21** Thou shalt not be affrighted at them : for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.

l Num. 11.  
20. & 14.  
9. 14. 42.  
& 16. 3.  
Josh. 3.  
10.  
m Ch. 10.  
17. Neh.  
1. 5. & 4.  
14. & 9.  
32.  
n Ex. 23. 29,  
30.  
† Heb.  
pluck off. **22** And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little : thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.

† Heb. be-fore thy face.  
Ver. 2. **23** But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed.

o Josh. 10.  
24. 25. 49.  
& 19. 1.  
&c.  
p Ex. 17.  
14. Ch. 9.  
16. & 25.  
19. & 29.  
20.  
q Ch. 11. 25.  
Josh. 1. 5.  
& 10. 8. &  
23. 9.  
r Ver. 5.  
Ex. 37. 20.  
Ch. 12. 3.  
1 Chro. 17.  
13.  
s Josh. 7. 1.  
21. 2 Mac.  
12. 40. **24** And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven : there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.

**25** ¶ The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire : thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto

remember to good purpose. *The great temptations*—The trials and exercises of thy faith and obedience to my commands.

*Ver. 22. Thou mayest not consume them at once*—Thou shalt not be able ; I will not assist thee with my omnipotency, to crush them at one run of success and victory ; for you are not yet numerous enough to people the whole country at once. But I will bless thee in the use of ordinary means, and thou shalt destroy them by degrees, in several battles, and that thou mayest learn by experience to put thy trust in me.

*Ver. 24. No man shall stand before thee*—This promise was conditional ; they were to be obedient and perform their duty, and then it would be fulfilled ; but if they neglected to do this, they would justly lose the benefit of it.

*Ver. 25. The silver or the gold*—Wherewith the idols were

made with them. *He will love thee*—He will continue to love thee, and to manifest his love to thee.

*Ver. 15. The diseases of Egypt*—Such as the Egyptians were infected with, either commonly, or miraculously. It seems to refer, not only to the plagues of Egypt, but to some other epidemic diseases, which they remembered to have prevailed among the Egyptians, and by which God had chastised them for their national sins. The leprosy and other cutaneous distempers were frequent in Egypt. The Scriptures also mention the botch of Egypt, as a disease common in that country, Deut. xxviii. 27. Diseases are God's servants, which go where he sends them, and do what he bids them.

*Ver. 18, 19. Thou shalt remember what the Lord thy God did*—Frequently and considerately for thy encouragement ; for people are said to forget those things which they do not

A.M. 2553. B.C. 1451. thee, lest thou be 'snared therein :  
 for it is <sup>u</sup> an abomination to the  
 LORD thy God.

26 Neither shalt thou bring an  
 abomination into thine house, lest  
 thou be a cursed thing like it: *but*  
 thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou  
 shalt utterly abhor it; <sup>z</sup>for it is a  
 cursed thing.

CHAP. VIII.

*An exhortation to obedience in consideration of past and promised mercies, ver. 1—9. A caution not to forget God in prosperity, ver. 10—18. A threatening in case of apostacy, ver. 19, 20.*

**A**LL the commandments which I  
 command thee this day <sup>a</sup> shall  
 ye observe to do, that ye may live,  
 and multiply, and go in and possess

covered or adorned, nor consequently any other of their ornaments. This God commanded, to shew his utter detestation of idolatry, and to cut off all occasions of it.

Ver. 26. *Lest thou be a cursed thing*—Heb. **כֶּרֶם**, *cherem*, devoted to utter destruction, as that and every thing was that had been employed to an idolatrous use.

CHAP. VIII. Ver. 1. *That ye may live*—Comfortably and prosperously, for *life*, in the Scripture phrase, signifies more than bare life, viz. happiness and prosperity, Gen. xvii. 18; 1 Sam. xxv. 6; Lev. xxv. 36; 1 Thes. iii. 8. On the other hand, afflictions and calamities are called death, Exod. x. 17, and 2 Cor. xi. 23.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt remember*—Call to mind and meditate upon the wisdom and goodness of God towards thee, and the power exerted on thy behalf. *All the way which the Lord led thee*—All the events which befell thee in the way, the miraculous protections, deliverances, provisions, instructions, which God gave thee; and withal, the severe punishments of thy disobedience. *To know what was in thine heart*—That thou mightest discover thyself, and manifest to others the infidelity, inconstancy, hypocrisy, and perverseness which lay hid in thine heart; the discovery and manifestation whereof God saw would be of peculiar use, both to them and to his church in all succeeding ages. It is well for us, likewise to remember all the ways both of God's providence and grace, by which he has hitherto led, and still leads us through the wilderness, that we may trust in him, and cheerfully serve him.

Ver. 3. *By every word of the Lord doth man live*—By every, or any thing which God appoints and blesses for this end, how unlikely soever it may seem to be for the support and nourishment of the human frame. For it is not the creature, without God, that is sufficient for the support of life; it is only his command and blessing that makes it sufficient. We ought not, therefore, to fix our dependance, as we are prone to do, on natural causes, but to remember

A.M. 2553. B.C. 1451. the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.

2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God <sup>b</sup> led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* <sup>c</sup> to prove thee, <sup>d</sup> to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

3 And he humbled thee, and <sup>e</sup> suffered thee to hunger, and <sup>f</sup> fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth <sup>g</sup> not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

4 <sup>b</sup> Thy raiment waxed not old

that we depend absolutely, entirely, and immediately on him for life and all things.

Ver. 4. *Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee*—The common interpretation of these words is, that, by a constant miracle, their clothes did not so much as decay, *nor their foot swell*, or, as some render it, *grow callous*, by so long travelling in hot and stony places. But Le Clerc thinks "it is hardly to be imagined that Moses, whose principal intention was to record the miracles which God wrought for the Israelites in the wilderness, should have mentioned this so transiently, and as it were by the bye, if it really had been wrought to that extent, especially as it would have been one of the greatest of them. For there must indeed have been as many miracles wrought as there were persons in the camp, and that not only once, but daily, and for the space of forty years. And if we add to this, that their clothes grew in proportion to their stature, as in that case they must have done, unless they had more coats than one apiece, a greater miracle can hardly be conceived. He observes farther, that God is never wont to work miracles unless they be quite necessary; yet here is one of the greatest miracles without any necessity at all. For, as the Israelites had flocks of sheep and goats in the wilderness, and certainly were not ignorant of the art of weaving, as appears from the curious work of the tabernacle, and as nothing hindered them from trafficking with their Arabian neighbours, it is evident they might have been supplied with clothes in the common way, either by making or purchasing them. This being the case, is it not as reasonable to believe that God would have fed the Israelites with manna, after their settlement in Canaan, as that he would have preserved their clothes from decay, during their abode in the wilderness, when there was no necessity for their being thus clothed by a miracle?" He therefore explains Moses's words thus: *Thy raiment waxed not old*—That is, "Providence has been so liberal in supplying your wants in this desert land, that you have never been under a necessity of

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

i 2 Sam. 7.  
14. Ps.  
89. 39.  
Prov. 3.  
12. Heb.  
19. 5, 6.  
Rev. 3.  
19.] 5 <sup>i</sup>Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

6 Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, <sup>k</sup>to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

i Ch. 11. 10,  
11, 12. 7 For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, <sup>l</sup>a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;

† Heb. of olive tree of oil. 8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land <sup>†</sup>of oil-olive, and honey;

m Ch. 33.  
25. 9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any *thing* in it; a land <sup>m</sup>whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

n Ch. 6. 11,  
12. 10 <sup>n</sup>When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

11 Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

12 <sup>o</sup>Lest *when* thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein*;

13 And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14 <sup>p</sup>Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou <sup>q</sup>forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

15 Who <sup>r</sup>led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, <sup>r</sup>wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where *there was no water*; <sup>t</sup>who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with <sup>u</sup>manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, <sup>x</sup>to do thee good at thy latter end;

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

o Ch. 28. 47.  
A 32. 15.  
Prov. 30.  
9. Hos. 13.  
6.

p 1 Cor. 4.  
7.  
q Ps. 106.  
21.

r Is. 63. 19.  
12, 14.  
Jer. 2. 6.  
Num. 21.  
6. Hos. 13.  
5.

t Num. 20.  
11. Ps. 78.  
15. & 112.  
8.

u Ver. 3.  
Ex. 16. 15.

x Jer. 31.  
5, 6. Heb.  
12. 11.

letting your clothes grow old upon your backs, but have always been supplied with new before the old were worn out. *Nor did your feet swell*—Namely, for want of shoes to defend them.” Agreeable to this interpretation, in chap. xxix. 5, instead of *Thy foot did not swell*, it is, Thy shoe did not wax old upon thy feet, i. e. “You were not reduced, through poverty, to wear shoes till they were grown so old, and torn that they could not defend your feet against tumours, and other inconveniences, arising from heat and rugged ways.” This interpretation, it must be observed, is not peculiar to Le Clerc; Spanheim, Burman, Bynæus, Budæus, Calmêt, and many others, have adopted it.

Ver. 5. *As a man chasteneth his son*—That is, unwillingly, being constrained by necessity; moderately, in judgment, remembering mercy; and for his reformation, not his destruction.

Ver. 7—9. *Depths*—Deep wells, or springs, or lakes, which were numerous and large. *Whose stones are iron*—Where iron mines are as plentiful as quarries of stone are in other places. *Thou mayest dig brass*—That is, copper of which brass is made.

Ver. 10. *Bless the Lord*—Solemnly praise him for thy

food; which is a debt both of gratitude and justice, because it is from his providence and favour that thou receivest both thy food, and refreshment and strength by it. The more unworthy and absurd is that too common profaneness of them, who, professing to believe in God, from whom all their comforts come, grudge to own him at their meals, either by desiring his blessing before them, or by offering due praise to God after them.

Ver. 14. *Lifted up*—As if thou didst receive and enjoy these things, either by thy own wisdom and valour, and industry, or by thy own merit.

Ver. 16. *That he might humble thee*—By keeping thee in constant dependence upon himself for every day’s food, and convincing thee what an impotent, helpless creature thou art, having nothing whereon to subsist, and being supported wholly by the alms of divine goodness from day to day. The mercies of God, if duly considered, are as powerful a mean to humble us as the greatest afflictions, because they increase our debts to God, and manifest our dependance upon him, and by making God great, they make us little in our own eyes. *To do thee good*—That is, that after he hath purged and prepared thee by afflictions, thou mayest receive



A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

17 <sup>y</sup>And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: <sup>z</sup>for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, <sup>a</sup>that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, <sup>b</sup>I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

20 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, <sup>c</sup>so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

CHAP. IX.

*A promise of Canaan, ver. 1—3. A caution, not to ascribe this to their own merit, ver. 4—6. A rehearsal of their various rebellions, ver. 7—24: and of Moses's intercession for them, ver. 25—29.*

**H**EAR, O Israel: Thou art to <sup>a</sup>pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations <sup>b</sup>greater and mightier than thyself, cities <sup>c</sup>great and <sup>c</sup>fenced up to heaven,

and enjoy his blessings with less disadvantage, whilst by the remembrance of former afflictions, thou art made thankful for those blessings, and more cautious not to abuse them.

Ver. 20. *So shall ye perish*—Assure yourselves, if you apostatize from the worship and service of God, and relapse into idolatry, irreligion, or vice, your nation will be involved in the same ruin and destruction, that you are now going to execute upon the Canaanites for the like national sins. These cautions and exhortations which Moses here so forcibly and pathetically gives to the Israelites ought to be well observed and laid to heart by us all, for every one of whom they are equally necessary.

CHAP. IX† Ver. 1, 2. This seems to be a new discourse, delivered at some distance of time from the former, probably on the next Sabbath day. *This day*—That is, *shortly*, within a little time, the word *day* being often put for *time*. *To possess nations*—That is, the land of these nations. *Mightier*

2 A people great and tall, <sup>d</sup>the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and *of whom* thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak!

3 Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God *is* he which <sup>e</sup>goeth over before thee; *as a* <sup>e</sup>consuming fire <sup>f</sup>he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: <sup>h</sup>so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.

4 <sup>i</sup>Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but <sup>k</sup>for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

5 <sup>l</sup>Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform <sup>m</sup>the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this

*than thyself*—This he adds that they might not trust to their own strength, but wholly rely upon God's help for the conquering them, and after the work was done might ascribe the glory of it to God alone and not to themselves. *Who can stand*—This seems to have been a proverb used in those times.

Ver. 3. *As a consuming fire*—Before whom thine enemies shall be as easily consumed, as stubble before the flames. *So shall thou drive them out—quickly*—Not the whole seven nations, whom he said, chap. vii. 22, God would drive out by little and little, but so many as to make a settlement for them in Canaan.

Ver. 5. *Not for thy righteousness*—Neither for thy upright heart nor holy life, the two things which God, above all others, regards. Here, therefore, all merit, in them is excluded: and they are given to know that although the Canaanites were expelled for their national wickedness, they were not settled in their room for their righteousness. And

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
d Num. 13.  
22, 25, 32.  
33.

z Prov. 10.  
32. Hos.  
9. 8.

a Ch. 7. 8.  
12.

b Ch. 4. 26.  
& 30. 18.

c Dan. 9.  
11, 12.

e Ch. 31. 9.  
Josh. 2.  
11.  
f Ch. 4. 24.  
Heb. 12.  
29.  
g Ch. 7. 23.  
Ex. 23. 31.  
Ch. 7. 24.

i Ch. 8. 17.  
Rom. 11.  
6, 20.  
1 Cor. 4.  
4, 7.

k Gen. 15.  
16. Lev.  
18. 24, 25.  
Ch. 18. 12.

l Tit. 2. 5.

m Gen. 15.  
7. & 13.  
15. & 16.  
7. & 17. 6.  
& 26. 4. &  
28. 13.



<sup>a. M. 2484. B. C. 1451.</sup> good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art <sup>a</sup> a stiff-necked people.

<sup>a</sup> 7 ¶ Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: <sup>o</sup> from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.

<sup>p</sup> 8 Also <sup>p</sup> in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you.

<sup>q</sup> 9 <sup>q</sup> When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then <sup>r</sup> I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

<sup>s</sup> 10 <sup>s</sup> And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire <sup>t</sup> in the day of the assembly.

<sup>u</sup> 11 And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.

<sup>a. M. 2485. B. C. 1451.</sup> 12 And the LORD said unto me, <sup>a</sup> "Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are <sup>x</sup> quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.

13 Furthermore <sup>y</sup> the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, <sup>z</sup> it is a stiff-necked people:

14 <sup>a</sup> Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and <sup>b</sup> blot out their name from under heaven: <sup>o</sup> and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.

15 <sup>c</sup> So I turned and came down from the mount, and <sup>e</sup> the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands.

16 And <sup>f</sup> I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against the LORD your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the LORD had commanded you.

17 And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.

18 And I <sup>g</sup> fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and

surely they, who did not deserve this earthly Canaan could not merit the kingdom of glory. *To perform the word*—To show my faithfulness in accomplishing that promise which I graciously made and confirmed with my oath.

Ver. 7. *Stiff-necked*—Rebellious and perverse, and so destitute of all pretence to righteousness. And thus our gaining possession of the heavenly Canaan must be ascribed to God's power and grace, and not to our own might or merit. In him we must glory and not in ourselves.

Ver. 8. *Also in Horeb ye provoked the Lord*—Rather, *Even in Horeb*; for there is an emphasis in this. Even when your miraculous deliverance out of Egypt was fresh in your memories: when God had but newly manifested himself to you, and delivered you the law in so stupendous and awful a manner, and with such visible displays of his divine majesty;

when he had just taken you into covenant with himself, and was actually conferring still further mercies upon you.

Ver. 10. *With the finger of God*—Immediately and miraculously, which was done not only to procure the greater reverence to the law, but also to signify, that it is the work of God alone to write this law upon the table of men's hearts. *In the day of the assembly*—That is, when the people were gathered by God's command to the bottom of Mount Sinai, to hear and receive God's ten commandments from his own mouth.

Ver. 14. *Let me alone!*—Stop me not by thy intercession: desist from all prayer and pleading in their behalf.

Ver. 17. *I brake them before your eyes*—Not by an unbridled passion, but in zeal for God's honour, and by the direction of God's Spirit; to signify to the people, that the

A.M. 2563.  
B. C. 1461.

forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

h Ex. 39.  
10, 11.

19 <sup>b</sup>For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the LORD was wroth against you to destroy you. <sup>i</sup>But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also.

i Ex. 39. 14.  
& 33. 17.  
Cb. 10.  
10. Ps.  
106. 23.

20 And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron also the same time.

k Ex. 39. 30.  
10. 31. 7.

21 And <sup>k</sup>I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burned it with fire, and stamped it, *and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust*: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.

l Num. 11.  
1, 3, 5.  
m Ex. 17. 7.  
n Num. 11.  
6, 24.

22 And at <sup>l</sup>Taberah, and at <sup>m</sup>Mas-sah, and at <sup>n</sup>Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.

o Num. 13.  
2, & 14. 1.

23 Likewise <sup>o</sup>when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and <sup>p</sup>ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.

p Ps. 106.  
24.

q Ch. 31. 97.

24 <sup>q</sup>Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

r Ver. 18.

25 <sup>r</sup>Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down *at the first*; because

covenant between God and them, contained in those tables, was broken, and that they were now cast out of God's favour, and could expect nothing from him but fiery indignation.

Ver. 21. *I cast the dust thereof into the brook*—That there might be no monument, nor remembrance of the calf left.

Ver. 25. *I fell down*—In a way of humiliation and supplication, on your behalf. *Forty days*—The same forty that were mentioned ver. 18, as appears by comparing this with the account given in Exodus, where this history is more fully

the LORD had said he would destroy you. A.M. 2563.  
B. C. 1461.

26 <sup>s</sup>I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord God, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. s Ex. 32. 11.  
&c.

27 Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin:

28 Lest <sup>t</sup>the land whence thou broughtest us out say, <sup>u</sup>Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness. t Gen. 41:  
37. 1 Sam.  
14. 25.  
u Ex. 32. 12.  
Num. 14.  
16.

29 <sup>x</sup>Yet they *are* thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm. x Ch. 4. 29.  
1 Kings 8.  
51. Neh.  
1. 10. Ps.  
95. 7.

## CHAP. X.

*God's mercy in renewing the tables, ver. 1—5. In leading Israel forward, and choosing the tribe of Levi for his own, ver. 6—9. In accepting the intercession of Moses, ver. 10, 11. An exhortation to fear, love, and serve God.*

**A**T that time the LORD said unto me, <sup>a</sup>Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and <sup>b</sup>make thee an ark of wood. 1491.  
a Ex. 24. 1.  
b Ex. 25. 10.

2 And I will write on the tables

related, and where this is related to have been done twice only. See Exod. xxxii. 10. and xxxiii. 5.

Ver. 26—29. *Redeemed through thy greatness*—The greatness of thy power and goodness, which appeared most eminently in that work. *Remember thy servant Abraham, &c.*—That is, thy promise made and sworn to them. *They are thy people*—Whom thou hast chosen to thyself out of all mankind.

CHAP. X. Ver. 2. *I will write on the tables*—Though the

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.

c Ex. 25. 16.  
21.

d Num. 33. 5.  
10. & 27. 3 And I made an ark of shittim-wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.

e Ex. 34. 4.

f Ex. 34. 28. 4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

g Heb. words.  
Ex. 34. 1.

h Ex. 19. 17.  
Ch. 9. 10.  
& 18. 16. 5 And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.

i Ex. 31. 49.  
k Ex. 40. 30.

l 1 Kings 8. 3. 6 ¶ And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was

buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

7 ¶ From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters.

8 ¶ At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day.

9 ¶ Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.

10 ¶ And I stayed in the mount, according to the first time, forty days and forty nights; and the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also, and the LORD would not destroy thee.

11 ¶ And the LORD said unto me,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

Num. 33. 24. 33.

Num. 3. 6. A. 4. 4. & 2. 14. & 19. 9.

Num. 4. 18.

Ch. 18. 5.

Lev. 9. 32.  
Num. 6. 23. Ch. 31. 5.

1491.

Num. 18. 20. 24. Ch. 18. 1. Ez. 44. 23.

Ex. 24. 28.  
Ch. 9. 18. 25.  
Or, former days.

Ex. 32. 14. 33. & 33. 17. Ch. 9. 19.

Ex. 32. 31. & 34. 1.

tables were broken, because they broke his commandment and made themselves a graven image, they were now renewed in proof that his wrath was turned away. And thus God's writing his law in our inward parts, is the surest proof of our reconciliation to him, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Reader! has God written it on thine? Remember, *He that loveth not, knoweth not God*, and is not in a state of reconciliation with him, 1 John iv. 8.

Ver. 3. *I made an ark*—Some of the Jewish Doctors concluded from this text that there were two arks, one made by Bezaleel, and this one by Moses, which they fancied was the ark that went before them in their marches and battles. But this notion is confuted by many other passages. All that Moses means by saying, *I made an ark*, is, that he ordered one to be made, just as the expression, *Solomon built the temple*, only means that he provided for the building of it, and caused it to be built.

Ver. 6. This following history comes in manifestly by way of parenthesis, as appears from ver. 10, where he returns to his former discourse; and it seems to be here inserted as an evidence of God's gracious answer to Moses's prayers, and of his reconciliation to the people, notwithstanding their late and great provocation. For, saith he, after this they proceeded by God's guidance in their journeys, and though Aaron died in one of them, yet God made up that breach, and Eleazar came in his place, and ministered as a priest, one branch of which office was to intercede for the people.

Ver. 8. *At that time*—About that time, that is, when I was come down from the mount, as was said ver. 5. *To stand*

*before the Lord*—A phrase used concerning the prophets, 1 Kings xvii. 1, and xviii. 15, this being the posture of servants. Hence the angels are said to stand, 2 Chron. xviii. 18, and Luke i. 19. *To bless*—The people, by performing those holy ministrations for them, and giving those instructions to them, to and with which God's blessing was promised; and this they did *in God's name*, that is, by command and commission from him. Let it be observed here, that a settled ministry is a great blessing to a people, and a special token of God's love to them. But they who are blessed with it should take care that it do not become a curse through their abuse or non-improvement of it.

Ver. 9. *Levi hath no inheritance with his brethren*—That they might attend only on the duties of their sacred office, provision was made for their maintenance, without their being obliged to plough, or sow, or entangle themselves in other worldly affairs. And is not provision made for the Clergy of this and other countries professing Christianity, for a similar reason, viz. that, being under no necessity of entangling themselves in the affairs of this life, they may war a good warfare, and please Him that hath chosen them to be his soldiers? 2 Tim. ii. 4. *The Lord is his inheritance*—They are to be maintained out of such tithes and revenues as are appropriated to them by the special appointment of God.

Ver. 11. *The Lord said unto me, Arise*—This is mentioned as a proof that God had hearkened to the intercession of Moses. *Take thy journey before the people*—It was fit that he, who had saved them from ruin by his intercession,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
† Heb. go  
in jour-  
ney.

Arise, †take *thy* journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give unto them.

a Mic. 6. 8.

12 ¶ And now, Israel, <sup>a</sup>what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but <sup>b</sup>to fear the LORD thy God, <sup>c</sup>to walk in all his ways, and <sup>d</sup>to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,

13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day <sup>e</sup>for thy good?

e Ch. 6. 24.  
f 1 Kings 8.  
27. Ps.  
115. 16. &  
148. 4.  
g Gen. 14.  
19. Ex.  
19. 5. Ps.  
94. 1.

14 Behold, <sup>f</sup>the heaven and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD's thy God, <sup>g</sup>the earth *also*, with all that therein *is*.

h Ch. 4. 37.

15 <sup>h</sup>Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

chose their seed after them, *even* you above all people, as *it is* this day.

16 Circumcise therefore <sup>i</sup>the foreskin of your heart, and be no more <sup>k</sup>stiff-necked.

17 For the LORD your God <sup>k</sup>is God of gods, and <sup>m</sup>LORD of lords, <sup>l</sup>a great God, <sup>n</sup>a mighty, and a terrible, which <sup>o</sup>regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

18 <sup>p</sup>He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

19 <sup>q</sup>Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

20 <sup>r</sup>Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou <sup>s</sup>cleave, <sup>t</sup>and swear by his name.

should have the conduct and command of them. And herein he was a type of Christ, who, as he *ever lives to make intercession for us, so has all power in heaven and on earth.*

Ver. 12. *What doth he require?*—By way of duty and gratitude for such amazing mercies? *But to fear the Lord thy God, &c.*—When Jehovah is *our God* in Christ, pacified towards us after all we have done, and has received us for his adopted children, then, and not before, are we qualified to comply with his will as here enjoined, to *love* as well as *fear* him, and to *walk in all his ways, yea to serve him*, as it is here expressed, *with all our heart and all our soul.* For then, *beholding what manner of love he hath bestowed upon us, in making us his children, we love him because he hath first loved us*, and that love becomes a source of never failing obedience in our souls: it makes the tree good, and then the fruit is good also. Reader! consider this well, lest thy religion be mere formality and hypocrisy, and while thou hast a name to live, thou be dead to God and things divine!

Ver. 14. *The heaven*—The aerial and starry heaven. *The heaven of heavens*—The highest, or third heaven, thus named for its eminency. *All that therein is*—All creatures and all men, which being all his, he might have chosen what nation he pleased to be his people.

Ver. 15. *To love them*—He shews that God had no particular obligation to their fathers, any more than to other persons and people, all being equally his creation, and that his choice of them out of, and above all others, proceeded only from his good pleasure.

Ver. 16. *Circumcise, therefore, your heart*—Rest not in your bodily circumcision, or in any mere external observances or duties, but seriously set upon that substantial and most important circumcision of the heart and of the spirit, which is signified by that of the flesh, and intended to be inculcated

thereby, see Rom. ii. 28, 29. Cleanse your hearts *from all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness*, fitly compared to the foreskin, which, under the Jewish law, if not cut off, made persons profane, unclean, and odious in the sight of God.

Ver. 17. *Who regardeth not persons*—Whether Jews or Gentiles, but deals justly and equally with all sorts of men; and as whosoever fears and obeys him shall be accepted, (viz. through faith in the Messiah, working by love), so all incorrigible transgressors shall be severely punished, and you no less than other people; therefore, do not flatter yourselves, as if God would bear with your sins, because of his particular kindness to you or to your fathers.

Ver. 18. *The judgment of the fatherless*—He is so far from disregarding those who are unbefriended, that he regards them the more on that account, takes their case under his special cognizance, and is particularly displeased with those who injure and oppress them. Nay, *he executes their judgment*, pleads their cause, and maintains their right against their potent adversaries, and therefore he expects that you should do so too. Even the compassion which he has implanted in the human breast for the oppressed and destitute, and which is his voice to men, calling upon them to protect the orphan, to assist the widow, and to relieve the necessitous, is one evidence, among many others, that he espouses their cause.

Ver. 19. *Love ye, therefore, the stranger*—Be kind and just even to Gentile strangers, as to fellow-creatures of the same frame with yourselves, in honour to your common Creator, and in imitation of that tender care which he exercises over the sons of men.

Ver. 20, 21. *To him shalt thou cleave*—With firm confidence, true affection, and constant obedience. *He is thy praise*—The object and matter of thy praise, as Exod. xv. 2. It is thy greatest honour to belong to him, to be his subject

**21** <sup>a</sup>He is thy praise, and he is thy God, <sup>x</sup>that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.

**22** Thy fathers went down into Egypt <sup>y</sup>with three-score and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee <sup>z</sup>as the stars of heaven for multitude.

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1481.  
u Ex. 15. 9.  
Ps. 22. 3.  
Jer. 17. 14.  
x 1 Sam. 13. 24. 2 Sam. 7. 25. Ps. 106. 21.  
y Gen. 46. 27. Ex. 1. 5. Acts 7. 14.  
z Gen. 15. 5. Ch. 1. 10. & 28. 62.

CHAP. XI.

*Moses exhorts them to obedience, by rehearsing God's works, ver. 1—7. By describing the goodness of the land, ver. 8—12. By promises and threats, ver. 13—17. An exhortation to teach their children, closed with a promise.*

**T**HEREFORE thou shalt <sup>a</sup>love the LORD thy God, and <sup>b</sup>keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.

**2** ¶ And know ye this day: for I *speake* not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen <sup>c</sup>the chastisement of the LORD your God, <sup>d</sup>his greatness, <sup>e</sup>his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm,

**3** <sup>f</sup>And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land;

a Ch. 10. 12. & 30. 16. 40.  
b Zech. 3. 7.  
c Ch. 5. 5.  
d Ch. 5. 24.  
e Ch. 7. 19.  
f Ps. 78. 12. & 135. 9.

**4** And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; <sup>g</sup>how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and *how* the LORD hath destroyed them unto this day;

**5** And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place;

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1481.  
g Ex. 14. 27. & 15. 9. Ps. 106. 11.

**6** And <sup>h</sup>what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the **||**substance<sup>i</sup> that <sup>†</sup>was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel:

h Num. 16. 1, 31. & 27. 3. Ps. 106. 17.

**7** But <sup>j</sup>your eyes have seen all the great acts of the LORD which he did.

i Or, living substance which followed them.  
† Heb. was at their feet.  
j Ch. 5. 3. & 7. 19.

**8** ¶ Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may <sup>k</sup>be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it;

k Josh. 1. 6.

**9** And <sup>l</sup>that ye may prolong *your* days in the land, <sup>m</sup>which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, <sup>n</sup>a land that floweth with milk and honey.

l Ch. 4. 40. & 5. 16. Prov. 10. 27.  
m Ch. 9. 8.  
n Ex. 3. 8.

**10** ¶ For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, *is* not as the

and servant, his child and spouse, and it should be thy chief duty and delight to praise and glorify him.

CHAP. XI. Ver. 2. *Know ye this day*—That is, acknowledge and consider it with diligence and thankfulness; for that is the sense of the original word here, and in a multitude of other places. *Your children, who have not known*—But your eyes have seen, ver. 7. *The chastisement of the Lord*—His judgments executed on the Egyptians in various plagues, the sundry methods of punishment and correction he has used to chastise, amend, and render you obedient to his laws, see chap. iv. 36, and viii. 5, and Prov. i. 2, where the same Hebrew word is used in this sense. *His greatness, &c.*—His majesty and great power, appearing in his works. He uses a variety of words to make them sensible in how many instances the divine power and goodness had been manifested in effecting their deliverance out of Egyptian bondage, and their subsequent preservation.

Ver. 4, 5. *Hath destroyed them unto this day*—Brought them so low that they have not yet recovered their strength. Or, the effect of which destruction continueth to this day, in their weakness and fear, and our safety from their farther attempts against us. *What he did in the wilderness*—Both in a way of judgment and mercy.

Ver. 7. *Your eyes have seen*—Some of them had seen all the great things done for them in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness; and all of them had seen some of his mighty acts in their behalf, q. d. You yourselves have had experience of God's goodness and power, and therefore you should be the more affected therewith. What our eyes have seen, especially in our younger days, should be improved by us long after.

Ver. 10. *The land is not as the land of Egypt*—The fruitfulness of it depends more especially on the divine Providence, and therefore you should be careful to serve the Lord, and secure his favour and blessing. *Waterest it with thy foot*—

A. M. 4591.  
B. C. 1481. land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, ° where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:

o Zech. 13.  
14.  
p Ch. 9. 7. 11 ¶ But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven:

† Heb. seek-  
eth.  
q 1 Kings 9.  
3. 12 A land which the LORD thy God † careth for; ° the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year.

r Ver. 22.  
Ch. 6. 17.  
s Ch. 20. 12. 13 ¶ And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken ° diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, ° to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1481.  
t Lev. 26. 4.  
Ch. 28. 12.  
u Joel 1. 22.  
Jam. 1. 7. 14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, ° the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

v Ps. 104.  
14.  
w Heb.  
grow. 15 ¶ And I will † send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.

y Ch. 6. 11.  
Joel 1. 12.  
z Ch. 29. 18.  
Job 31.  
37.  
a Ch. 8. 19.  
a 20. 17. 16 Take heed to yourselves, ° that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and ° serve other gods, and worship them;

b Ch. 6. 15.  
c 1 Kings 8.  
25. 7. Chro.  
6. 36. a  
7. 13.  
d Ch. 4. 26.  
a 8. 19.  
e 30. 16.  
Josh. 23.  
13, 16. 17 ¶ And then ° the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he ° shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ° ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

That is, with great pains and labour of thy feet; partly by fetching water and dispersing it, and partly by digging furrows, by a spade, with thy foot, and using engines for distributing the water, which engines they wrought with their feet. This is explained by a passage out of Philo, who tells us that the Egyptians, to supply the want of rain, were wont to water their gardens by machines for drawing water, fixed upon the banks of the Nile; which machines were so contrived as to be turned with their feet. So the meaning is, that whereas Egypt was watered by human art, Canaan was watered by rain from heaven, as the next verse explains.

Ver. 11. *A land of hills and valleys*—Which could not be made fruitful but by rain from heaven, which seldom fell in Egypt, whose fruitfulness depended on the overflowing of the Nile. Thus he informs them that the promised land was of such a condition as would keep them in a constant dependence upon God for the fruitfulness of it. He means, however, also to signify, that it was much more pleasant and healthful than Egypt, which, as it was enriched, so it was annoyed with the Nile, which, overflowing the land in summer-time, made the country both unpleasant and unhealthy. And health being the greatest of all outward blessings, Canaan must therefore be a more desirable habitation than Egypt. *The rain of heaven*—Which was more easily obtained, being given them without any charge or pains; more sweet and pleasant, not hindering their going abroad upon their affairs, as the overflowing of the Nile did; more safe and healthful, being free from that mud which attended the waters of the Nile; and more certain too, while they were obedient, the former and the latter rain being promised to be given to them in the proper season, on condition of their adhering to God's worship, and obeying his laws. And even this condition, though it might seem a clog and inconvenience, yet indeed was a great benefit; for thus, by their own interest and necessities, they were obliged to that obedience and reliance

on God upon which their happiness depended, both for this life and the next.

Ver. 12. *Which the Lord careth for*—In a special manner, watering it immediately, as it were by his own hand, without man's help, and giving peculiar blessings to it, which Egypt enjoyed not. *To the end of the year*—To give it the rain, and other blessings, proper to the several seasons. But all these mercies, and the fruitfulness of the land consequent upon them, were suspended upon their disobedience: and therefore it is not at all strange that some later writers describe the land of Canaan as a barren soil; which is so far from affording ground to question the authority of the Scriptures, that it much more confirms it, this being an effect of that threatening, that God would turn a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of those that dwelt in it, Psal. cvii. 34.

Ver. 14, 15. *I will give you*—Moses here personates God; or rather, God speaks by him. *The rain of your land*—Which is proper to your land, and not common to Egypt, where there is little rain. *The first rain and the latter rain*—In Judea and the neighbouring countries, there is seldom any rain save at two seasons, about the autumnal and vernal equinox, called the *former and latter rain*. The first fell about the time of sowing their seed, and served to prepare the ground, and make the grain take root in the earth; and the other when the corn was well grown, towards earing-time, to make the ears full and plump for harvest. *I will send grass in thy fields*—So godliness has here the promise of the life which now is. But the favour of God puts gladness into the heart more than the increase of corn, wine, and oil.

Ver. 16, 17. *That your heart be not deceived*—By the specious pretence of idolaters, persuading you that they enjoy fruitful seasons, and other temporal blessings, as a reward for their worship. *And he shut up the heaven*—Withhold

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451. 18 ¶ Therefore <sup>t</sup> shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and <sup>f</sup> bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

Ch. 6. 6.  
& 22. 44. Ch. 6. 9.  
& 7. 19 <sup>s</sup> And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Ch. 6. 9. 20 <sup>h</sup> And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates :

Ch. 4. 40.  
A. 6. 2.  
Prov. 3.  
2. & 4. 10.  
& 9. 11. 21 That <sup>i</sup> your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, <sup>k</sup> as the days of heaven upon the earth.

Ps. 72. 5.  
& 59. 29. Ver. 13.  
Ch. 6. 17. 22 ¶ For if <sup>i</sup> ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and <sup>m</sup> to cleave unto him;

Ch. 19.  
20. & 30.  
30. Ch. 4. 28.  
& 9. 5. 23 Then will the LORD <sup>u</sup> drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall <sup>o</sup> possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves.

Josh. 1.  
3. & 14. 9. 24 <sup>p</sup> Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall

be your's; <sup>q</sup> from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451.  
Gen. 15.  
18. Ex.  
23. 31.  
Num. 34.  
3, &c. 25 <sup>r</sup> There shall no man be able to stand before you: *for* the LORD your God shall <sup>v</sup> lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, <sup>t</sup> as he hath said unto you.

Ch. 7. 24.  
Ch. 2. 25.  
Ex. 23. 27. 26 ¶ <sup>u</sup> Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

Ch. 28. 9. 27 <sup>x</sup> A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:

Ch. 28. 15, 16. 28 And a <sup>y</sup> curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

29 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put <sup>z</sup> the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal.

30 *Are they not on the other side*

rain from you, which will be a sore judgment, quickly bringing a famine, whereby you will be wasted and consumed. Here, and elsewhere, heaven is compared to a great store-house, wherein God lays up his treasures of dew and rain, Job xxxviii. 22, the doors whereof God is said to open when he gives rain, and to shut when he withholds it.

Ver. 18. *Lay up these my words*—Let us all observe these three rules: 1, Let our hearts be filled with the word of God; let it dwell in us richly, in all wisdom, Col. iii. 16; and be laid up within us, as in a store-house, to be used upon all occasions. 2, Let our eyes be fixed upon it; Bind these words for a sign upon your hand—Which is always in view; and as frontlets between your eyes—Which you cannot avoid the sight of. 3, Let our tongues be employed about the word of God, especially with our children, who must be taught this, as far more needful than the rules of decency, any branch of human learning, or the calling they are to live by.

Ver. 21. *As the days of heaven*—As long as the heaven keeps its place, and continues its influences upon the earth. Thus the Psalmist says of the son of David, the Messiah, His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

Ver. 24. *Every place*—Not absolutely, as the Jewish

Rabbis fondly imagine, but in the promised land, as the sense is restrained in the following words; either by possession or by dominion, namely, upon condition of your obedience. *From the wilderness of Sin*—On the south of Canaan, and Lebanon, on the north. *From Euphrates*—On the east. So far the right of dominion extended, but that their sins cut them short; so far, however, Solomon extended his dominion. *Unto the uttermost sea*—The Mediterranean, on the west.

Ver. 26. *I set before you*—I propose them to your consideration and your choice. So that if a curse should be your portion, instead of a blessing, and you should be in a calamitous and miserable, and not in a prosperous and happy condition, you must thank yourselves for it. This he explains more at large in the 28th chapter. And the whole historical part of the Old Testament bears witness that God caused a blessing or a curse to attend them according as they observed or broke his laws.

Ver. 28. *Other gods which ye have not known*—With which you have no acquaintance, and of whose power, and wisdom, and goodness, you have no experience, as you have had of mine.

Ver. 29, 30. *Put*—Heb. *Thou shalt give*; that is, speak, or pronounce, or cause to be pronounced. This is more



**A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.** Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down, in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal, <sup>a</sup> beside the plains of Moreh?

**a Gen. 12.  
6. Judges  
7. 1.**

**b Ch. 9. 1.  
Josh. 1. 11.** 31 <sup>b</sup> For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.

**c Ch. 5. 32.  
& 18. 32.** 32 And ye shall observe <sup>c</sup> to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.

CHAP. XII.

*A command to destroy all relics of idolatry, ver. 1—3. To worship God in his own place, and according to his own appointment, ver. 4—14. A permission to eat flesh, but not blood, ver. 15, 16. Directions to eat the tithe in the holy place, and to take care of the Levite, ver. 17—19. A farther permission to eat flesh, but not blood, ver. 20—25. A direction to eat holy things in the holy place, ver. 26—28. Farther cautions against idolatry, ver. 29—32.*

**a Ch. 6. 1.** **THESE** <sup>a</sup> are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the

particularly expressed Deut. xxvii. 12, 13. *Over against*—Looking toward Gilgal, though at some considerable distance from it. *Beside the plains of Moreh*—This was one of the first places that Abraham came to in Canaan. So that in sending them thither to hear the blessing and the curse, they were reminded of the promise made to Abram in that very place, Gen. xii. 6, 7.

CHAP. XII. Ver. 1. *These are the statutes*—Moses being still deeply impressed with a sense of the great danger his nation would be in of falling into idolatrous practices, after their settlement in the promised land, in the neighbourhood of so many superstitious nations, begins here a new exhortation to them, reminding them of the laws provided against it, as the indispensable conditions of their happy and peaceable enjoyment of that fruitful country.

Ver. 2—4. *Ye shall destroy all the places*—Temples, chapels, altars, groves, as appears from other scriptures. *Green tree*—As the Gentiles consecrated divers trees to their false gods, so they worshipped these under them. *Pillars*—Upon which their images were set. *Names*—That is, all the memorials of them, and the very names given to the places from the idols. *Not do so*—That is, not worship him in several places, mountains, and groves.

Ver. 5. *To put his name there*—That is, to set up his worship there, and which he shall call by his name, as his house, or his dwelling-place; namely, where the ark should

LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee <sup>a</sup> to possess it, <sup>b</sup> all the days that ye live upon the earth. **A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.** **b Ch. 4. 10.  
1 Kings 6.  
40.**

2 <sup>c</sup> Ye shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall <sup>d</sup> possess served their gods, <sup>e</sup> upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: **c Ex. 31. 18.  
Ch. 7. 5.** **d 2 Kings  
16. 4. &  
17. 10,  
J. r. 3. 6.  
e Num. 33.  
52. Judg.  
9. 2.  
Heb.  
break  
down.**

3 And <sup>e</sup> ye shall <sup>f</sup> overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.

4 ¶ <sup>f</sup> Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God. **f Ver. 31.**

5 ¶ But unto the place which the LORD your God shall <sup>g</sup> choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: **g Ver. 11.  
Ch. 26. 9.  
Josh. 9.  
27. Kings  
6. 29.  
2 Chro. 7.  
12. Ps. 76.  
68.**

6 And <sup>h</sup> thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your <sup>i</sup> tithes, and heave-offerings of your hand, and your **h Lev. 17.  
2.** **i Ver. 17.  
Ch. 14. 22.  
& 15. 19.**

be, the tabernacle, or temple: which was first Shiloh, and then Jerusalem. There is not one precept in all the law of Moses so largely inculcated as this, to bring all their sacrifices to that one altar. And how significant was this appointment! They must keep to one place, in token of their belief, that there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man. It not only served to keep up the notion of the unity of the Godhead, but the one only way of approach to God, and communion with him in and by his Son.

Ver. 6. *Thither bring your burnt-offerings*—Which were wisely appropriated to that one place, for the security of the true religion, and for the prevention of idolatry and superstition, which might otherwise more easily have crept in; and to signify that their sacrifices were not accepted for their own worth, but by God's gracious appointment, and for the sake of God's altar, by which they were sanctified, and for the sake of Christ, whom the altar manifestly represented. *Your heave-offerings*—That is, your first-fruits, of corn, and wine, and oil, and other fruits. And these are called the heave-offerings of their hand, because the offerer was first to take these into his hands, and to heave them before the Lord, and then to give them to the priest. *Your free-will offerings*—Even your voluntary oblations; which were not due by my prescription, but only by your own choice: you may choose what kind of offerings you please to offer, but not the place where you shall offer them.



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

vows, and your free-will-offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks :

k Ch. 14. 28.

7 And <sup>k</sup>there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and <sup>l</sup>ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

<sup>l</sup> Ver. 14, 15. Lev. 23. 40. Ch. 16. 11, 14. & 26. 11. & 27. 2.

8 Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, <sup>m</sup>every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes :

<sup>m</sup> Judg. 17. 6. & 21. 25.

9 For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you.

n Ch. 11. 31.

10 But *when* <sup>n</sup>ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and *when* he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety ;

<sup>o</sup> Ver. 5, 14, 18, 21, 26. & Ch. 14. 23. & 15. 20. & 16. 2, &c. & 17. 8. & 19. 6. & 23. 14. & 26. 2. & 31. 11. Josh. 18. 1. 1 Kings. 8. 29. Ps. 78. 68.

11 Then there shall be <sup>o</sup>a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there: thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and all <sup>†</sup>your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD :

<sup>†</sup> Heb. the choice of your voice.

<sup>p</sup> Ver. 7.

12 And <sup>p</sup>ye shall rejoice before the

A. M. 2553.  
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LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as <sup>q</sup>he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

<sup>q</sup> Ch. 10. 9. & 14. 29.

13 <sup>r</sup>Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest :

<sup>r</sup> Lev. 17. 4.

14 <sup>s</sup>But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

<sup>s</sup> Ver. 11.

15 ¶ Notwithstanding <sup>t</sup>thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee :

<sup>t</sup> Ver. 11.

<sup>u</sup>the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, <sup>v</sup>as of the roebuck, and as of the hart.

<sup>u</sup> Ver. 22.

<sup>x</sup> Ch. 14. 5. & 15. 22.

16 ¶ <sup>y</sup>Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.

<sup>y</sup> Gen. 9. 4. Lev. 7. 26. & 17. 10. Ch. 15. 23. & Ver. 23. 24.

17 ¶ Thou mayest not eat within thy gates thy tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds, or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy free-will-offerings, or heave-offering of thy hand :

<sup>z</sup> Ver. 11, 19. & Ch. 14. 23.

18 <sup>z</sup>But thou must eat them be-

Ver. 7. *There*—Not in the tabernacle or temple, where only the priests might eat the most holy things, Num. xviii. 10, but in the court of the tabernacle, or in some place adjacent to the sanctuary. *Ye shall eat*—Your part of the things mentioned, ver. 6. *Before the Lord*—In the place of his peculiar presence, where his sanctuary shall be. *And ye shall rejoice*—For God is to be served with delight and gladness, and his worship ought to be a source of consolation to us; and it will be such, if we worship him in spirit and truth. *In all that you put your hand unto*—In all your possessions and labours whatsoever, which shall otherwise be accursed to you.

Ver. 8. *That we do here*—Where the inconveniency of the place, and the uncertainty of their abode, would not permit exact order in sacrifices, and feasts, and ceremonies, which therefore God was then pleased to dispense with; but, saith he, he will not do so there. *Right in his own eyes*—Not

that universal liberty was given to all persons to worship how they listed: but in many things their unsettled condition gave opportunity to do so.

Ver. 11. *His name*—His majesty and glory, his worship and service, his special and gracious presence. *Your choice vows*—Heb. *the choice of your vows*; that is, your select or chosen vows; so called, because things offered for vows were to be perfect, whereas defective creatures were accepted in free-will offerings. *Your daughters*—Hence it appears, that though the males only were obliged to appear before God in their solemn feasts, yet the women also were permitted to come.

Ver. 13. *Thy burnt-offerings*—Nor the other things mentioned above, this one and most eminent kind being put for all the rest.

Ver. 17. *Within thy gates*—That is, in your private habitations, here opposed to the place of God's worship.

<sup>A.M. 2533.  
B. C. 1451.</sup> fore the LORD thy God in the place where the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

<sup>a Ch. 14. 27.  
Eccl. 7. 31.  
† Heb. all thy days.</sup> 19 ¶ Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite † as long as thou livest upon the earth.

<sup>b Gen. 15. 18. & 26. 14. Ex. 34. 24. Ch. 11. 21. & 19. 8.</sup> 20 ¶ When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, <sup>b</sup> as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

21 If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

<sup>c Ver. 15.</sup> 22 <sup>c</sup> Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.

<sup>d Ver. 16.  
† Heb. be strong.  
e Gen. 9. 4.  
Lev. 17. 11, 14.</sup> 23 ¶ <sup>d</sup> Only † be sure that thou eat not the blood: <sup>e</sup> for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.

24 Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water.

<sup>f Ch. 4. 40.  
Is. 3. 10.</sup> 25 Thou shalt not eat it; <sup>f</sup> that it

<sup>A.M. 2533.  
B. C. 1451.  
g Ex. 15. 26.  
Ch. 13. 18. Kings 11. 38.</sup> may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, <sup>g</sup> when thou shalt do *that which is right* in the sight of the LORD.

26 ¶ Only thy <sup>b</sup> holy things which thou hast, and <sup>i</sup> thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose:

27 And <sup>k</sup> thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God: and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh.

28 Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, <sup>l</sup> that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest *that which is good and right* in the sight of the LORD thy God.

29 ¶ When <sup>m</sup> the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou <sup>†</sup> succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;

30 Take heed to thyself <sup>n</sup> that thou be not snared <sup>†</sup> by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.

31 <sup>o</sup> Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every <sup>†</sup> abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for

Ver. 20, 21. *Enlarge thy border*—Which will make it impossible to bring all the cattle thou usest to the tabernacle. *if the place be too far*—Being obliged to carry their sacrifices to the place of worship, they might think themselves obliged to carry their other cattle thither to be killed. They are therefore released from all such obligations, and left at liberty to kill them at home, whether they lived nearer that place, or farther from it; only the latter is here mentioned, as being the matter of the scruple. *As I have commanded*—In such a manner as the blood may be poured forth.

Ver. 22. *As the roe-buck*—As common or unhallowed food. They might eat of such cattle as were appointed for sacrifices, no less than of those not so appointed. *The unclean*—Because there was no holiness in such meat, for which the unclean might be excluded from it.

Ver. 27. *Thou shalt eat the flesh*—Excepting what shall be burned to God's honour, and given to the priest according to his appointment.

Ver. 30. *By following them*—By following the example they left, when their persons are destroyed.

<sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1451.</sup> <sup>p</sup> even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

<sup>p Lev. 18. 21. & 20. 9. Ch. 18. 10. Jer. 31. 35. Es. 24. 37. q Ch. 4. 2. & 13. 18. Josh. 1. 7. Prov. 30. 6. Rev. 22. 18.</sup> **32** What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: <sup>q</sup>thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

CHAP. XIII.

*Laws concerning the punishment of false prophets, ver. 1—5. Enticers to idolatry to be stoned, ver. 6—11. Idolatrous cities to be entirely destroyed, ver. 12—18.*

<sup>a Zech. 10. 2. b Matt. 24. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 9. c Ch. 18. 22. Jer. 28. 9. Matt. 7. 21.</sup> **I**F there arise among you a prophet, or a <sup>a</sup> dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, **2** And <sup>c</sup>the sign or the wonder

come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

**3** Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God <sup>d</sup>proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

**4** Ye shall <sup>e</sup>walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and <sup>f</sup>cleave unto him.

**5** And <sup>e</sup>that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to

<sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1451.</sup>

<sup>d Ch. 8. 2. Matt. 21. 24. 1 Cor. 11. 19. 2 Thes. 2. 11. Rev. 13. 14. e 2 Kings 23. 3. 2 Chro. 31. 31.</sup>

<sup>f Ch. 10. 20. & 30. 20. Ch. 18. 20. Jer. 14. 15. Zech. 13. 2.</sup>

CHAP. XIII. Ver. 1. Moses, foreseeing how liable the Israelites; in after ages, would be to be deluded by false prophets, who, under pretence of divine revelations, or communications of divine power, while indeed they were assisted by no other than wicked and infernal spirits, might foretel some future events, or work some wonderful and unaccountable things as demonstrations of their false doctrine, and thereby persuade others to join in their idolatrous worship, here proceeds to shew how such false pretenders to divine inspiration might be known, and lays down a law, according to which they were to be dealt with. *If there arise among you*—One of your own nation, for such might both be seduced, and afterwards become seducers of others: *A prophet*—That is, a false prophet, one who falsely pretends to have received a divine message. *Or a dreamer of dreams*—One that pretends some god has revealed himself to him in visions or dreams: *And giveth thee a sign*—Foretels some future and wonderful events as a sure sign thereof; as the prophets of Jehovah were wont to do, 1 Sam. x. 2—7; 1 Kings xiii. 3. It must be observed that *sign* and *wonder* here signify the same thing, and comprehend all miracles whatsoever, whether the foretelling of something that is out of the reach of human knowledge, or the performing some work that exceeds human power.

Ver. 2, 3. *And the sign or wonder come to pass*—God permitting Satan or his agents to do what is above the ordinary course of nature for thy trial. *Saying, Let us go after other gods*—That is, who, upon the sign's coming to pass, which he gave thee to confirm his doctrine, would persuade thee to go after other gods. *Thou shalt not hearken unto that prophet*—Shalt not receive his doctrine; but, though the event confirm the prediction, thou shalt look upon him as a liar, and teacher of false doctrine. *For the Lord your God proveth you*—That is, trieth your faith, love, and obedience, and examineth your sincerity by your constancy in his service, in opposition to all temptations to desert it. *To know*—Or make known publicly and openly, viz. that both you and others may know and see it, in order that the justice of his dispensations towards you, whether in judgment or mercy,

may be evident and glorious. The reasonableness of what Moses here enjoins is manifest. For the existence and infinite perfections of the *one living and true God*, the truth and goodness of his religion, and the authority of his laws being already so fully demonstrated by evidences of all kinds, evidences continued, and beyond all exception; and on the contrary, the gods of the heathen being so evidently either non-entities or false pretenders to divinity, and their worship so full of absurdity, folly, and the worst kinds of wickedness, it was not to be thought that a mere miracle, or a number of miracles or wonders, for the performance of which, if really performed, they could not account, or the fulfilling of a prediction, by any opposer of the true God, was a sufficient reason why they should abandon God's worship; call in question the truth of his religion, or go after any other god. Moses properly teaches them that the true divinity of miracles and wonders ought to be judged of by the doctrines, designs, and purposes, for the abetting and confirming whereof they were wrought; that every pretender to miracles, who would seduce men to false and irrational principles of religion, was to be looked upon as an impostor, and notwithstanding all he could do or say, they were steadily to adhere to the service of him who had given them so many proofs that he, and he alone, was the true God, and to his religion and worship, which had been so amply confirmed: concluding that God, by permitting such impostors, intended only to try their faith and sincerity—Compare 1 Cor. xii. 3, 1 John iv. 1—6. We may infer from hence that the attempts of the Roman Catholics to prove their peculiar doctrines by miracles are vain; for they ought first to shew them to be agreeable to reason and religion, before they attempt to prove them by miracles. For so long as they appear contrary to reason and Scripture, and repugnant to common sense, it will never be in the power of miracles, how numerous and stupendous soever, to establish the truth of them. Far less of their pretended miracles, which are nothing else but mere tricks and impostures.

Ver. 5. *Because he hath spoken*—Taught, or persuaded you, *to turn you away from the Lord*—To induce you to

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1461.  
† Heb.  
spoken  
recoil  
against  
the  
LORD.

h Ch. 17. 7.  
& 22. 21.  
24. 1 Cor.  
5. 13.  
i Ch. 17. 2.

k Gen. 16.  
5. Ch. 38.  
54. Prov.  
5. 20.  
Mich. 7.  
5.  
l 1 Sam. 18.  
1. 3. & 10.  
17.

m Prov. 1.  
10.

death; because he hath †spoken to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. <sup>h</sup>So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.

6 ¶ <sup>i</sup>If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or <sup>k</sup>the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, <sup>l</sup>which *is* as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;

7 *Namely*, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the *one* end of the earth even unto the *other end* of the earth;

8 Thou shalt <sup>m</sup>not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him;

forsake God and his worship. This shews that the most certain character of a true prophet is to be taken from his doctrine, rather than from his miracles. *To thrust thee out of the way*—This phrase denotes the great force and power of seducers to corrupt men's minds. *So shalt thou put the evil away*—Thou shalt remove the guilt, by removing the guilty.

Ver. 6. *The son of thy mother*—This is added, to restrain the signification of the word *brother*, which is often used generally for one near a-kin, and to express the nearness of the relation, the mother's side being usually the ground of the most fervent affection. *Thy daughter*—Thy piety must overcome both thy affection and thy compassion to the weaker sex. The father and mother are here omitted, because they are sufficiently contained in the former examples.

Ver. 8. *Neither shall thine eye pity him*—The reason of the thing shews that two circumstances are implied: One is, that the seducer should be convicted by two sufficient witnesses before he should be put to death; the other, that the offender obstinately persisted in the defence of idolatry in spite of admonition; for who can doubt but a father, for instance, might save the life of his son, in case he brought him to timely repentance? *Neither shalt thou conceal him*—That is, smother his fault, hide or protect his person; but shalt accuse him to the magistrate, and demand justice upon him.

9 But <sup>n</sup>thou shalt surely kill him; <sup>o</sup>thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

10 ¶ And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of †bondage.

11 And <sup>p</sup>all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you.

12 ¶ <sup>q</sup>If thou shalt hear *say* in one of thy cities, which the LORD thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying,

13 *Certain men*, ||the children of <sup>r</sup>Belial, <sup>s</sup>are gone out from among you, and have <sup>t</sup>withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known;

14 Then shalt thou enquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, *if it be truth, and the thing*

A.M. 2653.  
B.C. 1461.  
n Ch. 17. 5.  
o Ch. 17. 7.  
Acts 7. 59.

† Heb.  
bondmen.  
p Ch. 17. 12.  
& 19. 30.

q Josh. 22.  
11. 2c.  
Judg. 20.  
1.

Or.  
naughty  
men:  
Judg.  
19. 22.  
1 Sam. 2.  
12. & 25.  
17. 25.  
1 Kings  
21. 10, 12.  
2 Cor. 6.  
15.  
r 1 John 2.  
19. Jude  
19.  
s 9 Kings  
17. 21.  
t Ver. 3. 6.

Ver. 9—11. *Thou shalt surely kill him*—Not privately, a permission to do which under pretence of the party's being guilty of the crime in question, would have opened the door to innumerable murders, but by procuring his death through the sentence of the magistrate. *Thine hand shall be first upon him*—As the witness of his crime: for he was to be stoned to death, and the accuser was to throw the first stone, together with the witnesses, chap. xvii. 7. This law, at first sight, may appear too great a trial to humanity, but it is indeed no more than requiring a compliance with that plain principle of religion and morality to sacrifice all private considerations to the glory of God, and good of mankind. *All Israel shall hear and fear*—The law, though severe, yet was just and necessary, and calculated to preserve the body of the people from the contagion of idolatry.

Ver. 13. *Certain men, children of Belial*—So the most profligate and worthless are called in Scripture. The expression properly signifies persons *without yoke*, lawless, and rebellious, that will suffer no restraint, that neither fear God nor reverence man. *Are gone out from you*—Have separated themselves from you in point of religion, and carry themselves stubbornly and presumptuously herein.

Ver. 14. *Then thou shalt enquire*—This is meant of the magistrate, to whose office this properly belonged, and of whom he continues to speak in the same manner, *thou, ver.*

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

certain, *that* such abomination is wrought among you ;

15 ¶ Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, <sup>u</sup>destroying it utterly, and all that *is* therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.

<sup>u</sup> Ex. 22. 20.  
Lev. 27.  
28. Josh.  
6. 17, 31.

16 And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt <sup>x</sup>burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God: and it shall be <sup>y</sup>an heap for ever; it shall not be built again.

<sup>x</sup> Josh. 6.  
24.

<sup>y</sup> Josh. 8. 26.  
1a. 17. 1.  
& 25. 2.  
Jer. 49. 2.

17 And <sup>z</sup>there shall cleave nought of the ||cursed thing to thine hand: that the LORD may <sup>a</sup>turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, <sup>b</sup>as he hath sworn unto thy fathers ;

<sup>z</sup> Ch. 7. 26.  
Josh. 6. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Or, decret-  
ed.

<sup>a</sup> Josh. 6.  
26.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. 22.  
17. & 18.  
4. 9. & 28.  
14.

18 When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, <sup>c</sup>to keep all his commandments which

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 19. 25.  
28, 32.

I command thee this day, to do *that which is right* in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

## CHAP. XIV.

Directions, concerning mourning, ver. 1, 2. Concerning clean and unclean meats, ver. 3—21. Concerning tithes, ver. 29.

**Y**E are <sup>a</sup>the children of the LORD your God: <sup>b</sup>ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 8.  
16. & 9. 8.  
26. Gal. 3.  
26.

<sup>b</sup> Lev. 19.  
28. & 31.  
5. Jer. 16.  
6. & 41. 5.  
& 47. 5.  
1 Thes. 4.  
13.

2 <sup>c</sup>For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that *are* upon the earth.

<sup>c</sup> Lev. 30.  
26. Ch. 7.  
6. & 48.  
19, 19.

3 ¶ <sup>d</sup>Thou shalt not eat any <sup>e</sup>abominable thing.

<sup>d</sup> Ez. 4. 14.  
Acts 10.  
15.

4 ¶ <sup>e</sup>These *are* the beasts which ye shall eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat,

<sup>e</sup> Lev. 11.  
2, &c.

5 The hart, and the roebuck, and

15, and ver. 16. The Jewish writers say, the defection of a city was to be tried by the great sanhedrim. If it appeared that they were thrust away to idolatry, they were to send two learned men to admonish them. If they repented, all was well; if not, all Israel was to go up and execute this sentence. Though we do not find this law put in execution, in all the history of the Jewish church, yet for neglecting the execution of it on inferior cities, God himself, by the army of the Chaldeans, executed it on Jerusalem, the head city, which was utterly destroyed, and lay in ruins for seventy years.

Ver. 15. *The inhabitants*—Namely, all that were guilty, not the innocent part, such as disowned this apostasy, who doubtless by choice, at least upon warning, would come out of so wicked a place. *Utterly*—The very same punishment which was inflicted upon the cities of the cursed Canaanites, to whom, having made themselves equal, in sin, it was but just God should equal them in punishment.

Ver. 16, 17. *For the Lord*—For the satisfaction of God's justice, the maintenance of his honour and authority, and the pacification of his offended majesty. *It shall not be built*—It shall be an eternal monument of God's justice, and terror to after-ages. *Multiply thee*—So thou shalt have no loss of thy numbers by cutting off so many people.

CHAP. XIV. Ver. 1. *Ye are the children of the Lord your God*—Ye are not only the creatures, and the offspring, but the peculiar people, the worshippers, the servants, and

those of you that are truly pious, the adopted children of Jehovah, the one living and true God, who is *your God* in covenant; and therefore you should not dishonour him, your heavenly Father, nor disparage yourselves by unworthy or unbecoming practices, such as here follow; and whom you must not disobey. *Ye shall not cut yourselves*—This was the practice of idolaters, both in the worship of their idols and in their funerals, as also upon occasion of public calamities. *For the dead*—Through excessive sorrow for your dead friends, as if you had no hope of their happiness after death, 1 Thes. iv. 13; see on Lev. xix. 28. These furious expressions of mourning for the dead, subsist at this day in some of the eastern countries, see on Gen. i. 10. But nothing surely can be more unbecoming the sons of God and heirs of immortality than thus to sorrow, like those who expect no life after this. *Nor make any baldness between your eyes*—On the fore part of your heads, Lev. xxi. 5, just over the space that is between your eyes.

Ver. 2. *Thou art an holy people*—Since you have the honour to be separated to God as a peculiar people, by laws different from those of all other nations, it behoves you to act suitably to the dignity of your privileges, and to beware of defiling yourselves with any such heathenish rites or practices as are either impious or absurd. *Any abominable thing*—Unclean and forbidden by me, which therefore should be abominable to you, see on Lev. xi.

Ver. 5. *The pygarg*—A kind of goat. *And the chamois*—Heb. צמר, *zemer*, which Bochart takes for that kind of goat

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1451.  
† Or, *blason*.  
† Heb.  
*dishon*.

the fallow-deer, and the wild goat,  
and the  $\parallel$ pygarg, and the wild ox,  
and the chamois.

6 And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat.

7 Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; as the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof; therefore they are unclean unto you.

8 And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

9 ¶ These ye shall eat of all that are in the waters: all that have fins and scales shall ye eat:

10 And whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye may not eat; it is unclean unto you.

11 ¶ Of all clean birds ye shall eat.

12 <sup>h</sup>But these are they of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,

13 And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind,

14 And every raven after his kind,

15 And the owl, and the night

hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind,

16 The little owl, and the great owl, and the swan,

17 And the pelican, and the gier eagle, and the cormorant,

18 And the stork, and the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

19 And every creeping thing that lieth is unclean unto you: <sup>k</sup>they shall not be eaten.

20 But of all clean fowls ye may eat.

21 ¶ Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: <sup>m</sup>for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, <sup>n</sup>Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

22 ¶ Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

23 ¶ And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

24 ¶ And if the way be too long

f Lev. 11. 26.

f Lev. 11. 9.

h Lev. 11. 13.

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1451.

i Lev. 11. 20.  
k Lev. 11. 21.

i Lev. 17. 15.  
& 22. 6.  
k Ez. 4. 14.

m Ver. 2.

n Ex. 23. 19.  
& 34. 26.

o Lev. 27. 30. Ch. 13. 6, 17.  
p Neh. 10. 37.

p Ch. 12. 5, 6, 7, 17.

q Ch. 15. 19.

which is called in Latin *Rupicapra*, or mountain-goat, from the Arabic, *zamaru*, to bound like a roe.

Ver. 13. *And the glede*—Heb. *הראה*, *haraah*, a bird of the vulture kind, which evidently has its name from its sharp sight. This is omitted in Leviticus.

Ver. 21. *Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself*—The blood being in it rendered it unlawful to be eaten. *Proselytes of the gate*—Not being obliged to observe these laws, or mere Gentiles, who might happen to be in their country, might eat such meat. But those who were termed *proselytes of righteousness*, i. e. circumcised Gentiles, who had embraced the Jewish religion, were bound to abstain from such food as much as the native Jews.

Ver. 22, 23. *Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed*—There were three sorts of tithes to be paid from the

people, beside those from the Levites to the priests; 1, To the Levites for their maintenance, Lev. xxvii. 30—33; Numb. xviii. 21. These were to be eaten where they dwelt, ver. 31, and therefore to be paid there. 2, For the Lord's feasts and sacrifices, to be eaten by the offerers at Jerusalem: these are here intended. 3, Besides these two, there was to be every third year a tithe for the poor, to be eaten at their own dwellings, ver. 28, 29. *That thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God*—That thou mayest not only be accustomed to the worship of Jehovah thy God, but mayest become truly pious. For the fear of God was taught in that place of his public worship, and the very presenting themselves before him was a good mean to keep them in awe of him.

Ver. 24, 25. *When the Lord thy God hath blessed thee*—

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ch. 12. 24. for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

25 Then shalt thou turn *it* into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:

26 And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,

Heb. ask-  
eth of  
thee.  
Ch. 12. 7.  
19. & 26.  
11.  
Ch. 12. 12.  
16.  
Num. 18.  
20. Ch. 18.  
1. 27 And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.

Ch. 26. 12.  
Amos 4. 4. 28 ¶ At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay *it* up within thy gates:

29 And the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ch. 26. 12.  
Ver. 27.  
Ch. 12. 12.

Ch. 16. 10.  
Prov. 3.  
9, 10. Mal.  
3. 10.

CHAP. XV.

*Orders concerning the release of debts every seventh year, ver. 1—6. Concerning lending, ver. 7—11. Concerning the release of servants, ver. 12—18. Concerning the firstlings, ver. 19—23.*

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.

Ex. 21. 2.  
& 23. 10.  
Lev. 25.  
2, 4. Ch.  
31. 10.  
Jer. 34.  
14.

2 And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth *ought* unto his neighbour shall release *it*; he shall not exact *it* of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.

Heb.  
master of  
the lend-  
ing of his  
hand.

3 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact *it* again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;

Ch. 23. 20.

Hath given thee so great an increase that the tenth thereof is more than thou canst carry to the sanctuary. *Bind up the money in thine hand*—That is, in a bag, to be taken in thine hand, and carried with thee.

Ver. 26. *Thou shalt bestow that money, &c.*—This was an injunction to the Israelites, to use a part of their income in hospitality; to rejoice in the goodness of God, when they came before his presence; to acknowledge he was the author of all their blessings, and to gladden the hearts of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, by entertaining them; thus imitating God's goodness to themselves, by acts of kindness to others. *Thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God*—The comfortable and cheerful using of what God hath given us, with temperance and sobriety, is really the honouring of God with it. Contentment, holy joy, and thankfulness, make every meal a religious feast.

Ver. 27, 28. *The Levite—thou shalt not forsake him*—Thou shalt give him a share in such tithes, or in the product of them. *At the end of three years*—That is, in the third year, as it is expressed, Deut. xxvi. 12. *The same year*—That is added to shew that he speaks of the third year, and not of the fourth, as some might conjecture from the preceding phrase, *at the end of three years*.

Ver. 29. *The stranger, the fatherless, and the widow*—For this tithe was not to be spent merely in feasting them-

selves, but for the relief of such as were in want, who otherwise might have been compelled to beg, or to serve strangers, and thereby be in danger of being perverted from their religion.

CHAP. XV. Ver. 1. *At the end of every seven years*—When the seventh year comes, which is the end or last of the seven, ver. 9, and 12. This termed here, *the year of release*, was the Sabbatical year, spoken of Exod. xxiii. 11; Lev. xxv. 4. This wisdom of the Hebrew constitution provided for a release of all debts and servitudes every seventh year, that the Jewish nation might not moulder away from so great a number of free subjects into a condition of slaves, see on Lev. xxv.

Ver. 2. *Every creditor that lendeth ought shall release it*—This cannot be meant of money lent to those who had borrowed it, for the purchase of lands, trade, or other improvements, and who were able to pay; for nothing could have been more absurd than to have extinguished such debts, whereby the borrower was enriched. But it must be understood of money lent to an Israelite who was in poor circumstances, as appears from ver. 4. According to this law, every poor Israelite who had borrowed money, and had not been able to pay it before, should this year be released from it. And though, if he were able, he was bound in conscience



**4** || Save when there shall be no poor among you; <sup>a</sup>for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:

**5** Only <sup>d</sup>if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

**6** For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and <sup>a</sup>thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and <sup>f</sup>thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

**7** ¶ If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, <sup>e</sup>thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

**8** <sup>b</sup>But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth.

**9** Beware that there be not a

† thought in thy † wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine <sup>i</sup>eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and <sup>k</sup>he cry unto the LORD against thee, and <sup>l</sup>it be sin unto thee.

**10** Thou shalt surely give him, and <sup>m</sup>thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that <sup>n</sup>for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

**11** For <sup>o</sup>the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in the land.

**12** ¶ And <sup>p</sup>if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

**13** And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:

to pay it afterwards, yet it could not be recovered by law. *His brother*—This is added to limit the word *neighbour*, which is more general, unto a *brother*, in nation and religion, an Israelite. *The Lord's release*—Or, a release for the Lord, in obedience to his command, for his honour, and as an acknowledgment of his right in your estates, and of his kindness in giving and continuing them to you.

Ver. 4. *Save when there shall be no poor*—The words may be rendered thus, as in the margin of our Bibles, *To the end that there be no poor among you*. And so they contain a reason of this law; namely, that none be impoverished and ruined by a rigid exaction of debts. *For the Lord shall greatly bless thee*—If in this and other things you be obedient, God will so abundantly bless you that you shall be well able to forbear the requiring of your debts on the Sabbatic year.

Ver. 7, 8. *Thou shalt not shut thy hand from thy poor brother*—Because this law might tend to make some people cautious and niggardly in lending to the poor, as being assured they should lose the debt at the seventh year, if it were not paid before; or, upon this account might make them sparing of their charities in other matters; Moses here cautions them against being influenced by so mean a principle, and charges every Israelite to look upon his poor

neighbour as a brother, equally related to God as himself, who therefore would be sure to punish all uncharitableness to such as were his own people, as he would be to bless and reward those who, with a generous and bountiful heart, gratefully depended on his providence, and obeyed his commands. *Open thine hand*—That is, deal bountifully and liberally with him.

Ver. 9, 10. *Beware*—Suppress the first risings of such uncharitableness. *And thine eye be evil*—Envious, unmerciful, unkind, as this phrase means, Prov. xxiii. 6, i. e. thou grudge to relieve him. The opposite to this is a *bountiful eye*, Prov. xxii. 9. *And it be sin unto thee*—Charged upon thee as a sin. *Thine heart shall not be grieved*—That is, thou shalt give, not only with an open hand, but with a willing and cheerful mind, without which, thy very charity is uncharitable, and not accepted by God.

Ver. 11. *The poor shall never cease*—God, by his providence, will so order it, partly for the punishment of your disobedience, and partly for the trial and exercise of your obedience to him, and charity to your brother.

Ver. 12. *If thy brother be sold*—Either by himself or his parents, or as a criminal. *Six years*—To be computed from the beginning of his servitude, which is every where limited to the space of six years.

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451.  
Or, To the end that there be no poor among you.  
Ch. 28. 8.

Ch. 28. 1.

Ch. 28. 12.  
44.

Ch. 28. 13.  
Prov. 22.  
9.

1 John 3.  
17.

Lev. 25.  
26. Matt.  
5. 42.  
Luke 6.  
34.

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451.  
Heb. word.  
Heb. Bethal.  
Ch. 28. 54.  
66. Prov.  
25. 6. &  
25. 24.  
Matt. 20.  
15.  
Ch. 24. 15.  
Matt. 25.  
41, 42.

2 Cor. 9.  
9, 7.

Ch. 14. 29.  
& 24. 19.  
Ps. 41. 1.  
Prov. 24.  
9.

Matt. 26.  
11. Mark  
14. 7.  
John 7. 9.

Ex. 21. 2.  
Lev. 25.  
39. Jer.  
34. 14.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

q Prov. 10.  
22.r Ch. 5. 15.  
& 16. 12.

15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

s Ex. 21. 5.  
6.

16 ¶ And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee:

17 Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.

18 It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

t Is. 16. 14.  
& 21. 16.u Ex. 13. 2.  
& 34. 19.  
Lev. 27.  
26. Num.  
3. 12.

19 ¶ All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work

with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

20 \* Thou shalt eat it before the LORD thy God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

x Ch. 12. 5,  
6, 7, 17.  
& 14. 23.  
& 16. 11,  
14.

21 \* And if there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God.

y Lev. 22.  
20, Ch. 17.  
1. Eclus.  
35. 12.

22 Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: \* the unclean and the clean person shall eat it alike, as the roebuck, and as the hart.

z Ch. 12. 15.  
22.

23 \* Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.

a Ch. 12. 16.  
23.

## CHAP. XVI.

*A repetition of the laws concerning the passover, ver. 1—8. The feast of pentecost, ver. 9—12. That of tabernacles, ver. 13—15. All the males are to attend them, ver. 16, 17. An appointment of judges and officers, ver. 18—20. A caution against groves and images, ver. 21, 22.*

**O**BERVE the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

a Ex. 12. 2.  
&c.b Ex. 13. 4.  
& 34. 18.c Ex. 12. 29.  
42.

2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice

Ver. 15—17. *The Lord redeemed thee*—And brought thee out with riches, which, because they would not, God gave thee as a just recompense for thy service; and therefore thou shalt follow his example, and send out thy servant furnished with all convenient provisions. *For ever*—All the time of his life, or, at least, till the year of jubilee. *Likewise*—That is, either dismiss her with plenty, or engage her to perpetual servitude, in the same manner and by the same rites.

Ver. 19, 20. *All the firstling males thou shalt sanctify*—Giving them to God on the eighth day. And thou shalt do no work with the female firstlings of the cow, nor shear those of the sheep. Even these must be offered to God as peace-offerings, or used in a religious feast. *Year by year*—Namely, in the solemn feasts, which returned upon them every year.

idolatry, Moses proceeds to inculcate upon them a strict regard to the most exact observance of the three great annual festivals, appointed by their law to be celebrated at the stated place of national worship, these being designed for this very end, to keep the people steady to the profession and practice of the religion of the one true God. The first of these feasts was the Passover, with that of unleavened bread; comprehending the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, with other sacrifices and oblations prescribed for each day of that whole week during which it was to continue. Of which see on Exod. xii. and xiii. *Observe the month of Abib*—Or of new fruits, which answers to part of our March and April, and was, by a special order from God, made the beginning of their year, in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt. *By night*—In the night Pharaoh was forced to give them leave to depart, and accordingly they made preparation for their departure, and in the morning they perfected the work.

Ver. 2, 3. *Thou shalt sacrifice the passover*—Strictly so

CHAP. XVI. Ver. 1. As a further preservative against

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1451. the passover unto the LORD thy God,  
d Num. 28.  
19.  
e Ch. 19. 5, e  
26. of the flock and <sup>d</sup> the herd, in the  
place which the LORD shall choose  
to place his name there.

f Ex. 19. 15,  
19, 39, &  
18. 3, 7, &  
34. 18. 3 Thou shalt eat no leavened  
bread with it; seven days shalt thou  
eat unleavened bread therewith, *even*  
the bread of affliction; for thou  
camest forth out of the land of  
Egypt in haste; that thou mayest  
remember the day when thou camest  
forth out of the land of Egypt all  
the days of thy life.

g Ex. 13. 7. 4 <sup>e</sup> And there shall be no leavened  
bread seen with thee in all thy coast  
seven days; <sup>h</sup> neither shall there *any*  
*thing* of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst  
the first day at even, remain  
all night until the morning.

i Or, kill. 5 Thou mayest not || sacrifice the  
passover within any of thy gates,  
which the LORD thy God giveth  
thee:

6 But at the place which the LORD

thy God shall choose to place his  
name in, there thou shalt sacrifice  
the passover <sup>i</sup> at even, at the going  
down of the sun, at the season that  
thou camest forth out of Egypt.

7 And thou shalt <sup>k</sup> roast and eat  
*it* <sup>l</sup> in the place which the LORD thy  
God shall choose: and thou shalt  
turn in the morning, and go unto  
thy tents.

8 Six days thou shalt eat unlea-  
vened bread; and <sup>m</sup> on the seventh  
day *shall be* a † solemn assembly to  
the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no  
work *therein*.

9 ¶ <sup>n</sup> Seven weeks shalt thou  
number unto thee: begin to number  
the seven weeks from *such time as*  
thou beginnest *to put* the sickle to  
the corn.

10 And thou shalt keep the feast  
of weeks unto the LORD thy God  
with a || tribute of a freewill-offering <sup>o</sup>  
of thine hand, which thou shalt give

called; which was the paschal lamb: The sheep and oxen  
here mentioned were additional sacrifices which were to be  
offered in the seven days of the paschal solemnity, Numb.  
xxviii. 18. Indeed the passage may be rendered, *Thou shalt  
therefore observe the feast of the passover unto the Lord  
thy God with sheep and with oxen.* Bread of affliction—So  
called, because it was not pleasant nor easily digested and  
was appointed to be used to put them in mind of their afflic-  
tions and miseries in Egypt, and of their coming out from  
thence in haste, being allowed no time to leaven or prepare  
their bread.

Ver. 5, 6. *Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within  
any of thy gates*—That is, of thy cities, as that word often  
signifies, see Gen. xxii. 17, and xxiv. 60. *But at the place  
which the Lord shall choose*—And in no other place. The  
reason of this is evident: the passover itself was a sacrifice;  
hence Christ as our passover is said to be sacrificed for us,  
1 Cor. v. 3; and many other sacrifices, as we have just seen,  
were to be offered during the seven days of the feast. Now  
no sacrifice was accepted but from the altar that sanctified  
it. It was therefore necessary that they should go up to  
the place of the altar; for though the paschal lamb was  
entirely eaten by the owners in their separate apartments,  
yet it must be killed in the court of the tabernacle or tem-  
ple, its blood sprinkled, and its inwards burned upon the  
altar. Besides, by confining them to the *appointed place*, he  
kept them to the *appointed rule*, from which they would have  
been apt to vary, and to introduce foolish inventions of their  
own had they been permitted to offer these sacrifices within

their own gates, from under the inspection of the priests.  
Add to this, that being appointed to attend where God had  
chosen to place his name, they were hereby directed to have  
their eye up to him in the solemnity, and *the desire of their  
hearts towards the remembrance of his name*, and were pointed  
to the place where the Messiah, the true passover, was to be  
slain. *At even*—*At the season that thou camest out of Egypt*  
—That is, about the time thou wast preparing to come out.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt turn in the morning*—The words are  
only a permission, not an absolute command. After the so-  
lemnity was over, they might return to their several places of  
abode. Some think they might return, if they pleased, the  
very morning after the paschal lamb was killed and eaten, the  
priests and Levites being sufficient to carry on the rest of the  
week's work. But this is evidently a mistake; for the first  
day of the seven was so far from being the day of their dis-  
persion, that it was expressly appointed for a *holy convoca-  
tion*. Nor was it their practice to disperse on that day, but to  
keep together the whole week, 1 Chron. xxxv. 17. The mean-  
ing, therefore, is, as the paraphrase of Jonathon expounds it,  
*In the morning, after the end of the feasts, thou shalt go  
to thy tents*—That is, *thy dwellings*, which Moses calls here  
*tents*, referring to their present state, and to put them in  
mind afterwards, when they were settled in better habita-  
tions, that there was a time when they dwelt in tents.

Ver. 8. *Six days*—That is, besides the first day on which  
the passover was killed. So that in all, unleavened bread  
was eaten seven days.

Ver. 9, 10. *Thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn*

<sup>A.M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1451.</sup> unto the LORD thy God, ° according  
<sup>o Ver. 17.</sup>  
<sup>1 Cor. 16.</sup> ing as the LORD thy God hath  
<sup>2.</sup> blessed thee :

<sup>p Ch. 19. 7.</sup>  
<sup>12, 18.</sup>  
<sup>Ver. 14.</sup> 11 And <sup>p</sup>thou shalt rejoice before  
the LORD thy God, thou, and thy  
son, and thy daughter, and thy man-  
servant, and thy maid-servant, and  
the Levite that is within thy gates,  
and the stranger, and the fatherless,  
and the widow, that are among you,  
in the place which the LORD thy  
God hath chosen to place his name  
there.

<sup>q Ch. 13. 15.</sup> 12 ° And thou shalt remember  
that thou wast a bondman in Egypt:  
and thou shalt observe and do these  
statutes.

<sup>r Ex. 23. 16.</sup>  
<sup>Lev. 23.</sup>  
<sup>24. Num.</sup>  
<sup>29. 18.</sup> 13 ¶ Thou shalt observe the feast  
of tabernacles seven days, after that  
thou hast gathered in thy † corn and  
thy wine :

<sup>† Heb.</sup>  
<sup>floor, and</sup>  
<sup>thy wine-</sup>  
<sup>press.</sup>  
<sup>2 Neh. 8. 9.</sup>  
<sup>&c.</sup> 14 And ° thou shalt rejoice in thy  
feast, thou, and thy son, and thy  
daughter, and thy man-servant, and  
thy maid-servant, and the Levite,  
the stranger, and the fatherless, and

—To reap the first-fruits of the barley harvest, the wave sheaf, in particular, which was offered to the Lord on the sixteenth day of that month. *Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks*—So called, because it was seven weeks after the bringing the sheaf at the passover, that is, fifty days, whence it was termed Pentecost, (see on Lev. xxiii. 16.) It was also called the feast of first-fruits, Numb. xxviii. 26. *With a tribute of free-will-offering*—Over and besides the sacrifice for the day, and the two loaves and sacrifices with them, Numb. xxviii. 27—31. Lev. xxiii. 17—20. God here directs that they should make some voluntary oblation.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman*—This is added to shew, 1, That to remind them of this was one principal end of this feast. 2, As a motive to engage them to a cheerful obedience to all the other commands of God. 3, To induce them to regard their poor servants and strangers in this feast.

Ver. 14—16. *Thou shalt rejoice*—In God, and in the effects of his favour, serving and praising him with a glad heart. *Shall all thy males appear before the Lord*—That is, from twenty to fifty years of age. The women were not obliged to be present at these solemnities; 1, Because the weakness of their sex rendered them unable to bear so long a journey as many of them would have had to take, without more fatigue than would have been consistent with their health. 2, Because the care of their children and servants

the widow, that are within thy gates.

<sup>t Lev. 23.</sup>  
<sup>39.</sup> 15 ° Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

<sup>u Ex. 23. 14.</sup>  
<sup>17. & 34.</sup>  
<sup>23.</sup> 16 ¶ ° Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and ° they shall not appear before the LORD empty :

<sup>x Ex. 23. 15.</sup>  
<sup>& 34. 20.</sup>  
<sup>Ecdl. 36.</sup>  
<sup>4.</sup> 17 Every man shall give † as he is able, ° according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

<sup>y Ver. 10.</sup>  
<sup>z Ch. 1. 16.</sup>  
<sup>1 Chro. 23.</sup>  
<sup>4. & 26.</sup>  
<sup>29. Chro.</sup>  
<sup>19. b. 3.</sup> 18 ¶ ° Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

demanded their presence at home. 3, Because they were represented in the men. No doubt the chief intention of these sacred feasts was to promote piety towards God, and mutual love towards each other, among the Israelites. By the various solemn services in which they were engaged at these seasons, their minds would be awakened to a sense of the infinite importance of religion, and excited to reverence, and stand in awe of the divine Majesty, while many would be inspired unfeignedly to praise and love the author of all their mercies. By being brought so often together from all parts of the country, their acquaintance with, and regard for each other, would be both continued and increased, and the bond of union among them, as a community, greatly strengthened. Thus also they would be preserved from the idolatrous rites and superstitious practices of their heathen neighbours, and their attachment to their own happy constitution, both civil and religious, would be confirmed.

Ver. 18. *Judges*—Chief magistrates, to examine and determine causes and differences. *Officers*—Who were subordinate to the other to bring causes and persons before them, to acquaint people with the sentence of the judges, and to execute their sentence. *Thy gates*—Thy cities, which he here calls gates, because there were the seats of judgment set. Pursuant to this law, in every town which contained above a hundred and twenty families, there was a court of twenty-three judges; in the smaller towus, a court of three judges.

A. M. 2552.  
E. C. 1451.  
a Ex. 23. 2,  
6. Lev. 19.  
1b.  
b Ch. 1. 17.  
Prov. 24.  
23.  
c Ex. 23. 8.  
Prov. 17.  
23. Eccl.  
7. 1.  
Ecclus.  
20. 29.  
d Or, mat-  
ters.  
† Heb. Jus-  
tice, jus-  
tice.  
d Ez. 19. 5,  
9.  
e Ex. 34. 13.  
1 Kings  
14. 15. &  
16. 31.  
2 Kings  
17. 16. &  
21. 3.  
2 Chro. 33.  
3.  
f Lev. 26. 1.  
g Or, statue,  
or, pillar.

19 <sup>a</sup>Thou shalt not wrest judg-  
ment; <sup>b</sup>thou shalt not respect per-  
sons, <sup>c</sup>neither take a gift: for a gift  
doth blind the eyes of the wise, and  
pervert the || words of the righteous.

20 †That which is altogether just  
shalt thou follow, that thou mayest  
<sup>d</sup>live, and inherit the land which the  
LORD thy God giveth thee.

21 ¶ <sup>e</sup>Thou shalt not plant thee  
a grove of any trees near unto the  
altar of the LORD thy God, which  
thou shalt make thee.

22 †Neither shalt thou set thee  
up *any* || image; which the LORD  
thy God hateth.

CHAP. XVII.

*A charge, concerning sacrifices, ver. 1. Concerning putting idolaters to death, ver. 2—7. Concerning the decision of causes by the sanhedrim, ver. 8—13. Concerning the choice and duty of a king, ver. 14—20.*

a Ch. 15. 21.  
Mat. 1. 2,  
13.  
† Or, goat.

**T**HOU <sup>a</sup>shalt not sacrifice unto  
the LORD thy God *any* bul-  
lock, or || sheep, wherein is blemish,  
or any evil-favouredness: for that is

an abomination unto the LORD thy  
God.

2 ¶ <sup>b</sup>If there be found among <sup>b</sup>Ch. 12. 6.  
you, within any of thy gates which  
the LORD thy God giveth thee, man  
or woman, that hath wrought wick-  
edness in the sight of the LORD thy  
God, <sup>c</sup>in transgressing his covenant,

3 And hath gone and served other  
gods, and worshipped them, either  
<sup>d</sup>the sun, or moon, or any of the  
host of heaven, <sup>e</sup>which I have not  
commanded;

4 †And it be told thee, and thou  
hast heard of *it*, and enquired dili-  
gently, and, behold, *it be true, and*  
the thing certain, *that* such abomi-  
nation is wrought in Israel:

5 Then shalt thou bring forth that  
man or that woman, which have com-  
mitted that wicked thing, unto thy  
gates, *even* that man or that woman,  
and <sup>e</sup>shalt stone them with stones,  
till they die.

6 <sup>b</sup>At the mouth of two witnesses,  
or three witnesses, shall he that is  
worthy of death be put to death; *but*

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
b Ch. 12. 6.  
c Josh. 7.  
11. 15. &  
23. 16.  
Judg. 2.  
20. 9 Kings  
16. 12.  
Hos. 9. 1.  
d Ch. 4. 19.  
Job 31. 6.  
Jer. 7. 9,  
31. & 19,  
5. & 22.  
33.  
e Ch. 13. 12.  
14.  
f Lev. 24.  
14, 16. Ch.  
13. 10.  
Josh. 7.  
25.  
g Num. 35.  
20. Ch. 19.  
15. Matt.  
18. 16.  
John 8.  
17. 2 Cor.  
13. 1.  
1 Tim. 5.  
19. Heb.  
10. 28.

CHAP. XVII. Ver. 1. Having spoken of the principal services and offerings prescribed in the law for preventing the Israelites from idolatrous practices, Moses interposes a caution against neglect or profaneness in their own worship of the true God; which might be committed by offering any beast to him that had a disease, blemish, or defect in it. See in Lev. i. 3. *Bullock or sheep*—Either greater or smaller sacrifices, all being comprehended under the two most eminent kinds. All that God receives he requires to be perfect.

Ver. 2. *In transgressing his covenant*—That is, in idolatry, as it is explained, ver. 3, which is called a transgression of God's covenant made with Israel, both because it was a breach of their faith given to God and of that law which they covenanted to keep; and because it was a dissolution of that matrimonial covenant with God, a renouncing of God and his worship, and a choosing other gods.

Ver. 3. *The host of heaven*—Those glorious creatures, which are to be admired as the wonderful works of God, but not to be set up in God's stead. By condemning the most specious of all idolatries, he intimates how absurd a thing it is to worship stocks and stones, the works of men's hands. *I have not commanded*—That is, I have forbiddeu. Such negative expressions are emphatical.

Ver. 6. *Witnesses*—Namely, credible and competent wit-

Ver. 19, 20. *Thou shalt not wrest judgment*—Not give a forced and unjust sentence. *Thou shalt not respect persons*—Not give sentence according to the quality of the person, his riches or poverty, friendship or enmity, but according to the justice of the cause. *A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise*—Biases his mind, that he cannot discern between right and wrong. *And pervert the words of the righteous*—That is, the sentence of those judges who are inclined and used to do righteous things, and have the reputation of being righteous men; it makes them give a wrong judgment. *That which is altogether just*—Heb. *righteousness, righteousness*, doubling the expression to give it emphasis; that is, nothing but righteousness in all causes and times, and to all persons equally.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt not plant thee a grove*—To plant groves in honour of the true God, was a part of primitive worship, as we see by the example of Abraham, Gen. xxi. 33. But the Gentiles having abused this custom, and made trees and groves, dedicated to their idols, the scenes of the most vile and abominable superstitions, God saw fit to prohibit the Israelites from planting any such groves near the place of divine worship, lest they should have taken occasion from hence to blend the worship of idols, and the impure rites of heathenism with the service of the true God.

**A. M. 2553.**  
**B. C. 1451.** at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

**i** **Ch. 13. 9.**  
**Acts 7. 55.** **7** <sup>i</sup>The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So <sup>k</sup>thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

**k** **Ver. 12.**  
**Ch. 13. 5.**  
**& 19. 19.**

**l** **2Chro. 19.**  
**10. Hag.**  
**2. 11.**  
**Mal. 2. 7.**  
**m** **Ex. 21.**  
**13, 20, 27,**  
**28. A 23.**  
**2. Num.**  
**35. 11, 16,**  
**19. Ch. 19.**  
**4. 10.**  
**n** **Ch. 12. 5.**  
**& 19. 17.**  
**Ps. 122. 5.** **8** ¶ If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, <sup>m</sup>between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, *being* matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, <sup>n</sup>and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose;

**o** **Jer. 19.**  
**15.** **9** And <sup>o</sup>thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and <sup>p</sup>unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; <sup>q</sup>and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:

**p** **Ch. 19. 17.**

**q** **Ex. 44. 24.**

**A. M. 2554.**  
**B. C. 1451.** **10** And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the LORD shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee:

**11** According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, *to* the right hand, nor *to* the left.

**12** ¶ And <sup>r</sup>the man that will do presumptuously, <sup>†</sup>and will not hearken unto the priest <sup>‡</sup>that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and <sup>t</sup>thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.

**r** **Num. 15.**  
**30. Ezra**  
**10. S. Hos.**  
**4. 4.**  
**†** **Heb. motto**  
**hearken.**  
**‡** **Ch. 13. 9.**  
**7.**

**t** **Ch. 13. 5.**

nesses. The Jews rejected the testimonies of children, women, servants, familiar friends, or enemies, persons of dis-solute lives, or evil fame.

**Ver. 7. First upon him**—God thus ordered it, for the caution of witnesses, that, if they had, through malice or wrath, accused him falsely, they might now be afraid to imbrue their hands in innocent blood; and for the security and satisfaction of the people in the execution of this punishment.

**Ver. 8. If there arise a matter too hard for thee**—These words are to be considered as addressed to the ordinary judges, or inferior magistrates, who were appointed in every city. *Between blood and blood*—That is, in capital cases, whether a man hath committed wilful or casual murder. *Between plea and plea*—In civil causes, about words or estates, when the question is, whose cause or plea is the better? *Between stroke and stroke*—In criminal causes; in the case of wounds or blows inflicted by one man upon another, of which see **Exod. xxi. 20.** *Being matters of controversy*—That is, such things being doubtful, and the magistrates being divided in their opinions about them. *Thou shalt get thee unto the place which the Lord shall choose*—Namely, to set up his tabernacle or temple there; because there was the abode, both of their Sanhedrim, which was constituted of priests and civil magistrates, and of the high-priests, who were to consult God, by Urim, in matters which could not be decided otherwise.

**Ver. 9. Unto the priests**—That is, unto the great council, which consisted chiefly of the priests and Levites, as being the best expositors of the laws of God, by which all those controversies were to be decided. And the high-priest was commonly one of that number, comprehended here under *the priests*, whereof he was the chief. *By judges* here, seems

to be meant those supreme judges of the nation, whom God raised up when the Israelites were oppressed by their enemies, such as Gideon, Jephthah, Sampson, Samuel, &c. Such judges were, by their office, invested with the highest authority, civil as well as military; for to judge Israel was to administer justice, as well as to command armies. Moses seems to intimate, that the Hebrew commonwealth was to retain, after his death, the same form as it had now when he was alive; for he himself was the supreme judge, or administrator of justice, to whom the more difficult causes were to be referred, **chap. i. 17.** So Joshua was judge after him, and many others.

**Ver. 10—12. Thou shalt do according to the sentence**—He speaks, 1, To the inferior magistrates, who, in the suits here referred to, between man and man, were to give sentence in their lower courts, according to the decision of the great council, or of the supreme judge, and were to take care that the sentence should be carried into execution; and, 2, To private persons, who, in such cases, are required to acquiesce in the judgment of those whom God had made the supreme interpreters of his law, and to conform themselves to the sentence passed. *The man that will do presumptuously*—If an inferior judge should presume to contradict the sentence of the higher court, given according to God's law, and would not execute the orders of it; or if a private person should refuse to conform himself to their sentence, that contumacy was to be punished with death, though the matter were ever so small in which the opposition was made. For, unless the parties concerned had been strongly bound to obey the definitive sentence of the judge, priest, or great council, in such matters, there would have been no end of strife. *And thou shalt put away the evil*—The evil thing, that scandal, that pernicious example.

A. M. 9553.  
B. C. 1451.  
u Ch. 13. 11.  
& 19. 20.

13 <sup>u</sup>And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

14 ¶ When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, <sup>x</sup>I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that *are* about me;

15 Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, <sup>y</sup>whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* <sup>z</sup>from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother.

16 ¶ But he shall not multiply <sup>a</sup>horses to himself, nor cause the people <sup>b</sup>to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as <sup>c</sup>the LORD hath said unto you, <sup>d</sup>Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that <sup>e</sup>his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

Ver. 13. *When thou shalt say, I will set a king over me*—He only foresees and foretels what they would do, but does not hereby signify that he should approve of it. Yea, when they did this thing, for the very reason here assigned, God declared his utter disapprobation of it.

Ver. 15. *Whom the Lord thy God shall choose*—Approve of, or appoint. So it was in Saul and David. God reserved to himself the nomination both of the family and of the person. *Thy brethren*—Of the same nation and religion; because such a person was most likely to maintain true religion, and to rule with righteousness, gentleness, and kindness to his subjects; and that he might be a fit type of Christ, their supreme King, who was to be one of their brethren.

Ver. 16. *He shall not multiply horses*—Though he might have horses for his own use, yet he was not to have many horses for his officers and guard, much less for war, lest he should trust in them. The multiplying horses is also forbidden, lest it should raise too great a correspondence with Egypt, which furnished Canaan with them. *The Lord hath said*—The Lord hath now said to me, and I, by his command, declare it to you. *Ye shall no more return that way*—Into Egypt, lest ye be again infected with her idolatries.

Ver. 17. *Neither shall he multiply wives to himself*—As the manner of other kings was, contrary to the design of God from the beginning. *That his heart turn not away*—From

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
f 2 Kings  
11. 12.

18 <sup>f</sup>And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of <sup>g</sup>that *which is* before the priests the Levites;

19 And <sup>h</sup>it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he <sup>i</sup>turn not aside from the commandment, *to* the right hand, or *to* the left: to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*Rules concerning Priests and Levites, ver. 1—8. Cautions against witchcraft, ver. 9—14. A promise of Christ, ver. 15—19. The punishment and mark of a false prophet, ver. 20—22.*

God and his law, as Solomon's did. *Neither silver nor gold*—Lest this should lift up his heart in confidence and pride, which God abhors, and beget in him a contempt of his people. They are not simply forbidden to be rich, if God made them so, which was the case of David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, and some others; but they are forbidden, either inordinately to desire, or irregularly to procure great riches, by grinding the faces of their own subjects, or possessing themselves, contrary to justice, of the property of others.

Ver. 18, 19. *He shall write*—With his own hand, say the Jews. *Out of that which is before the priests*—Out of that original, which was carefully kept by the priests in the sanctuary, that it might be a perfect copy, and that it might have the greater influence upon him, coming to him as from the hand and presence of God. *He shall read therein*—Diligently and constantly; neither the greatness of his place, nor the weight and multitude of his business, shall excuse or hinder him. *All the days of his life*—It is not enough to have Bibles, but we must use them, yea, use them daily. Our souls must have constant meals of that manna, which, if well digested, will afford them true nourishment and strength.

Ver. 20. *That his heart be not lifted up*—He intimates, that the Scriptures, diligently read, are a powerful means to keep a person humble, because they shew him, that, though a king, he is subject to a higher monarch, to whom he must



A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.  
a Num. 19.  
20. & 26.  
62. Ch.  
10. 9.

b Num. 18.  
8. 1 Cor.  
9. 13.

c Lev. 7. 30.  
—34.

d Ex. 22. 29.  
Num. 18.  
12, 24.

e Ex. 25. 1.  
Num. 3.  
10.

**T**HE priests the Levites, and all the tribes of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance.

2 Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren: the LORD is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them.

3 ¶ And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep; and they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw.

4 <sup>d</sup>The first-fruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

5 For <sup>e</sup>the LORD thy God hath

chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

6 And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourned, and come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the LORD shall choose;

7 Then he shall minister in the name of the LORD his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, which stand before the LORD.

8 ¶ They shall have like portions to eat, beside that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.

9 ¶ When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.  
f Ch. 10. 8.  
& 17. 12.

g Num. 33.  
2.  
h Ch. 19. 5.

i 2 Chro. 21.  
2.

k 2 Chro. 31.  
4. Neh.  
12. 44, 47.  
Heb. his  
sales by  
the fa-  
thers.

l Lev. 18.  
26, 30. Ch.  
19. 29, 31.

give an account of all his administrations, and receive from him his sentence, agreeable to their quality, which is sufficient to abate the pride of the haughtiest person in the world.

CHAP. XVIII. Ver. 1. *His inheritance*—The Lord's portion or inheritance, which God had reserved to himself, as tithes and first-fruits, and other oblations distinct from those which were made by fire.

Ver. 3. *The maw*—The Hebrew word here rendered *maw*, or *stomach*, may have another signification; and some render it the *breast*, others take it for the part which lies under the breast.

Ver. 6. *With all the desire of his mind*—With full purpose to fix his abode, and to spend his whole time and strength in the service of God. It seems, the several priests were to come from their cities to the temple by turns, before David's time; and it is certain they did so after it. But if any one of them was not contented with this attendance upon God in his tabernacle, and desired more entirely and constantly to devote himself to God's service there, he was permitted so to do, because this was an eminent act of piety, joined with self-denial, to part with those great conveniences which he enjoyed in the city of his possession.

Ver. 8. *Like portions*—With their brethren, who were in actual ministration: as they share with them in the work, so shall they in the encouragements. *Besides that which cometh*—The reason of this law was because he that waited on the altar, ought to live by the altar; and because it was fit he should keep his money, wherewith he might redeem what he sold, if afterwards he saw occasion for it. Mr. Henry adds a remarkable note here, especially considering

he wrote upwards of four-score years ago. "A hearty, pious zeal to serve God and his church, though it may a little encroach upon a settled order, and there may be somewhat in it that looks irregular, yet ought to be gratified, and not discouraged. He that loves dearly to be employed in the service of the sanctuary, in God's name, let him minister. He shall be as welcome to God as the Levites, whose course it is to minister, and should be so to them."

Ver. 10. *That maketh his son or daughter to pass through the fire*—By a superstitious dedicating, or a cruel sacrificing of them, see on Lev. xviii. 21. *That useth divination*—Of which there were many sorts, as is implied in the original expressions here קסם קסם, *kosem kesamin*, divining divinations, or with divinations. The meaning undoubtedly is, That seeketh to know or foretel things secret, or things to come, by unlawful arts and practices. *An observer of times*—Superstitiously pronouncing some days lucky and others unlucky: or, *an observer of the clouds*, or heavens; for the word מענן, *megnonen*, here used, may be derived from ננן, *gnanan*, a cloud. And then it means, *That divineth by the motion or figure of the clouds*, the appearance or passage of meteors, by thunder, lightning, by the stars, the flying or chattering of birds, and the like. Or, deriving the word from עין, *gnain*, an eye, *qui præstigiis utitur*, a juggler, one who causes things to assume a false appearance, practises illusions on people's fancies, or deceives them by sleight of hand. *An enchanter*—Or a conjecturer, that endeavours, or pretends, to discover hidden things by a superstitious use of words or ceremonies, by observation of water or smoke, or any contingencies. Or, as the original word seems to be derived from נחש, *nachash*, a serpent, it means one that divines by means of serpents, of which kind of diviners we

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1461.

m Lev. 18.  
21. Ch. 19.  
31.

n Lev. 19.  
26, 31. &  
20, 27. Is.  
8. 19.

o Lev. 20.  
27.

p 1 Sam. 28.  
7.

q Lev. 18.  
24. Ch. 9.

his daughter <sup>m</sup> to pass through the fire, <sup>n</sup> or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11 <sup>o</sup> Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a Necromancer.

12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the

LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13 Thou shalt be || perfect with the LORD thy God.

14 For these nations, which thou shalt || possess, hearkened unto observers of time, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

15 ¶ The LORD thy God will

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1461.

Or, upright, or, sincere, Gen. 17. 1.

Or, inherit.

r Ver. 18.  
John 1.  
45. Acts  
3. 22. &  
7. 37.

have many instances in the Heathen poets, particularly Homer and Virgil. A *witch*—Supposed to be in covenant with the devil, and by his help to delude people's senses, or hurt their persons, their cattle, or other property, through the use of evil arts. The same Hebrew word is translated *witch* also, Exod. xxii. 18, where it is evidently intended to be taken in the same sense as here. But Exod. vii. 11, Dan. ii. 2, and Mal. iii. 5, where it occurs in the plural number, it is translated *sorcerers*, and interpreted by Aben Ezra, of those who change and transform natural things, so as to deceive the eyes of the beholders. Le Clerc translates the word, *hariolus, soothsayer*, because it is joined in the Scriptures with other species of divination.

Ver. 11. *Or a charmer*—One that charmeth serpents or other creatures. Or, rather, as the Hebrew *חבר חבר, chober chuber*, seems to mean, *an astrologer*, or such as, by the conjunction of the planets, pretended to foretel the events of men's lives, or other future things. It must be observed, that the eastern people were much addicted to divination of all kinds, and undertook no enterprize of importance without consulting their soothsayers; and therefore Moses uses these sundry expressions that he might prohibit it in all its forms. *A consulter with familiar spirits*—The original words *שאל אוב, shoel ob*, are here rendered by the Seventy, *εγγαστριμυθος*, one that speaks out of his belly: but literally, it is one that consults or inquires of *Ob*. This word originally means a *bottle*, and was the name which the Hebrews gave to the spirit which was supposed to agitate these ventriloquists, because their bodies were violently distended, like leather bottles full of wine and ready to burst: see Doddridge on Acts xvi. 16; where both St. Paul and St. Luke evidently consider the girl spoken of, as being really possessed by what is there termed *πνευμα Πυθωνος*, a spirit of Python, or divination, because the Greeks supposed it to be an inspiration from their god Apollo, whom they termed *Pythius*.

*A wizard*—Heb. *a knowing man*, who by any forbidden ways undertakes the revelation of secret things. The Seventy render the word *παρασχομος, an observer of prodigies*. *A necromancer*—Heb. *One that seeketh unto the dead*, that calleth up and inquires of them, as the witch of Endor is represented to have done. Dr. Waterland, after the Seventy, renders it very properly, *one that consults the dead*—Their manner of doing this, is stated to have been by visiting their graves in the night, and there lying down and muttering certain words with a low voice, by which means they pretended to have communion with them by dreams, or by the

dead appearing to them. To this Isaiah has been thought to allude, chap. viii. 19, and xxix. 4.

Ver. 13, 14. *Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God*—Sincerely and wholly his, seeking him and cleaving to him, and to his word alone, and therefore abhorring all commerce and conversations with devils. *Hath not suffered thee so to do*—Hath not suffered thee to follow these superstitious and diabolical practices, as he hath suffered other nations to do, but hath instructed thee better by his word and spirit, and will more fully instruct thee by a great prophet.

Ver. 15. *Will raise up*—Will produce and send into the world in due time. *A prophet of thy brethren, like unto me*—These words are very remarkable, and deserve our very particular attention. Moses was now about to leave his people, and therefore informs them, for their comfort, that God would raise them up another prophet, who should speak unto them God's words, and instruct them in his will. He has been understood by many eminent persons as foretelling hereby that God would raise up a succession of prophets in the Jewish Church for the instruction of his people. And, perhaps, this interpretation is not to be altogether rejected, 1, Because this prediction is alleged here as a reason why they need not consult with diviners, as they should have prophets at hand to advise them whenever it was needful. 2, Because the prophet here spoken of, is opposed to the *false prophets*, and a general rule is hereupon given for the discovery of all succeeding prophets whether true or false, ver. 20—22. 3, Because, as is here threatened, whenever the people did not hearken to, and obey these prophets, God *required it of them*, punishing them repeatedly, and that in a singular manner, by the sword of their enemies, by famine, and by captivity, especially the captivity of the ten tribes under Shalmaneser the king of Assyria, and the captivity of Judah and Benjamin, by Nebuchadnezzar, with the awful calamities preceding and following.

The prediction, however, must of necessity be primarily interpreted of the Messiah. 1, Because the text speaks of *one prophet only*, in the singular number, and not of *many*. 2, Because the Messiah alone can with propriety be said to have been a prophet *like unto Moses*, it being simply denied, and that repeatedly, that any other prophet did, or should arise, like unto him, see chap. xxxiv. 10, Numb. xii. 6—8. God spake to the other prophets in dreams and visions, or by the appearance of angels, but he conversed with Moses in a free and familiar way, *mouth to mouth, and face to face*, as it is expressed, as a man converses with his friend,

A. M. 2513.  
B. C. 1451. raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Ch. 9. 10. 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb <sup>s</sup>in the day of the assembly, saying, <sup>t</sup>Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

Ch. 5. 23. 17 And the LORD said unto me, <sup>u</sup>They have well spoken that which they have spoken,

Ver. 15.  
John 1.  
45. Acts  
3. 22. & 7.  
27.  
1. & 61. 16.  
John 17.  
8.  
John 4.  
25. & 8.  
28. & 12.  
49.  
Acts 3. 2. 18 <sup>x</sup>I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and <sup>y</sup>will put my words in his mouth; <sup>z</sup>and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 <sup>a</sup>And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

A. M. 2557.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ch. 5. 12.  
Jer. 14.  
16. Zech.  
13. 2.  
Ch. 1. 1.  
Jer. 2. 9. 20 ¶ But <sup>b</sup>the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or <sup>c</sup>that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

22 <sup>d</sup>When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, <sup>e</sup>if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it <sup>f</sup>presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

## CHAP. XIX.

*Of the cities of refuge, ver. 1—10. Of wilful murderers, ver. 11—13. Of removing landmarks, ver. 14. Of witnesses, true, ver. 15, or false, ver. 16—21.*

**WHEN** the LORD thy God <sup>a</sup>hath cut off the nations, Ch. 19. 29.

Moses having his light in the divine will immediately from God, without the intervention of dreams, visions, or the appearance of angels. They only expounded and enforced the laws of God already given, none of them being, properly speaking, *lawgivers*, in the intermediate space between Moses and Christ. But Moses was properly a lawgiver, and that in a very extraordinary sense, delivering a law which was in general entirely new, and that with such authority and attestations from God, as had never been witnessed on earth before. Not many of these prophets wrought miracles, and those who did, can with no propriety be said to have resembled Moses in that respect. The first and the last of these instances of dissimilitude are particularly noticed in one of the passages above referred to. "There arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face; in all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt; and in all that mighty hand and great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel." Add to all this that Moses was a *mediator* and a *king* as well as a prophet, in the former of which characters, none of the ancient prophets resembled him, and none, except David, in the latter. But Christ was truly like him in all these greater, and in a variety of lesser respects. He was not only a Prophet, but a Priest and Mediator, a King and Lawgiver, and not only fully equalled, but infinitely surpassed Moses in the excellency of his ministry and work, the glory of his miracles, and in his familiar and intimate converse with God; being in *the bosom of the Father*, and the *wisdom and word of God incarnate*. 3, The awful threatening denounced in this passage, ver. 19, was most signally fulfilled with respect to those of the Jews that did

not hearken to this prophet: The Lord most terribly required it of them, and continues to require it. For wrath came upon them to the uttermost, 1 Thess. ii. 16, by the Roman armies, in the siege and destruction of their cities, and especially of Jerusalem their capital city, and the utter ruin of their country, and the sad effects of that wrath they have felt for upwards of seventeen hundred years, and continue to feel to this day. But, 4, What perfectly places the matter beyond all doubt, this prophecy is expounded by God himself, of Christ, and of Christ *alone*, in the New Testament, see Acts iii. 22, and vii. 37, John i. 45, and v. 45, 46, and vi. 14.

Ver. 22. *If the thing follow not*—Which he gives as a sign of the truth of his prophecy. *That is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken*—The falsehood of his prediction, shews him to be a false prophet. *He hath spoken it presumptuously*—Impudently, ascribing his own vain and lying fancies to the God of truth. For though the mere fulfilling of a sign, or working of a bare miracle, was not to be considered as sufficient of itself to establish a false and wicked doctrine, as is stated chap. xiii. 1—3; yet, on the other hand, a man that pretended to work a miracle, or predict a future event, in confirmation of a message said to be received from Jehovah, or from some other god, and who failed in the performance of the miracle, or the thing foretold not coming to pass, evidently proved himself to be an impostor. *Thou shalt not be afraid of him*—That is, of his predictions or threatenings, so as to be deterred thereby from doing thy duty in bringing him to deserved punishment.

CHAP. XIX. Ver. 1. From enforcing the laws enacted

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

† Heb. in-  
heriteth,  
or, pos-  
sesseth.

† Ex. 21. 13.  
Num. 35.  
10. 14.  
Josh. 20.  
2.

whose land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou †succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses ;

2 <sup>b</sup>Thou shalt separate three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

3 Thou shalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither.

c Num. 35.  
15. Ch. 4.  
42.

4 ¶ And <sup>c</sup>this is the case of the slayer, which shall flee thither, that he may live: Whoso killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not †in time past;

5 As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the †head slippeth from the †helve, and †lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; he shall flee unto one of those cities, and live:

† Heb. from yester-  
day the third  
day.

† Heb. iron-  
wood.

† Heb. findeth.

d Num. 35.  
12.

6 <sup>d</sup>Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the

way is long, and †slay him; where- as he *was* not worthy of death, inas- much as he hated him not †in time past.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

† Heb. smite him in life.  
† Heb. from yester-  
day the third  
day.

7 Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three cities for thee.

8 And if the LORD thy God <sup>e</sup>en- large thy coast, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers ;

e Gen. 15.  
18. Ch. 12.  
20.

9 If thou shalt keep all these com- mandments to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the LORD thy God, and walk ever in his ways; <sup>f</sup>then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three :

f Josh. 20.  
7.

10 That innocent blood be not shed in thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inherit- ance, and *so* blood be upon thee.

11 But <sup>g</sup>if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him †mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities:

g Ex. 21. 12.  
Ac. Num.  
35. 16. 24.  
Ch. 27. 24.  
Prov. 26.  
17.

† Heb. in  
use,

12 Then the elders of his city shall

against idolatry, and calculated to preserve and promote the purity of divine worship, Moses now proceeds to inculcate some important duties belonging to the second table, but not in any exact order, nor without interspersing some precepts respecting ceremonial matters. He begins with some regulations, appointed to secure the preservation of the most important part of the property of a fellow-creature, his life.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt separate three cities for thee*—There were to be six cities of refuge in all, but Moses had already appointed three on that side of Jordan where they now were. See Numb. xxxv. 14, 15, Deut. iv. 41. *In the midst of thy land*—That is, in the midst of the several parts or districts of thy land, or *within thy land*; for had they been all three in the very heart of the country, the very intention of them would have been counteracted: which was, that they should be so conveniently placed in several parts of the country, that men might easily and speedily flee to them.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt prepare thee a way*—Make a plain road to them, keep it in good repair, and distinguish it by evident marks, to prevent delays and mistakes, that the man- slayer might meet with no difficulty in escaping to the nearest city. *And divide the coasts of thy land*—Thy possessions

on the west of Jordan, into three equal parts, and in the central part of each, open a place of refuge, which being nearly at an equal distance, with respect to the inhabitants of that district, all might have the same benefit by it.

Ver. 8, 9. *If the Lord thy God enlarge thy coast*—As far as the Euphrates. *If thou shalt keep all these command- ments*—This shews that the promise of enlarging their border was conditional, and the condition not being performed, the promise was never accomplished, so that there was no need for three more cities of refuge. *This the Jewish writers themselves own: "Yet the holy blessed God,"* say they, *"did not command it in vain, for in the days of Messiah the Prince, they shall be added."* They expected it in the letter: but we know, it has in Christ its spiritual accomplish- ment. For the borders of the Gospel-Israel, are enlarged according to the promise: and in the Lord our righteous- ness, refuge is provided for all that by faith flee to him.

Ver. 12. *The elders of the city*—The city of the man- slayer. The sense is, that upon any information or suspicion of murder, laid against any one that had taken refuge in any of these cities, the magistrates of the town or district where the fact was committed, should send for the person out

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.

b Ch. 12. 8.  
& 25. 12. <sup>13</sup> h Thine eye shall not pity him, <sup>1</sup> but thou shalt put away *the guilt* of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

i Num. 35.  
23. Ch. 91.  
9. 1 Kings  
2. 31. <sup>14</sup> ¶ k Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

k Ch. 97. 17.  
Job 24. 9.  
Prov. 22.  
29. Hoe.  
3. 10. <sup>15</sup> ¶ l One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

l Num. 35.  
30. Ch. 17.  
6. Matt.  
18. 16.  
John 8.  
17. 2 Cor.  
13. 1.  
1 Tim. 5.  
19. Heb.  
10. 28. <sup>16</sup> ¶ If a false witness m rise up against any man to testify against him || *that which is wrong*;

m Ps. 97.  
12. & 35.  
11. <sup>17</sup> Then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, <sup>n</sup> before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;

n Or, fall-  
ing away. <sup>18</sup> And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if

the witness *be* a false witness, *and* hath testified falsely against his brother;

o Prov. 19.  
5, 9. Dan.  
6. 24.  
Hist. Sus.  
69.  
Ch. 13. 5.  
& 17. 7.  
& 21. 21.  
& 22. 21.  
24. & 24.  
7.  
Ch. 17.  
13. & 21.  
31. <sup>19</sup> ° Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so <sup>p</sup> shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

<sup>20</sup> ¶ And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

r Ver. 12. <sup>21</sup> ¶ And thine eye shall not pity; *but* <sup>s</sup> life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

CHAP. XX.

*The exhortation of the priest to them who were going to battle, ver. 1—4. The dismissal of them who were engaged in business, or faint-hearted, ver. 5—9. How they were to treat distant cities, ver. 10—15. The cities of the Canaanites, ver. 16—18. Fruit-trees not to be destroyed, ver. 19, 20.*

**W**HEN thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest <sup>a</sup> horses, and chariots, *and* <sup>a</sup> people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God *is* <sup>b</sup> with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

of the Refuge-city, bring him to a fair trial, and, upon clear evidence of wilful murder, condemn him to death, and cause execution to be done without fear, partiality, or affection; as they valued the Divine blessing, and desired to be free of the guilt of innocent blood, which otherwise would be required at their hands.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark*—Having provided for the preservation of the lives of innocent persons, against such as might be disposed to take them away, he proceeds to give a charge for securing every man's right and property in other matters; and especially forbids all encroachments upon boundaries of lands and estates. Josephus considers this as a prohibition, not only against removing any land-mark of an Israelite, but also, any that might distinguish their territories from those of any of the neighbouring nations, with whom they might be at peace, the breaking in upon these bounds being generally the occasion of wars and insurrections, which arise from the covetousness of men, who would thus fraudulently enlarge their possessions.

Ver. 15—17. *One witness shall not rise up*—Or, *be established*, as the same word is rendered in the end of the

verse; that is, shall not be accepted or owned as sufficient. *If a false witness rise up*—A single witness, though he speak truth, is not to be accepted for the condemnation of another man; but if he be convicted of bearing false witness, it is sufficient for his own condemnation. *Both the men shall stand before the Lord*—That is, shall come to the supreme court, which consisted partly of priests, and partly of other great persons, who, it seems, in Moses's time, sat at the door of the tabernacle, and so the men, in standing before them, might properly be said to *stand before the Lord*.

Ver. 21. *An eye for an eye*—What punishment the law allotted to the accused, if he had been convicted, the same was the false accuser to bear.

CHAP. XX. Ver. 1. *When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies*—The land of Canaan being to be gained by conquest, in a war of God's special appointment; and the Israelites, after their settlement in it, being likely to be exposed to invasions from, or quarrels with the neighbouring nations, Moses judged it necessary to leave them some standing rules for their conduct in both these kinds of war. The first and great rule was, to commit their cause

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

2 And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people.

3 And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not you hearts † faint, fear not, and do not † tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them;

4 For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, ° to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

5 ¶ And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not <sup>d</sup>dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

6 And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet † eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.

7 ° And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

8 And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, 'What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart † faint as well as his heart.

9 And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies † to lead the people.

10 ¶ When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, ° then pro-

11 And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

† Heb. be tender.  
† Heb. make haste.c Ch. 1. 30.  
& 3. 22.  
Josh. 23. 16.

d Neh. 12. 37. Ps. 30. title.

† Heb. made it common: Lev. 19. 23, 24. Ch. 28. 30.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ch. 24. 5

Judg. 7. 5.

† Heb. melt.

† Heb. to be in the head of the people.

e Sam. 20. 15, 20.

to God, depending, with entire confidence, upon that divine power which had so often and so wonderfully delivered them, without the least fear or discouragement at the superior force or terrible appearance of their enemies. *And seest horses and chariots*—The armies of the Israelites consisted wholly of foot, and their law seems to have obliged them to continue so, in order that their reliance might be entirely on God, chap. xvii. 16. But the Egyptians, Canaanites, and other nations, had the advantage of horses and chariots, in which they placed their confidence. Thus the Psalmist, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." These chariots were sometimes armed with scythes, to rush in among the foot, and cut them down like grass, which made them very formidable. These are the *chariots of iron*, mentioned Judg. iv. 3.

Ver. 2. *The priest shall approach*—The Jews say there was a priest anointed for the purpose, whose office, as we may gather from Num. xxxi. 6, was to blow with the trumpet, when they were preparing for battle. And to *speak to the people*—Probably exhorting them in the most persuasive manner, to a courageous and undaunted performance of their duty, considering their cause as God's, and relying on his protection and aid.

Ver. 5, 6. *What man is there*—This and the following exceptions are to be understood only of a war allowed by God, not in a war commanded by God, not in the approach-

ing war with the Canaanites, from which even the bridegroom was not exempt, as the Jewish writers note. *Hath planted a vineyard*—This and the former dispensation were generally convenient, but more necessary in the beginning of their settlement in Canaan, for the encouragement of those who should build houses or plant vineyards, which were chargeable to them, and beneficial to the commonwealth. *Eaten of it*—Heb. made it common; namely, for the use of himself, and family, and friends, which it was not till the fifth year.

Ver. 7, 8. *Hath betrothed a wife*—The time allowed in this case was a year, Deut. xxiv. 5. This was a law of great humanity, that conjugal love might not be disturbed, but have time to knit into a firm and lasting affection. *What man is fearful and faint-hearted*—This fearfulness is to be understood, say the Jews, not only of a natural timorousness which is incident to some constitutions, and makes a man tremble at every danger, but of the adventitious terrors of a guilty conscience. For they did not, as is the modern fashion, send the wickedest and most worthless into the wars; but if they knew any man to be a notorious villain, they thrust him out of the army, lest his example should corrupt and discourage the rest of the soldiery.

Ver. 9. *They shall make captains*—Or rather, as the Hebrew is, *they shall set or place the captains of the armies, in the head or front of the people*, under their charge, that they may conduct them, and, by their example, encourage

<sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1651.</sup> 12 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:

13 And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, <sup>b Num. 31. 7.</sup> thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:

14 But the women, and the little ones, and <sup>i Josh. 8. 2.</sup> the cattle, and all that is in the city, *even* all the spoil thereof, shalt thou <sup>†</sup>take unto thyself; and <sup>† Heb. spoil. ‡ Josh. 22. 8.</sup> thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

15 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities *which are* very far off from thee, which *are* not of the cities of these nations.

<sup>1 Num. 31. 2, 3, 35. & 24. 57. Ch. 7. 1. Josh. 11. 14.</sup> 16 ¶ But <sup>1</sup>of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee *for* an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

17 But thou shalt utterly destroy them; *namely*, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:

<sup>m Ch. 7. 4. & 12. 30. 31. & 18. 9.</sup> 18 That <sup>m</sup>they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which

they have done unto their gods; so <sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1651.</sup> should ye <sup>a Ex. 22. 22.</sup> sin against the LORD your God.

19 ¶ When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an ax against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (||for the tree of the field is man's life) <sup>†</sup>to employ them in the siege:

20 Only the trees which thou knowest that they *be* not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until <sup>†</sup>it be subdued.

CHAP. XXI.

*The expiation of an uncertain murder, ver. 1—9.*  
*The usage of a captive taken to wife, ver. 10—14.*  
*The first-born not to be disinherited, ver. 15—17.*  
*A stubborn son to be put to death, ver. 18—21.*  
*Bodies of malefactors to be buried, ver. 22, 23.*

**I**F *one* be found slain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, *and* it be not known who hath slain him:

their soldiers. It is not likely they had their captain to make when they were just going to battle.

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt save alive nothing*—No human creature; for the beasts, some few excepted, were given for a prey. This slaughter of all the people, is to be understood, only in case they did not surrender when summoned, but rejected the conditions of peace when offered them. In which case, their condition was worse than that of any other people whose males only were to be slain, ver. 14.

Ver. 18. *That they teach you not to do after all their abominations*—Here is the great reason for the aforesaid severe execution; they were most abominable idolaters, who offered their children to Moloch; they were *magicians, wizards, necromancers*, and guilty of all those abominations and filthy lusts, mentioned Lev. xviii. So that God thought them not fit to live any longer upon the face of the earth; for had they been spared, after obstinately rejecting terms of peace, they would undoubtedly have sought to infect the

Israelites with their filthy idolatry; and it was mercy to the human race in general, not to suffer such a wicked, contagious generation to subsist. From the words here quoted, *That they teach you not, &c.* a Jewish writer justly observes, "If they repented and forsook their idolatry, the Israelites might let them live;" for then there was no such danger in sparing them. Accordingly Rahab, her father, mother, brethren, and all her kindred, were preserved alive, and so were the Hivites or Gibeonites, on condition of servitude, which they themselves offered, Josh. ix. 11—15. See Josh. xi. 11—20, Jer. xviii. 7, 8.

Ver. 19. *Thou shalt not destroy the trees*—Which is to be understood of a general destruction of them, not of cutting down some few of them, as the conveniency of the siege might require. *Man's life*—The sustenance or support of his life.

CHAP. XXI. Ver. 1—3. *Lying in the field*—Or, in the  
 3 T 2



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

2 Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which *are* round about him that is slain :

3 And it shall be, *that* the city *which is* next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, *and* which hath not drawn in the yoke ;

4 And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley :

5 And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for <sup>a</sup>them the LORD thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the LORD; and <sup>b</sup>by their <sup>†</sup>word shall every controversy and every stroke be *tried* :

6 And all the elders of that city,

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 10. 8.  
1 Chro. 23.  
18. Eccl.  
46. 15.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 17. 8.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb.  
mouth.

city, or any place: only the field is named, as the place where such murders are most commonly committed. *Thy elders and judges*—Those of thy elders who are judges: the judges or rulers of all the neighbouring cities. *Measure*—Unless it be evident which city is nearest; for then measuring was superfluous. *Which had not drawn in the yoke*—A fit representation of the murderer, in whose stead it was killed, who would not bear the yoke of God's laws. A type also of Christ, who was under no yoke but what he had voluntarily taken upon himself.

Ver. 4. *Unto a rough valley*—The Hebrew word *נַחַל*, *nachal*, here used, signifies either a valley, or a torrent; and most probably is here meant of a valley with a brook running through it. For, ver. 6, the elders are required to wash their hands over the heifer, which seems to intimate that there was running water in the place. *Which is neither eared nor sown*—Rough, uncultivated ground, fitly representing the horribleness of the murder. The Jews say, that unless, after this, the murderer was found, this valley was never to be tilled nor sown, which made the owners of the ground employ their utmost diligence to find out the murderer, that their land might not be waste for ever. But it is more natural to suppose, that such a rough and waste place was chosen partly, that the horridness of it might beget an horror of the murder, and of the murderer, and partly because the blood of the victim would have polluted cultivated ground. For, though not slain at the altar, this was a kind of expiatory sacrifice, whereby the land was to be purged from the legal pollution contracted by the murder; and such sacrifices rendered every person or thing unclean that touched them. *Shall strike off the heifer's neck*—To

*that are* next unto the slain man, <sup>c</sup>shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley;

7 And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen *it*.

8 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, <sup>d</sup>and lay not innocent blood <sup>d</sup>unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.

9 So <sup>e</sup>shalt thou put away the *guilt of* innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do *that which is* right in the sight of the LORD.

10 ¶ When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

11 And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
c Ps. 19. 18.  
& 26. 6.  
Matt. 27.  
24.

d Jon. 1. 14.  
† Heb. *in*  
*the midst*.

e Ch. 19. 13.

shew what they should and would have done to the murderer, if they had found him.

Ver. 5, 6. *By their word shall every controversy be tried*—That is, every one of this kind, every one that shall arise about any stroke, whether such a mortal stroke as is here spoken of, or any other, or wound given by one man to another. In these matters they shall give sentence, being consulted by the elders or judges of the cities, chap. xvii. 9, 12. *The elders shall wash their hands*—Protesting their innocence, says a learned Jewish writer, (Chazkuni) in these words: "As our hands are now clean, so are we innocent of the blood which has been shed." See an allusion to this, Psal. xxvi. 6, Matt. xxvii. 24.

Ver. 7, 8. *They shall answer*—To the priest who shall examine them. *Our hands have not shed this blood*—This about which the present inquiry is made; or this which is here present: for it is thought, the corpse of the slain man was brought into the same place where the heifer was slain. Nor have we seen or understood how, or by whom this was done. *Forgiven*—Though there was no moral guilt in this people, yet there was a ceremonial uncleanness in the land, which was to be expiated and forgiven.

Ver. 9. *So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood*—Till this was done, the guilt was to be looked upon as national: but upon this being solemnly performed, the government was deemed to have done its duty, and the nation to be cleared of all guilt in this matter. No doubt the chief end of the appointment of this ceremony was, to beget and preserve in the minds of men, an abhorrence of murder, and a care to prevent or detect it.

Ver. 11. *And hast a desire unto her*—Moses here return-

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;

12 Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and || †pare her nails;

Or, suffer to grow.  
† Heb. make, or, dress.

13 And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

† Ps. 45. 10.

14 And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

g Gen. 34.  
2. Ch. 32.  
29. Judg.  
19. 24.

15 ¶ If a man have two wives, one beloved, <sup>h</sup>and another hated, and they have born him children, both

h Gen. 29.  
33.

the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born son be her's that was hated:

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

16 Then it shall be, <sup>i</sup>when he maketh his sons to inherit *that* which he hath, *that* he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, *which is indeed* the first-born:

i Chro. 5.  
2. & 26.  
10. 2 Chro.  
11. 19, 22.

17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the first-born, <sup>k</sup>by giving him a double portion of all <sup>†</sup>that he hath: for he *is* <sup>l</sup>the beginning of his strength; <sup>m</sup>the right of the first-born *is* his.

k i Chro. 5.  
1.  
† Heb. *that is found with him.*  
l Gen. 49. 3.  
m Gen. 25.  
31, 33.

18 ¶ If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that*, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

19 Then shall his father and his

ing to the case of war with the neighbouring nations, directs that, if an Hebrew soldier conceived a peculiar regard for a captive woman, and desired to marry her, he must not do it immediately after she became his prisoner, it being of dangerous consequence for the Israelites to marry Gentile wives. He was first to keep the woman in his house for a month, at least, where she was to live in the retirement and habit of a mourner, for the loss of her parents and her country; as also to give her time to be instructed in the knowledge of the true God and his will, and renounce her idolatrous worship, and to allow him sufficient space to try whether his affection for her was calm and steady, or might cool and wear off. If this interval caused no abatement of his love, but, upon her turning proselyte, he still desired to make her his wife, he might then lawfully do it.

Ver. 12, 13. *She shall shave her head*—This was one of the external signs of mourning, Lev. xix. 27, and xxi. 5. *Shall pare her nails*—This also seems to have been done in mourning. In the original it is, *Shall make her nails*, which may be understood of letting her nails grow, which to us seems more suitable to a state of mourning. But this is to be resolved entirely into the fashion of countries. Poole thinks, that both of these things were rather to be done in token of her renouncing her heathenish idolatry and superstition, and of her becoming a new woman, and embracing the true religion. *She shall put the raiment of her captivity off from her*—That is, as the French renders the words more clearly, *the raiment which she wore when she was taken captive*. Instead of the fine clothes wherein she had been taken captive, she was to put on sordid apparel, which was the habit of mourners, *And shall bewail her father and*

*her mother*—Either their death, or, which was in effect the same, her final separation from them, being now to forget all her former relations.

Ver. 14. *If thou have no delight in her*—The sense may either be, 1, If, after he had afflicted her, by making her shave her head, change her garments, &c. and keeping her a full month in hope of marriage, he should change his mind and refuse to marry her: or, 2, If, after he had married her, and she had been his wife some time, he should conceive a dislike to her, and resolve to part with her; in either of these cases, it was not to be in his power to use her as a prisoner of war, by either selling her for money, or making her a slave, but he was to give her her liberty, and let her dispose of herself as she pleased. "The wisdom and humanity of Moses," says Philo, "are very remarkable in this law, whereby the soldiers are forbidden to indulge a hasty and brutal passion, are kept a whole month in abstinence, and thereby have an opportunity given them of knowing the temper and disposition of the woman, for whose misfortune in captivity, a compassionate provision is made by allowing her so long a time of separation and mourning."

Ver. 15. *If a man have two wives*—This practice, though tolerated, is not hereby made lawful; but only provision is made for the children in that case. *Hated*—Comparatively, that is, less loved.

Ver. 19. *His father and mother*—The consent of both is required to prevent the abuse of this law to cruelty. And it cannot reasonably be supposed that both would agree, without the son's abominable and incorrigible wickedness; in which case it seems a righteous law, because the crime of rebellion against his own parents did so fully signify what

A. M. 2626.  
B. C. 1454.

mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city; and unto the gate of his place;

20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; *he is a glutton, and a drunkard.*

21 And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die:

so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

22 ¶ And if a man have committed a sin <sup>p</sup>worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree:

23 <sup>q</sup>His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for

<sup>r</sup>he that is hanged is <sup>†</sup>accursed of God;) that <sup>t</sup>thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Ch. 13. 5. & 19. 19. & 22. 21. 24.  
Ch. 13. 11.  
Ch. 19. 6. & 22. 26. Acts 23. 29. & 35. 11. 25-26. 26. 31.  
Joah. 8. 29. & 10. 26. 27. John 19. 31.  
Gal. 3. 13.  
Heb. the curse of God: Num. 25. 4. 2 Sam. 21. 6.  
Lev. 18. 28. Num. 35. 24.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Laws for preserving stray or fallen cattle, ver. 1—4. For a distinction of apparel between women and men, ver. 5. For compassion even towards birds, ver. 6, 7. Of battlements on houses, ver. 8.*

a pernicious member he would be in the commonwealth of Israel, who had dissolved all his natural obligations. *Unto the elders*—Which was a sufficient caution to preserve children from the malice of any hard-hearted parents, because these elders were first to examine the cause with all exactness, and then to pronounce the sentence.

Ver. 20. *A glutton and a drunkard*—Under which two offences, others of a like or worse nature are comprehended.

Ver. 22. *On a tree*—Which was done after the malefactor was put to death some other way; this public shame being added to his former punishment.

Ver. 23. *He is accursed of God*—He is in a singular manner cursed and punished by God's appointment with a most shameful kind of punishment, as this was held among the Jews, and all nations; and therefore this punishment may suffice for him, and there shall not be added to it that of lying unburied. And this curse is here appropriated to those that are hanged, to signify beforehand that Christ should undergo this execrable punishment, and be made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13; which, though it was future in respect to men, yet was present unto God. *Defiled*—Either by in-

*Against improper mixtures, ver. 9—11. Of a wife, falsely accused, ver. 13—19. Justly accused, ver. 20, 21. The punishment of adultery, rape, fornication, ver. 22—29. Of incest, ver. 30.*

**T**HOU shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

2 And if thy brother *be* not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again.

3 In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost things of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself.

4 <sup>b</sup>Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again.

5 ¶ The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither

humanity towards the dead: or by suffering the monument of the man's wickedness, and of God's curse, to remain public a longer time than God would have it; whereas it ought to be put out of sight, and buried in oblivion.

CHAP. XXII. Ver. 1, 2. *Thy brother's*—Any man's, this being a duty of common justice and charity, which the law of nature taught even heathens. *Hide thyself from them*—Dissemble, or pretend that thou dost not see them, or pass them by as if thou hadst not seen them. *If thy brother be not nigh unto thee*—Which may make the duty more troublesome or chargeable. *Or if thou know him not*—Which implies that, if they did know the owner, they should restore it. *Bring it unto thine own house*—To be used like thine other cattle. *Thou shalt restore it again*—The owner, as it may be presumed, paying the charges.

Ver. 5. *Shall not wear*—That is, ordinarily or unnecessarily, for in some cases this may be lawful, as to make an escape for one's life. Now this is forbidden for decency's sake, that men might not confound those sexes which God hath distinguished; that all appearance of evil might be

A. M. 2583.  
B. C. 1481. shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Lev. 22.  
28. 6 ¶ If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, *whether they be* young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, <sup>c</sup> thou shalt not take the dam with the young:

Ch. 4. 10. 7 *But* thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; <sup>d</sup> that it may be well with thee, and *that* thou mayest prolong *thy* days.

8 ¶ When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

Lev. 19.  
19. 9 ¶ <sup>e</sup>Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the <sup>f</sup> fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.

1 Cor. 6.  
14, 15. 10 <sup>g</sup>Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together.

A. M. 2583.  
B. C. 1481. 11 <sup>h</sup>Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, *as* of woollen <sup>i</sup> and linen together.

Num. 15.  
38. Matt.  
23. 5.  
Heb.  
wings. 12 ¶ Thou shalt make thee <sup>b</sup> fringes upon the four <sup>†</sup> quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest *thyself*.

Gen. 29.  
21. Judg.  
15. 1. 13 ¶ If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

14 And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

15 Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth *the tokens* of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate:

16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17 And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech *against her*, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid, and yet these *are the tokens* of my daughter's virginity. And they shall

avoided, such change of garments carrying a manifest sign of effeminacy in the man, of arrogance in the woman, of lightness and petulancy in both; and also to cut off all suspicions and occasions of evil, for which this practice would open a wide door.

Ver. 6, 7. *Thou shalt not take the dam with the young*—This and such like merciful precepts of the law of Moses tended to humanize the hearts of the Israelites, to produce in them a sense of the Divine Providence, extending itself to all creatures, and to teach them to exercise dominion over them with gentleness. The command also respected posterity, restrained a selfish and covetous disposition, and taught them not to monopolize all to themselves, but leave the hopes of a future seed for others.

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt make a battlement*—A fence or breast-work, because the roofs of their houses were made flat, that men might walk on them. *Blood*—The guilt of blood, by a man's fall from the top of thy house, through thy neglect of this necessary provision. The Jews say, that by the equity of this law, they are obliged, and so are we, to fence or remove every thing, whereby life may be endangered, as wells, or bridges, lest, if any perish through the omission, their blood be required at the hands of those who have neglected to perform so plain a duty.

Ver. 9, 10. *Divers seeds*—Either, 1, With divers kinds of

seeds mixed and sown together between the rows of vines in thy vineyard: which was forbidden to be done in the field, Lev. xix. 19, and here in the vineyard. Or, 2, With any kind of seed differing from that of the vine, which would produce either herbs, or corn, or fruit-bearing trees, whose fruit might be mingled with the fruit of the vines. Now this and the following precepts, though in themselves small and trivial, are given, according to that time and state of the Church, for instruction in greater matters, and particularly to commend to them simplicity in all their carriage towards God and men, and to forbid all mixture of their inventions with God's institutions in doctrine and worship. *An ox and an ass*—Because the one was a clean beast, the other unclean; whereby God would teach men to avoid polluting themselves by the touch of unclean persons or things.

Ver. 12. *Fringes*—Or *laces*, or *strings*, partly to bring the commands of God to their remembrance, as it is expressed Numb. xv. 38, and partly as a public profession of their nation and religion, whereby they might be distinguished from strangers, that so they might be more circumspect to behave as became the people of God, and that they should own their religion before all the world. *Thou coverest thyself*—These words seem to confine the precept to the upper garment wherewith the rest were covered.

Ver. 13. *If any man take a wife*—And afterward falsely

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1461.

spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him;

19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred *shekels* of silver, and give *them* unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.

20 ¶ But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel:

21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die; because she hath <sup>k</sup>wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: <sup>l</sup>so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

<sup>k</sup> Gen. 24.  
7. Judg.  
20. 6, 10.  
2 Sam. 13.  
12.  
<sup>l</sup> Ch. 13. 5.

<sup>m</sup> Lev. 20.  
10. John  
8. 5.

22 ¶ <sup>m</sup>If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

<sup>n</sup> Matt. 1.  
18.

23 If a damsel *that is* a virgin be <sup>n</sup> betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;

<sup>o</sup> Ch. 21. 14.

24 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, *being* in the city; and the man, because he hath <sup>o</sup>humbled his

neighbour's wife: <sup>p</sup>so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1461.  
p Ver. 21,  
22.

25 ¶ But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man <sup>q</sup> force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die:

Or, take strong hold of her, 2 Sam. 13. 14.

26 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; *there is* in the damsel no sin *worthy* of death; for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so *is* this matter:

27 For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and *there was* none to save her.

28 ¶ <sup>q</sup>If a man find a damsel *that* is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

Ex. 22.  
16.

29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife; <sup>r</sup>because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

r Ver. 24.

30 ¶ <sup>s</sup>A man shall not take his father's wife, nor <sup>t</sup>discover his father's skirt.

s Lev. 18.  
8. & 20.  
11. Ch. 27.  
20. 1 Cor.  
5. 1.  
t Ruth 2. 9.  
Ex. 16. 8.

## CHAP. XXIII.

*Who are to be excluded the congregation of rulers, ver. 1—6. An Edomite and an Egyptian not to be abhorred, ver. 7, 8. No uncleanness to be in the camp, ver. 9—14. Of servants escaped from their masters, ver. 15, 16. Laws, against sodomy and whoredom, ver. 17, 18. Against usury, ver. 19, 20. Against the breach of vows, ver. 21—23. The liberty which might be taken in another's field or vineyard, ver. 24, 25.*

accuse her.—What the meaning of that evidence is, by which the accusation was proved false, the learned are not agreed. Nor is it necessary for us to know: they for whom this law was intended, undoubtedly understood it.

Ver. 19. *Give them unto the father of the damsel*—Because this was a reproach to his family, and to himself, as such misconduct of his daughter would have been ascribed to his neglect of properly instructing or watching over her. *He may not put her away all his days*—Thus he was deprived of

the common benefit which every Israelite had who did not like his wife, which was to sue out a divorce.

Ver. 24—27. *She cried not*—And therefore is justly presumed to have consented to it. *As when a man riseth against his neighbour, even so is this matter*—Not an act of choice, but of force and constraint. *The damsel cried*—Which is in that case to be presumed; charity obliging us to believe the best, till the contrary be manifest.

Ver. 29. *Shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels*

A. M. 2551.  
B. C. 1451.

**H**E that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

2 A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Neh. 12. 1. 3 ¶ An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 2. 29. 4 <sup>b</sup> Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and <sup>c</sup> because they hired against thee

<sup>c</sup> Num. 32. 3.

—Besides the dowry, as Philo, the learned Jew, observes, which is here omitted, because that was customary, it being sufficient here to mention what was peculiar to this case. *She shall be his wife*—He was not at liberty to refuse her, if her father consented to his marrying her, and he was deprived of the privilege of ever divorcing her.

CHAP. XXIII. Ver. 1, 2. *He that is wounded*—It is generally agreed that Moses is here speaking of eunuchs. *Shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord*—The meaning is, not that they should be debarred from the public worship of the true God, as the phrase sometimes signifies, for that privilege was granted to all nations indiscriminately, provided they renounced idolatry, Exod. xii. 48, Lev. xxii. 18, Numb. ix. 14. But the sense seems to be, that such a one should not be deemed an Israelite, nor have his name entered in the public register; and especially that he should not be admitted to honours or offices, either in the church or commonwealth of Israel, or be allowed to be one of the society of elders, or rulers of the people, or to sit in council with them. The same privilege was denied to those here termed *bastards*, under which name the Jews comprehended not only those begotten in simple fornication, but also the offspring of all such incestuous marriages as are prohibited, Lev. xviii. One chief reason of this law, no doubt, was to deter people from such unlawful connexions as would both offend God, and leave an indelible blot upon their posterity.

Ver. 3. *An Ammonite or a Moabite*—The Jews will have it, that the women of these two nations were not concerned in this law. And that though an Israelitish woman might not marry an Ammonite or Moabite, yet a man of Israel might marry one of their women, after she professed the Jewish religion. *For ever*—This seems to denote the perpetuity of this law, that it should be inviolably observed in all succeeding ages.

VOL. I. N<sup>o</sup>. XVII.

Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

A. M. 2551.  
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5 Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.

6 <sup>d</sup> Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their <sup>†</sup> prosperity all thy days for ever.

<sup>d</sup> Ezra 9. 18.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. good.

7 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because <sup>f</sup> thou wast a stranger in the land.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. 26. 34, 35.  
<sup>f</sup> Ex. 22. 31. & 27. 9. Lev. 19. 34. Ch. 10. 19.

8 The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the LORD in their third generation.

Ver. 4. *They met you not with bread and water*—That is, meat and drink; as the manner of those times and countries was, with respect to strangers and travellers, which was the more necessary, because there were no public houses of entertainment. Their fault, then, was unmercifulness to strangers and afflicted persons, which was aggravated both by their relation to the Israelites, as being the children of Lot, and by the special kindness of God and of the Israelites to them, in not fighting against them. *Because they hired against thee Balaam*—As the foregoing passage peculiarly refers to the Ammonites, so this doth to the Moabites, Numb. xxii. 5—7.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt not seek their peace*—That is, make no contracts, either by marriages, or leagues, or commerce with them; but rather constantly keep a jealous eye over them, as enemies who will watch every opportunity to ensnare or disturb thee. This counsel was now the more necessary, because a great part of the Israelites lived beyond Jordan in the borders of those people, and therefore God sets up this wall of partition betwixt them, as well knowing the mischief caused by bad neighbours, and Israel's proneness to receive infection from them. Individual Israelites were not hereby forbidden to perform any office of humanity to them, but the body of the nation are forbidden all familiar conversation with them.

Ver. 7, 8. *Thou wast a stranger*—And didst receive habitation, protection, and provision from them a long time, which kindness thou must not forget for their following persecution. It is ordinary with men, that one injury blots out the remembrance of twenty favours. But God doth not deal so with us, nor will he have us to deal so with others, but commands us to forget injuries, and to remember kindnesses. *In the third generation*—When they had been proselytes to the true religion for three generations, they might be incorporated with the Jewish community. And, according

3 U

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9 ¶ When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.

† Lev. 15.  
16.

10 † If there be among you any man, that is not clean by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp.

† Heb.  
turneth  
toward.  
‡ Lev. 15.

11 But it shall be, when evening † cometh on, † he shall wash himself with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again.

12 Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad;

† Heb.  
attend  
down.

13 And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shall be when thou † wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shall

turn back and cover that which cometh from thee: A. M. 2553.  
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14 For the LORD thy God † walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no † unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee: † Heb.  
nakedness of  
any  
thing.

15 ¶ Thou shalt not deliver unto † his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee: † 1 Sam.  
30. 13.

16 ¶ He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it † likeeth him best: † thou shalt not oppress him. † Heb. is  
good for  
him.  
1 Ex. 22. 21.

17 ¶ There shall be no † whore of the daughters of Israel, nor † sodomite of the sons of Israel. † Or, so-  
domites.  
‡ Lev. 19.  
29. Prov.  
2. 16.  
‡ Gen. 19.  
5. ‡ King.  
23. 7.

18 ¶ Thou shalt not bring the

to the Hebrew masters, the grand-children are the third generation.

Ver. 9. *Keep from every wicked thing*—Then especially take heed, because that is a time of confusion and licentiousness, when the laws of God and man cannot be heard for the noise of arms; because the success of thy arms depends upon God's blessing, which wicked men have no reason to expect; and because thou dost carry thy life in thy hand, and therefore hast need to be well prepared for death and judgment.

Ver. 13. *Cover*—To prevent the annoyance of ourselves or others; to preserve and exercise modesty; and principally that by such outward rites they might be enured to the greater reverence of the Divine Majesty, and the greater caution to avoid all real and moral uncleanness.

Ver. 15, 16. *The servant which is escaped from his master*—It seems, from the connection, that this has a particular relation to times of war, when heathen soldiers or servants might desert and come over to the Israelites, with intent to turn proselytes to the true religion. In which case, they were neither to send them back, and expose them to the severity of their heathen masters, nor use them hardly themselves, but permit them to live peaceably, and with full enjoyment of all the liberties and privileges of a proselyte in Israel, Lev. xix. 33, 35. It may be understood, likewise, of such foreign servants as, upon inquiry, appeared to be unjustly oppressed by their masters. For it is not strange if the great God, who hates all tyranny, and styles himself the refuge of the oppressed, should interpose his authority to rescue such persons from their cruel masters. *He shall dwell with thee in the place which he shall choose*—This shews plainly that the passage is not to be understood of

the servants of the Israelites their brethren, but of aliens and strangers; he is said to be *escaped*, and to be allowed to *dwell among them*, which the servant of an Israelite was supposed to do before.

Ver. 17. *There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel*—No common prostitute, such as were tolerated and encouraged by the Gentiles, and used even in their religious worship. Not that such practices were allowed to the strangers among them, as is evident from many passages of Scripture and reason; but that it was in a peculiar manner, and upon special reasons, forbidden to them, as being much more odious in them than in strangers. It is remarkable, that the original words, which we render *whore* and *sodomite*, import a man or woman consecrated to some deity, who served their gods by prostitution.

Ver. 18. *The hire of a whore*—It was a custom among the idolatrous nations, for prostitutes to dedicate to the honour of their false gods some part of what they had earned by prostitution. In opposition to which abominable practice this law is thought to have been instituted. *Or the price of a dog*—It is not easy to give any satisfactory account why these two, the price of a *whore*, and of a *dog*, are associated in the same law. Thus much seems clear, from Numb. xviii. 15, that the price of a dog is not here rejected because the dog is an unclean creature. Some have thought it is because the dog was worshipped by the Egyptians, that God, to draw his people from or guard them against idolatry, casts this contempt upon that creature, in refusing the price it should be sold for. But the most natural sense of the passage seems to be, to take the word *dog* here, in a figurative sense, for the *sodomite*, or *whore-monger*, before mentioned, such persons being not improperly styled dogs, on account of



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hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

• Ex. 22. 25.  
Lev. 25.  
36. Neh.  
5. 7. Ps.  
15. 5.  
Luke 6.  
34.

19 ¶ Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:

¶ Lev. 19.  
34. & Ch.  
15. 3.

20 ¶ Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

¶ Ch. 15. 10.

¶ Num. 30.  
2. Ec. 5. 4.

21 ¶ When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

¶ Num. 80.  
7. Ps. 66.  
1. 4. 34.

23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a free-will-offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

24 ¶ When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine

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own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.

25 When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

† Matt. 19.  
1. Mark  
2. 21.  
Luke 6. 1.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of divorce, ver. 1—4. New-married men discharged from the war, ver. 5. Of pledges, ver. 6, 10—13. Of manstealers, ver. 7. Of the leprosy, ver. 8, 9. Of daily wages, ver. 14, 15. None to be punished for another's sin, ver. 16. Of justice and mercy to the widow, fatherless, and stranger, ver. 17—22.

WHEN a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

¶ Matt. 5.  
31. & 19.  
7. Mark  
10. 4.

2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

† Heb. mat-  
ter of  
naked-  
ness.  
† Heb.  
cutting  
off.

3 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if

their shameless incontinency and brutal manners. Accordingly, men of canine, beastly natures, are called dogs, Matt. xv. 26; 2 Pet. ii. 22; Rev. xxii. 15.

Ver. 19. *Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother*—To an Israelite. They held their estates immediately from God, who, while he distinguished them from all other people, might have ordered, had he pleased, that they should have all things in common. But instead of that, and in token of their joint interest in the good land he had given them, he only appointed them, as there was occasion, to lend to one another without interest. This, among them, would be little or no loss to the lender, because their land was so divided, their estates so settled, and there was so little merchandise among them, that it was seldom, or never, they had occasion to borrow any great sums, but only for the subsistence of their families, or some uncommon emergence. But they might lend to a stranger upon usury, who was supposed to live by trade, and therefore got by what he borrowed:

in which case it is just the lender should share in the gain. This usury, therefore, is not oppressive; for they might not oppress a stranger.

Ver. 21—23. *Not slack*—Not delay; because delays might make them both unable to pay it, and unwilling too. *A free-will offering*—Which, though thou didst freely make, yet, being made, thou art no longer free, but obliged to perform it.

Ver. 24. *At thy pleasure*—Which was allowed in those parts, because of the great plenty and fruitfulness of vines there.

CHAP. XXIV. Ver. 1. *Some uncleanness*—Some hateful thing, some distemper of body, or quality of mind, not observed before marriage: or some light carriage, as this phrase commonly signifies, but not amounting to adultery. *Let him write*—This is not a command, as some of the Jews understood it, nor an allowance and approbation, but merely a

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the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

<sup>b</sup> Jer. 3. 1. 4 <sup>b</sup> Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD; and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 20. 7. 5 ¶ <sup>c</sup> When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, <sup>†</sup> neither shall he be charged with any business: *but* he shall be free at home one year, and shall <sup>d</sup> cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

6 ¶ No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh *a man's* life to pledge.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. 21. 16. 7 ¶ <sup>e</sup> If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and making merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; <sup>f</sup> and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

<sup>g</sup> Lev. 13. 2. & 14. 2. 8 ¶ Take heed in <sup>h</sup> the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the

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priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do.

9 <sup>h</sup> Remember what the LORD thy God did <sup>i</sup> unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of <sup>i</sup> Egypt.

10 ¶ When thou dost <sup>†</sup> lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.

11 Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee.

12 And if the man *be* poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge:

13 <sup>k</sup> In any case thou shalt deliver <sup>k</sup> him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and <sup>l</sup> bless thee: and <sup>m</sup> it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

14 ¶ Thou shalt not <sup>n</sup> oppress an hired servant *that is* poor and needy, *whether he be* of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that *are* in thy land within thy gates:

permission of that practice, for prevention of greater mischiefs, and this only until the time of reformation, till the coming of the Messiah, when things were to return to their first institution, and purest condition.

Ver. 4. *Her former husband may not take her again*—This is the punishment of his levity and injustice in putting her away without sufficient cause, which, by this offer, he now acknowledgeth. *Defiled*—Not absolutely, as if her second marriage were a sin, but with respect to her first husband, to whom she is as a defiled or unclean woman; that is, forbidden; for things forbidden are accounted and called unclean, Judg. xiii. 7, because they may no more be touched or used than an unclean thing. *Thou shalt not cause the land to sin*—Thou shalt not suffer such lightness to be practised, lest the people be polluted, and the land defiled and accursed by that means.

Ver. 5. *Business*—Any public office or employment, which may cause an absence from or neglect of his wife. *One year*—That their affections may be firmly settled, so as there may be no occasions for the divorces last mentioned.

Ver. 6. *Mill-stone*—Used in their hand-mills. Under this, he understands all other things necessary to get a livelihood, the taking away whereof is against the laws both of charity and prudence, seeing by those things alone he can be enabled both to subsist and to pay his debts. *Life*—His livelihood, the necessary support of his life.

Ver. 7. *That thief shall die*—Thus the crime of man-stealing was to be punished with death, though stealing of beasts, or other things, was not.

Ver. 9. *Remember what the Lord did unto Miriam*—This seems to have been intended as an admonition, to take care not to speak evil of dignities, or disobey the commands of the priest, which might bring such a stroke upon them as God inflicted upon Miriam.

Ver. 10—13. *Thou shalt not go in*—To prevent both the poor man's reproach, by having his wants exposed, and the creditor's greediness, which might be occasioned by the sight of something which he desired, and the debtor could not spare. *The pledge*—He shall choose what pledge he pleases, provided it be sufficient for the purpose. *Thou shalt not sleep*—But restore it before night, which intimates that he should take no such thing for pledge, without which a man could not sleep. *Bless thee*—Bring down the blessing of God upon thee by his prayers: for though his prayers, if he be not a good man, shall not avail for his own behalf, yet they shall avail for thy benefit. *It shall be righteousness unto thee*—Esteemed and accepted by God, as a work of righteousness, or mercy.

Ver. 14, 15. *Not oppress a hired servant*—By detaining his wages from him when due, which is the meaning of oppression here, as appears from the next verse. *At his day thou shalt give him his hire*—That is, at the time appointed,

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15 At this day <sup>o</sup>thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and † setteth his heart upon it: † lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

Lev. 19.  
13. Jer.  
22. 14.  
Tobit 4.  
14. Job.  
14. 4.  
† Heb. If he  
seth his  
heart unto  
thee, &c.  
1. & 2. 4.  
P. Jam. 5. 4.  
† 2 Kings  
14. 6.  
2 Chron. 25.  
4. Jer.  
31. 29. 30.  
Ez. 19. 20.

16 ¶ <sup>o</sup>The father shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

Ex. 21. 21.  
Prov. 23.  
23. 1. 1.  
23. Jer. 5.  
25. & 26.  
3. Ez. 18.  
29. Zech.  
7. 10.  
Mal. 2. 2.  
Ex. 22. 16.  
† Ver. 21.  
Ch. 16. 18.

17 <sup>r</sup>Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take the widow's raiment to pledge:

Lev. 19.  
9. 10. &  
24. 22.

18 But <sup>t</sup>thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

Ch. 15. 10.  
Ps. 41. 1.  
Prov. 19.  
17.

19 ¶ <sup>u</sup>When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field: thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may <sup>b</sup>bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

† Heb. thou  
shalt not  
fetch it  
after  
these.

20 When thou beatest thine olive-tree, † thou shalt not go over the

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boughts again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

21 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it † afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

† Heb. af-  
ter thee.

22 And <sup>y</sup>thou shalt remember <sup>r</sup>Ver. 19. that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

CHAP. XXV.

Stripes not to exceed forty, ver. 1—3. The ox not to be muzzled, ver. 4. Of marrying the brother's widow, ver. 5—10. Of an immodest woman, ver. 11, 12. Of just weights and measures, ver. 13—16. Amalek to be destroyed, ver. 17—19.

**I**F there be a <sup>a</sup>controversy between <sup>a</sup> men, and they come unto judgment, that *the judges* may judge them; then they <sup>b</sup>shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 19. 17.  
Ez. 44. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Prov. 17.  
15.

2 And it shall be, if the wicked man *be* <sup>c</sup>worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, <sup>d</sup>and to be beaten before his face,

<sup>c</sup> Luke 12.  
48.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. 10.  
17.

weekly or daily. He speaks of an hireling who was so poor as not to be able to provide himself and family with necessaries without his wages, and who therefore eagerly expected them as the support of their lives.

Ver. 16. *Not be put to death*—If the one be free from the guilt of the other's sin, except in those cases where the sovereign Lord of life and death, before whom none is innocent, hath commanded it, as chap. xiii. 15, Josh. vii. 24. For though God do visit the father's sins upon the children, Exod. xx. yet he will not suffer men to do so.

Ver. 17. *Raiment*—Not such as she hath daily and necessary use of, as being poor. But this concerns not rich persons, nor superfluous raiment.

Ver. 19—22. *It shall be for the stranger*—Moses here exhorts them to be mindful of those provisions made for the poor by this law, Lev. xix. 9, 10, and xxiii. 22, wherein they are ordered not to be over exact in reaping the fruits of their fields and vineyards, but to leave something to be gathered by their poor neighbours. *When thou beatest thine olive-tree*—As they were wont to do, with sticks, to

bring down the olives. *It shall be for the fatherless, &c.*—Surely nothing can be more just, humane, or merciful, than all these laws here recited.

CHAP. XXV. Var. 1. *If there be a controversy between men*—Having made provision for the security of private right in some such remarkable cases as might be sufficient standards whereby to regulate all others, and having fixed punishments to the breach of the most capital laws, Moses now comes to such criminal matters as deserved only corporal penalties, and directs the inferior courts to be just and impartial in their proceedings upon all such complaints. *They shall justify the righteous*—Acquit him from guilt and false accusations, and free him from punishment. *Condemn the wicked*—Declare him guilty, and pass sentence of condemnation upon him to suitable punishment.

Ver. 2. *Worthy to be beaten*—Which the Jews say, was the case of all those who had committed crimes which the law commands to be punished, without expressing the kind or degree of punishment. *Before his face*—That the punish-

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• 2 Cor. 11. 24. 3 <sup>c</sup>Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed, lest if he should exceed and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should <sup>f</sup>seem vile unto thee.

f Job 18. 3. 4 ¶ <sup>e</sup>Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he <sup>†</sup>treadeth out *the corn*.

g Prov. 19. 10. 1 Cor. 9. 9. 1 Tim. 5. 15. <sup>†</sup>Hab. <sup>†</sup>thresheth, Hos. 10. 11. h Matt. 22. 21. Mark 12. 19. Luke 20. 29. ¶ Or, next kinsman, Gen. 38. 9. Ruth 1. 1v. & 3. 9. 5 ¶ <sup>h</sup>If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife; and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

i Gen. 28. 9. 6 And it shall be, *that* the first-born which she beareth <sup>i</sup>shall succeed in the name of his brother *which* is dead, that <sup>k</sup>his name be not put out of Israel.

k Ruth 4. 10. 7 And if the man like not to take his <sup>¶</sup>brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the <sup>l</sup>gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's

ment might be duly inflicted, without excess or defect. And from this no person's rank or quality exempted him, if he were a delinquent.

Ver. 3. *Forty stripes he may give him*—The law of Moses very wisely limited the number of stripes, lest severe judges should order delinquents to be lashed to death, as was often done among the Romans, than which, perhaps, a more cruel kind of death can hardly be devised. And it seems not to have been superstition, but prudent caution, in the Jews, that they would not exceed thirty-nine stripes, lest, through mistake or forgetfulness, they should go beyond the bounds which they were commanded to keep. *Thy brother should seem vile*—Lest the judges, by exceeding the bounds of humanity, and that compassion which was due to a *brother*, a partaker of human nature in common with themselves, and one of the same nation and community, civil and religious, should be accustomed to think despicably of their poor brethren, and set their lives at nought. Or lest he should be made contemptible to his brethren, either by this cruel usage of him, as if he were a brute beast; or by some deformity or infirmity of body, which excessive beating might produce.

Ver. 4. *When he treadeth out the corn*—Which they did in those parts, either immediately, by their hoofs, or by drawing carts, or other instruments, over the corn. Hereby God taught them humanity, even to their beasts that served them, and much more to their servants, or other men

A. M. 2553.  
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8 Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and *if* he stand *to it*, and say, <sup>m</sup>I like not <sup>n</sup>to take her;

9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and <sup>a</sup>loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, *So* shall it be done unto that man that will not <sup>o</sup>build up his brother's house.

10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

11 ¶ When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets:

12 Then thou shalt cut off her

who laboured for them, especially to their ministers, 1 Cor. ix. 9.

Ver. 5, 6. *If brethren dwell together*—In the same town, or, at least, country. For if the next brother had removed his habitation into remote parts, or were carried thither into captivity, then the wife of the dead had her liberty to marry the next kinsman that lived in the same place with her. *One*—Any of them, for the words are general, and the reason of the law was to keep up the distinction of tribes and families, that so the Messiah might be discovered by the family from which he was appointed to proceed; and also of inheritances, which were divided among all the brethren, the first-born having only a double portion. *A stranger*—To one of another family. *That his name be not put out*—That a family be not lost. So this was a provision that the number of their families might not be diminished.

Ver. 9, 10. *Loose his shoe*—As a sign of his resignation of all his right to the woman, and to her husband's inheritance; for as the shoe was a sign of one's power and right, Psal. lx. 8, and cviii. 9, so the parting with the shoe was a token of the alienation of such right; and as a note of infamy, to signify, that by this disingenuous action he was unworthy to be amongst free men, and fit to be reduced to the condition of the meanest servants, who used to go barefoot, Isai. xx. 2, 4. *His name*—That is, his person, and his posterity also. So it was a lasting blot.

hand, <sup>p</sup> thine eye shall not pity her.  
 13 ¶ <sup>q</sup> Thou shalt not have in thy  
 bag † divers weights, a great and a  
 small.

14 Thou shalt not have in thine  
 house † divers measures, a great and  
 a small.

15 But thou shalt have a perfect  
 and just weight, a perfect and just  
 measure shalt thou have: <sup>r</sup> that thy  
 days may be lengthened in the land  
 which the LORD thy God giveth  
 thee.

16 For <sup>s</sup> all that do such things,  
 and all that do unrighteously, are an  
 abomination unto the LORD thy God.

17 ¶ Remember what Amalek did  
 unto thee by the way, when ye were  
 come forth out of Egypt;

18 How he met thee by the way,  
 and smote the hindmost of thee,  
 even all that were feeble behind thee,  
 when thou wast faint and weary;  
 and he <sup>t</sup> feared not God.

19 Therefore it shall be, <sup>x</sup> when  
 the LORD thy God hath given thee  
 rest from all thine enemies round  
 about, in the land which the LORD  
 thy God giveth thee for an inheri-  
 tance to possess it, that thou shalt

blot out the remembrance of Amalek  
 from under heaven; thou shalt not  
 forget it.

CHAP. XXVI.

*A form of confession made by him that offered the first-fruits, ver. 1—11. A prayer to be made after the disposal of the third year's tithe, ver. 12—15. He binds all these precepts upon them, by the divine authority, and the covenant between God and them, ver. 16—19.*

AND it shall be, when thou art  
 come in unto the land which  
 the LORD thy God giveth thee for an  
 inheritance, and possessest it, and  
 dwellest therein;

2 <sup>a</sup> That thou shalt take of the first  
 of all the fruit of the earth, which  
 thou shalt bring of thy land that  
 the LORD thy God giveth thee, and  
 shalt put it in a basket, and shalt  
 go unto the place which the LORD  
 thy God shall choose to place his  
 name there.

3 ¶ And thou shalt go unto the  
 priest that shall be in those days,  
 and say unto him, I profess this day  
 unto the LORD thy God, that I am  
 come unto the country which the  
 LORD sware unto our fathers for to  
 give us.

Ver. 13. *Divers weights, great and small*—The great to buy with, the small for selling. This law taught them to be so far from practising deceit, that they were not even to have the instruments of it by them. Would to God that there was no need to enforce the same law in our days!

Ver. 17, 18. *Out of Egypt*—Which circumstance greatly aggravated their sin, that they should do thus to a people, who had been long exercised with sore afflictions, to whom pity was due by the laws of nature and humanity, and for whose rescue God had in so glorious a manner appeared, which they could not be ignorant of. *And he feared not God*—Though they feared Israel, whom they durst not look in the face, but cut them off behind, yet they feared not God, but acted a base and inhuman part, in contempt of the divine authority, and of all the miraculous interpositions of the divine providence in behalf of that chosen nation. So that while their conduct was barbarous to Israel, they set the great Jehovah at defiance.

*land*—Every Israelite being obliged, by law, to offer the first-fruits of his field and vineyard at the tabernacle, at the proper seasons of the year; Moses now prescribes to them the forms of solemn profession and prayer, with which each offerer should present them. *Thou shalt go unto the place which the Lord shall choose*—This seems to have been especially enjoined to each master of a family, and the time when these first-fruits were to be presented was the feast of Pentecost, Exod. xxiii. 16; when, as well as at the two other great feasts, that of the passover, and that of tabernacles, they were obliged to go up to the place of God's altar.

Ver. 3. *I profess this day unto the Lord*—Thus, at his presenting them to the priest in waiting, the offerer was to declare he brought them in humble and grateful acknowledgment of the divine providence and goodness, that had settled him and his family in this fruitful country, pursuant to the gracious promises made to his forefathers. And the following confession, appointed to be made on the occasion, was well fitted to excite in his mind, humility, gratitude, and trust in God; it being an important part of the worship of

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4 And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God.

5 And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, 'A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous :

6 And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage ;

7 And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression :

8 And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an out-stretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders :

9 And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey.

God, as Maimonides observes, for a man to be mindful of his afflictions, when God has given him rest from them.

Ver. 5. *A Syrian was my father*—That is, Jacob ; for though born in Canaan, he was a Syrian by descent, his mother Rebecca, and his grand-father Abraham, being both of Chaldea or Mesopotamia, which in Scripture is comprehended under the name of Syria. His wives and children, by their mothers' side, and his relations were Syrians, and he himself had lived twenty years in Syria with Laban. *Ready to perish*—Through want and poverty, or through the rage of his brother Esau, and the treachery of his father-in-law Laban, see Gen. xxviii. 11, 20, and xxxii. 10. Or perhaps this refers to the state of Jacob a little before he went down into Egypt, when he and his family were in danger of perishing by famine, had he not been sustained by his son.

Ver. 10, 11. *Thou shalt set it*—The basket of first-fruits, before the Lord—That is, before the sanctuary, where God was more especially present. This shews that the person offering this oblation was to hold the basket in his hand, while he made the foregoing acknowledgment. *And worship before the Lord*—Bowing his body, as the original word imports, towards the holy place, which external sign of inward worship, in all truly pious men, was accompanied with

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10 And now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God ;

11 And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

12 ¶ When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled ;

13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast com-

gratitude of heart to God for his benefits, and with prayer for their continuance. *And thou shalt rejoice*—Thou shalt hereby be enabled to take comfort in all thy enjoyments, when thou hast sanctified them by giving God his portion. It is the will of God that we should be cheerful, not only in our attendance upon his holy ordinances, but in our enjoyment of the gifts of his providence. Whatever good thing God gives us, we should make the most comfortable use of it we can, still tracing the streams to the fountain of all consolation.

Ver. 12. *The third year, which was the year of tithing*—Heb. of that tithe ; that is, of the tithe for the poor, commanded to be paid every third year : and instead of being carried to the place of the sanctuary, there to be eaten with joy before the Lord, was to be spent at home in entertaining their poor neighbours, and the Levites who lived in or near the place of the owner, see chap. xiv. 27—29, where this tithe is enjoined. Of the other yearly tithes, see on chap. xiv. 22, 23.

Ver. 13. *Before the Lord thy God*—As this tithe of the third year was to be spent at home, these words must signify, either that every man was to make this solemn profession at home, in his private addresses to God, or that the next time

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manded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them:

P Ps. 119.  
151, 153,  
176.

14 I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

q Lev. 7.  
20. & 21.  
1, 11, 110s.  
9. 6.

15 Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swearest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

r Is. 63. 15.  
Zech. 9.  
14.

16 ¶ This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

17 Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk

s Ex. 20. 19.

in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice:

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18 And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments;

Ex. 6. 7. &  
19. 5. Ch.  
7. 6. & 14.  
2. & 29. 9.

19 And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

u Ch. 4. 7.  
& 28. 1.  
Ps. 145.  
14.

x Ex. 19. 6.  
Ch. 7. 6.  
& 28. 9.  
1 Pet. 2.  
9.

CHAP. XXVII.

A command to write all the law upon stones, ver. 1—8. A charge to Israel to obey God, ver. 9, 10. To pronounce a blessing on Mount Gerizzim, and a curse on Mount Ebal, ver. 11—13. To the Levites, to pronounce the whole curse, ver. 14—26.

AND Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people,

he went up to the place of the sanctuary, he was to make this declaration before the most holy place, where God was supposed to be peculiarly present. At which soever place he made it, it was to be done as before God; that is, solemnly, seriously, and in a religious manner, with due respect to God's presence, in obedience to his command, and with an eye to his glory.

Ver. 14. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning—This is thought by Spencer to have respect to some idolatrous custom then in use; such as that of the Egyptians, who, when they offered the first-fruits of the earth, were wont to invoke Isis with doleful lamentations. But, as the Israelites were not allowed to eat of things consecrated to God, when they were in a state of mourning, Hos. ix. 4, this may probably be all that is here intended. Or the declaration may mean, I have not done it in sorrow, grieving that I was to give away so much of my profits to the poor, but I have cheerfully eaten and feasted with them, as I was commanded to do. For any unclean use—As some of the old idolaters were wont to do, who separated part of the first-fruits for magical, and sometimes impure uses; or for any common use; for any other use than that which thou hast appointed; which would have been a pollution of them. Nor given ought thereof for the dead—Or, to the dead; that is, says Spencer, to dead idols, such as the Gentiles worshipped, who offered their first-fruits to them, as if they had been the authors of their increase. But the expression, for the dead, more probably

means for any funeral pomp or service, for, it seems, the Jews were wont to send in provisions to feast with the nearest relations of the party deceased; and in that case, both the guests and food were legally polluted, Numb. xix. 11—14; and, therefore, to have used these tithes in such a way, would have been a double fault, both a defiling of sacred food, and the employing of those provisions on sorrowful occasions, which, by God's express command, were to be eaten with rejoicing.

Ver. 15. Look down from thy holy habitation—Though God was pleased to dwell among them, by a glorious symbol of his presence, yet Moses well knew, and hereby teaches the Israelites to acknowledge, that he dwelt in more transcendent glory in the heavens, which all nations have believed to be the throne and peculiar habitation of the omnipresent God. And bless thy people—Thus, after that solemn profession of their obedience to God's commands, they were taught to pray for God's blessing, whereby they were instructed how vain and ineffectual the prayers of unrighteous or disobedient persons are.

Ver. 17, 18. Avouched—Or declared, or owned. Avouched thee—Hath owned thee for such before all the world, by eminent and glorious manifestations of his power and favour, by a solemn entering into covenant with thee, and giving peculiar laws, promises, and privileges to thee above all mankind.

CHAP. XXVII. Ver. 1. Moses with the elders—Having, in discourses at several times, repeated the principal part of



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saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day.

2 And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster:

3 And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee.

4 Therefore it shall be when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in Mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster.

5 ¶ And there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them.

the laws, and made several necessary additions to them, Moses called the council together, and summoned the body of the people to attend them at the tabernacle; where, after an earnest exhortation to observe what he had already said, and was now about to prescribe to them, he directs them, the first opportunity they had after their arrival in the land of promise, to renew their covenant with God in a solemn manner. In order to this, they were to write or engrave the chief heads of their law, especially of the moral law, upon large square stones, smoothly plastered over for that purpose, to be audibly read to the whole assembly, with the circumstances hereafter appointed. *This day*—This expression signifies, not the space of one day, but refers to the whole time of their abode in the plains of Moab.

Ver. 2, 3. *On the day*—Here it is evident the word *day* does not signify precisely the very same day they passed over, but some indefinite time after, namely, as soon as they were come to Mount Ebal, ver. 4, after the taking of Jericho and Ai. See Josh. viii. 30. *All the words of this law*—Some have thought that he means the whole book of Deuteronomy. But they must have been immense stones to have contained this. It is more probable that only the ten commandments are intended; or perhaps, as Josephus's opinion is, only the cursings which here follow, the last whereof seems to respect the whole law of Moses. *Mount Ebal*—The mount of cursing. Here the law was written, to signify that a curse was due to the violators of it, and that no man could expect

6 Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God:

7 And thou shalt offer peace-offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the LORD thy God.

8 And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

9 And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel: this day thou art become the people of the LORD thy God.

10 Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

11 ¶ And Moses charged the people the same day, saying,

12 These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin:

justification from it, all having violated it in one kind and degree or other. Here the sacrifices were to be offered, to shew that there is no way to be delivered from this curse, but by the blood of Christ, which all these sacrifices did typify, and by Christ's being made a curse for us.

Ver. 6. *Whole stones*—Rough, not hewn, or polished, whereby all manner of imagery was avoided. *Shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon*—In order to ratify their covenant with God, as they did at Horeb. By the law written on the stones, God spake to them; by the altar, and sacrifices upon it, they spake to God: and thus was communion kept up between them and God.

Ver. 2. *The priests spake unto all Israel*—They assisted Moses in pressing the people to attend duly to the meaning and design of this solemnity. *Thou art become the people of the Lord*—By thy solemn renewing of thy covenant with him.

Ver. 12. *Upon Mount Gerizim*—The original words may be rendered, *Beside, or near to, Mount Gerizim*. There were in Canaan two mountains that lay near together, with a valley between, the one called Gerizim, the other Ebal. On the sides of these, which faced each other, all the tribes were to be drawn up, six on a side, so that in the valley they came near each other, so near that the priests, standing between them, might be heard by them that were next them on both sides. Then one of the priests, or perhaps more, at some distance from each other, pronounced with a loud voice, one

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e Ch. 28. 18.

f Ch. 11. 29.  
John 8.  
33. Judg.  
9. 7.

**13** And <sup>e</sup>these shall stand upon Mount Ebal † to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

**14** ¶ And <sup>h</sup>the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,

**15** <sup>i</sup>Cursed *be* the man that maketh *any* graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth *it* in a secret place.

**16** <sup>k</sup>And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.

**17** <sup>l</sup>Cursed *be* he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**18** <sup>m</sup>Cursed *be* he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**19** <sup>n</sup>Cursed *be* he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**19** <sup>o</sup>Cursed *be* he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**20** <sup>p</sup>Cursed *be* he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**21** <sup>q</sup>Cursed *be* he that lieth with any manner of beast. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**22** <sup>r</sup>Cursed *be* he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**23** <sup>s</sup>Cursed *be* he that lieth with his mother-in-law. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**24** <sup>t</sup>Cursed *be* he that smiteth his neighbour secretly. And all the people shall say, Amen.

**25** <sup>u</sup>Cursed *be* he that taketh re-

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Ch. 11. 29.  
Josh. 6.

Heb. for  
a curse-  
ing.

Ch. 33.  
10. Josh.

8. 33. Dan.  
9. 11.

Ex. 30. 4,  
23. & 34.  
17. Lev.

19. 4. &  
26. 1. Ch.

4. 16. 23.  
& 5. 8. 15.

44. 9. Hos.  
13. 9.

Num. 5.  
22. Jer.

11. 5.  
1 Cor. 14.

16.  
Ex. 30. 19.

& 21. 17.  
Lev. 19. 3.

Ch. 21. 18.

Ch. 19. 14.  
Prov. 22.

28.

Lev. 19.  
14.

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Ex. 22. 21.  
Ch. 10. 16.

Mat. 3. 9.  
& 21. 17.

Lev. 18.  
8. & 20. 11.

Ch. 22. 30.

Lev. 18.  
23. & 20.  
15.

Lev. 18.  
9. & 20. 17.

Lev. 18.  
17. & 20.  
14.

Ex. 20. 15.  
& 21. 16.

14. Lev.  
24. 17.

Num. 35.  
31. Ch. 19.  
11.

Ex. 23. 7.  
Ch. 10. 17.

& 16. 15.  
Ez. 22. 19.

of the curses following. And all the people who stood on the foot and side of Mount Ebal (those farther off taking the signal from those who were nearer) said, Amen! Then the contrary blessing was pronounced, "Blessed is he that doth so or so:" to which all who stood on the foot and side of Mount Gerizzim, said, Amen! *Simeon, Levi, &c.*—All these were the children of the free-women, Leah and Rachel, to shew both the dignity of the blessings above the curses, and that the blessings belong only to those who are evangelically free, as this is expounded and applied, Gal. iv. 22, even to those that receive the Spirit of adoption and liberty. Joseph is here put for both his sons and tribes Manasseh and Ephraim, which are reckoned as one tribe, because Levi is here numbered; but when Levi is omitted, as it is where the division of the land is made, there Manasseh and Ephraim pass for two tribes.

Ver. 13. *To curse*—Of the former tribes, it is said, they stood to bless the people: of these, that they stood to curse. Perhaps the different way of speaking intimates, That Israel in general were a happy people, and should ever be so, if they were obedient. And to that blessing, they on Mount Gerizzim said, Amen! But the curses come in, only as exceptions to the general rule: "Israel is a blessed people: but if there be any, even among them, that do such and such things, they have no part or lot in this matter, but are under a curse." This shews how ready God is to bestow the blessing: if any fall under the curse, they bring it on their own heads. Four of these are children of the bond-women, to shew that the curse belongs to those of servile and disingenuous spirits. With these are joined Reuben, who,

by his shameful sin, fell from his dignity, and Zebulun, the youngest of Leah's children, that the numbers might be equal.

Ver. 14. *The Levites*—Some of the Levites, namely, the priests, who bare the ark, as it is expressed, Josh. viii. 33, for the body of the Levites stood upon Mount Gerizzim, ver. 12. But these stood in the valley between Gerizzim and Ebal, looking towards the one or the other mountain, as they pronounced either the blessings or the curses.

Ver. 15. *Cursed*—The curses are expressed, but not the blessings. For as many as were under the law, were under the curse. But it was an honour reserved for Christ to bless us; to do that which the law could not do. So in his Sermon on the Mount, the true Mount Gerizzim, we have blessings only. *The man that maketh any graven image*—Under this particular he understands all the gross violations of the first table, as under the following branches he comprehends all other sins against the second table. *Amen*—It is easy to understand the meaning of Amen to the blessings. But how could they say it to the curses? It was both a profession of their faith in the truth of these curses, and an acknowledgment of the equity of them. So that when they said Amen, they did, in effect, say, not only, it is certain it shall be so, but it is just it should be so.

Ver. 16. *That setteth light*—Or, *despiseth* in his heart: or *reproacheth* or *curseth* secretly: for, if the fact were notorious, it was punished with death.

Ver. 18. *Out of the way*—That misleadeth simple souls, giving them pernicious counsel, either for this life, or for the next.

Ver. 24. *Smiteth*—That is, killeth. This includes murder:

ward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen.

26 <sup>a</sup>Cursed *be* he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

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\* Ch. 28. 15.  
P. 119.  
11. 2 Gal.  
A. 10.

CHAP. XXVIII.

*The blessings of obedience, personal, family, and national, ver. 1—14. The curses of the disobedient; their extreme vexation, ver. 15—44. Their utter ruin and destruction, ver. 45—68.*

AND it shall come to pass, <sup>a</sup>if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe *and* to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God <sup>b</sup>will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

Ex. 15. 26.  
Lev. 26.  
3. Is. 55.  
2.

b Ch. 26. 10.

2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and <sup>c</sup>overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

c Ver. 15.  
Zech. 1. 6.

d Ps. 128.  
1. 4.

e Gen. 39.  
5.

f Ver. 11.  
Gen. 22.  
17. & 19.  
29. Ch. 7.  
14. Pa.  
107. 39. &  
127. 3. &  
1. S. 3.  
Prov. 10.  
92. 1 Tim.  
4. 8.

3 <sup>d</sup>Blessed *shalt* thou *be* in the city, and blessed *shalt* thou *be* <sup>e</sup>in the field.

4 Blessed *shall be* <sup>f</sup>the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the in-

crease of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

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5 Blessed *shall be* thy basket and thy <sup>g</sup>store.

Or, dough, or kneading trough. Pa. 121. 8.

6 <sup>g</sup>Blessed *shalt* thou *be* when thou comest in, and blessed *shalt* thou *be* when thou goest out.

7 The LORD <sup>h</sup>shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face; they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

Lev. 26. 7. 28. 41. Ps. 59. 34. Ver. 25.

8 The LORD shall <sup>i</sup>command thee blessing upon thee in thy <sup>j</sup>store-houses, and in all that thou <sup>k</sup>settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Lev. 25. 21. Or, barns. Prov. 3. 10. Ch. 15. 10.

9 <sup>l</sup>The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

Ex. 19. 5. 6. Ch. 7. 6. & 26. 18. & 29. 14.

10 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art <sup>m</sup>called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be <sup>n</sup>afraid of thee.

Num. 6. 27. Chro. 7. 14. Is. 63. 19. Dan. 9. 18. Ch. 11. 25.

11 And <sup>o</sup>the LORD shall make thee plenteous <sup>p</sup>in goods, in the fruit of thy <sup>q</sup>body, and in the fruit of

Ver. 4. Ch. 30. 9. Prov. 10. 22. Or, for good. Heb. belly.

under the colour of law, which is of all others the greatest affront to God. Cursed therefore is he that any ways contributes to accuse, or convict, or condemn, an innocent person.

Ver. 26. *Confirmeth not*—Or, *performeth not*. To this we must all say, Amen! Owing ourselves to be under the curse, and that we must have perished for ever, if Christ had not redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us.

CHAP. XXVIII. Ver. 1. *If thou hearken diligently*—The foregoing blessings and curses being appointed to be pronounced in so solemn a manner, Moses takes occasion from thence to enlarge upon both of them, to shew the Israelites what they and their posterity had to expect at the hands of God, according as they complied or not with the terms of the covenant which they were now under.

Ver. 2—6. *All these blessings*—shall overtake thee—The blessings which others greedily follow after, and never overtake, shall follow after thee, and shall be thrown into thy lap by special kindness. *In the city, and in the field*—

Whether they were husbandmen or tradesmen, whether in the town or country, they should be preserved from the dangers of both, and have the comforts of both. How constantly must we depend upon God, both for the continuance and comfort of life! We need him at every turn: we cannot be safe, if he withdraw his protection, nor easy, if he suspend his favour; but if he bless us, go where we will, it is well with us. *Store*—Store-house, it shall always be well replenished, and the provision thou hast there shall be preserved for thy use and service. *Comest in*—That is, in all thy affairs and administrations.

Ver. 9, 10. *Establish thee*—Shall confirm his covenant with thee, by which he separated thee to himself as a holy and peculiar people. *Called by the name of the Lord*—That you are in truth his people and children: a most excellent and glorious people, under the peculiar care and countenance of the great God.

Ver. 11, 12. *Plenteous in goods*—The same things which were said before are repeated, to shew that God would repeat and multiply his blessings upon them. *His good treasure*—

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**B. C. 1451.** thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

**12** The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven **p** to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and **q** to bless all the work of thine hand: and **r** thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

**13** And the LORD shall make thee **s** the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that **t** thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do **them**.

**14** And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, **to** the right hand, or **to** the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

**15** ¶ But it shall come to pass, **u** if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and **v** overtake thee:

**16** Cursed **w** shalt thou be **y** in the city, and cursed **z** shalt thou be in the field.

**17** Cursed **aa** shall be thy basket and thy store.

**18** Cursed **ab** shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

**19** Cursed **ac** shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed **ad** shalt thou be when thou goest out.

**20** The LORD shall send upon thee **ae** cursing, **af** vexation, and **ag** rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto **ah** for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.

**21** The LORD shall make **ai** the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.

**22** **aj** The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the **ak** sword, and with **al** blasting, and with **am** mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

**23** And **an** thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee **ao** shall be iron.

**24** The LORD shall make the rain.

The heaven or the air, which is God's storehouse, where he treasures up rain or wind for man's use.

Ver. 13. *The head*—The chief of all people in power, or at least in dignity and privileges; so that even they that are not under thine authority, shall reverence thy greatness and excellency. So it was in David's and Solomon's time, and so it should have been oftener, and much more, if they had performed the conditions.

Ver. 15. *These curses shall overtake thee*—So that thou shalt not be able to escape them, as thou shalt vainly hope and endeavour to do. There is no running from God, but by running to him; no fleeing from his justice, but by fleeing to his mercy.

Ver. 20. *Cursing, vexation, and rebuke*—The first of these words seems to import that God would blast all their

designs; the second relates to disquiet and perplexity of mind, arising from the disappointment of their hopes, and presages of approaching miseries; the third respects such chastisements from God as would give them a severe check and rebuke for their sins and follies.

Ver. 21—24. *Shall make the pestilence cleave to thee*—Sometimes Divine Providence shall scourge you by one calamity, and sometimes by another, and they will cut off your people in great numbers. *Thy heaven shall be brass*—Dry, and shut up from giving rain or dew. *The earth iron*—Exceeding hard through drought, and barren. *The rain of thy land powder and dust*—As unprofitable to thy ground or seed, as if it were only so much dust. Or rather, by reason of long droughts, dust blown up into the air by winds, shall fall in showers instead of rain.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

25 <sup>e</sup>The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and <sup>b</sup>thalt be †removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

26 And <sup>i</sup>thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray *them* away.

27 The LORD will smite thee with <sup>k</sup>the botch of Egypt, and with <sup>l</sup>the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.

28 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and <sup>m</sup>astonishment of heart:

29 And thou shalt <sup>n</sup>grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save *thee*.

30 <sup>o</sup>Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her; <sup>p</sup>thou shalt build an house, and thou

shalt not dwell therein; <sup>q</sup>thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not †gather the grapes thereof.

31 Thine ox *shall be* slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass *shall be* violently taken away from before thy face, and †shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep *shall be* given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue *them*.

32 Thy sons and thy daughters *shall be* given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and <sup>r</sup>'fail *with longing* for them all the day long: and *there shall be* no might in thine hand.

33 <sup>s</sup>The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up: and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway:

34 So that thou shalt be <sup>t</sup>mad *for* the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

35 The LORD shall <sup>u</sup>smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.Ch. 30. 6.  
Heb. profane, or, use it as common meal: Ch. 30. 6.

Heb. shall not return to thee.

Ps. 119. 83.

Ver. 31. Lev. 26. 16. Jer. 6. 17.

Ver. 67.

Ver. 37.

Ver. 27—29. *The botch of Egypt*—Such boils or blains as the Egyptians were plagued with, spreading from head to foot. *The emerods*—Those painful swellings of the hemorrhoidal vessels, called piles. *Blindness*—Of mind, so that they should not know what to do. *Astonishment*—They should be filled with wonder and horror, because of the strangeness and soreness of their calamities. *Grope at noon day*—In the most clear and evident matters, thou shalt grossly mistake. *Thy ways*—Thy counsels and enterprizes shall be frustrated, and turn to thy destruction. Compare Jer. xxv. 16, 18; Zeph. i. 17; Lam. iv. 14; Jer. iv. 9; and Ezek. iv. 17.

Ver. 32. *Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given*—When you have provoked the divine justice to deliver you into the hands of your enemies, you shall have nothing left which you can call your own. Your very wives and children shall become a prey to your enemies; shall be taken from you, and given, or sold, to another people—By those who have conquered you, and taken them captives. *Thine eyes shall fail*—Or be consumed, partly with grief and plentiful tears, and partly with earnest desire, and long and

vain expectation of their return. *There shall be no might in thine hand*—No power to rescue, nor money to ransom them.

Ver. 33. *Which thou knowest not*—Who shall come from a far country, whom thou didst not at all expect or fear, and therefore will be the more dreadful when they come. This was remarkably fulfilled when Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, came and dispossessed the ten tribes, and when Nebuchadnezzar carried the other two tribes away, and placed other people in their room. *Thou shalt be oppressed and crushed alway*—They were not to be quite rooted out and destroyed, as the Amalekites and Canaanites were, of whom no footsteps now remain; but to be scattered through other nations, and there oppressed, crushed, and enslaved.

Ver. 34. *Thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes*—Quite bereaved of all comfort and hope, and abandoned to utter despair. "Into what madness, fury, and desperation, have they been pushed," says Bishop Newton, in illustration of this prophecy, "by the cruel usage, extortions, and oppressions, which they have undergone! We will allege only two similar instances, one from ancient, and one from

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

36 The LORD shall <sup>a</sup>bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and <sup>y</sup>there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.

37 And thou shalt become <sup>z</sup>a astonishment, a proverb <sup>a</sup>and a by-word, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.

38 <sup>b</sup>Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather <sup>c</sup>but little in; for <sup>c</sup>the locust shall consume it.

39 Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress *them*, but shalt neither drink *of the wine*, nor gather *the grapes*; for the worms shall eat them.

40 Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint *thyself* with the oil; for thine olive shall cast *his fruit*.

41 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but <sup>†</sup>thou shalt not enjoy them; for <sup>d</sup>they shall go into captivity.

42 All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust <sup>||</sup>consume.

43 The stranger that *is* within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

44 <sup>e</sup>He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: <sup>f</sup>he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

45 Moreover <sup>g</sup>all these curses shall <sup>g</sup>consume thee.

2 Kings 17.  
4, 6, &  
11, 12, 14.  
& 25, 7.  
11, 2 Chron.  
31, 11, &  
35, 6, 20.  
y Ch. 4, 24.  
& Ver. 64.  
Jer. 16, 3.  
z 1 Kings 9.  
7, Jer. 31.  
9, & 25, 9.  
Zech. 5.  
13.  
a Ps. 44, 14.

b Mic. 6, 15.  
Hag. 1, 6.

c Joel 1, 4.

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B. C. 1451.

† Heb. *they shall not be thine.*  
d Lam. 1, 5.

|| Or, *possess.*

e Ver. 13.

f Ver. 13.  
Lam. 1, 5.

g Ver. 15.

modern history. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the Jews took refuge in the castle of Masada, where, being closely besieged by the Romans, they, at the persuasion of Eleazar their leader, first murdered their wives and children, then ten men were chosen by lot to slay the rest; this being done, one of the ten was chosen in like manner to kill the other nine, which having executed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner; and only two women and five boys escaped, by hiding themselves in the aqueducts under ground. Such another instance we have in our English history: for in the reign of Richard I. when the people were in arms to make a general massacre of them, fifteen hundred of them seized on the city of York to defend themselves; but being besieged, they offered to capitulate, and to ransom their lives with money. The offer being refused, one of them cried in despair, that it was better to die courageously for the law, than to fall into the hands of the Christians. Every one immediately took his knife, and stabbed his wife and children. The men afterwards retired into the king's palace, which they set on fire, in which they consumed themselves, with the palace and furniture."

Ver. 36. *The Lord shall bring thee and thy king*—The calamity shall be universal; even thy king shall not be able to avoid it, much less his subjects, who have far less advantage and opportunity for escape; he who should protect or rescue them, shall be lost with them. This was partly fulfilled when Jehoiachin was carried captive to Babylon, with his mother, his wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land, 2 Kings xxiv. 15; and afterwards Zedekiah, *ibid.* xxv. 7, Jer. lii. 11. For the Assyrians were a people, though not quite unknown to the Jews in Moses's time, yet with whom they had but little intercourse. But it was more especially accomplished in their last dispersion by the Romans, *a nation which neither they nor their fathers knew. There thou shalt serve other gods, wood and stone*—So that

what formerly was their choice and delight, should now become their plague and misery. And this, doubtless, was the condition of many Israelites under the Assyrian and Babylonish captivities, being either influenced by the example and counsels of their conquerors, or compelled by their tyranny to practise this idolatry. And Bishop Newton on this passage proves, by authentic testimonies, that "it has been common for Jews, in popish countries, to comply with the idolatrous worship of the Church of Rome, and to bow down to stocks and stones, rather than that their effects should be seized and confiscated."

Ver. 37. *Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word*—"And do we not hear and see this prophecy fulfilled almost every day? Is not the avarice, usury, and hard-heartedness of a Jew grown proverbial? And are not their persons generally odious among all sorts of people? Mohammedans, Heathens, and Christians, however they may disagree in other points, yet generally agree in vilifying, abusing, and persecuting the Jews. In most places, where they are tolerated, they are obliged to live in a separate quarter by themselves, (as they did in London in the Old Jewry,) and to wear some badge of distinction. Their very countenances commonly distinguish them from the rest of mankind. They are in all respects treated as if they were of another species." Bishop Newton.

Ver. 43. *The stranger that is within thee*—Within thy gates; who formerly honoured and served thee, and were, some of them, glad of the crumbs which fell from thy table. *Shall get above thee very high*—Shall rise to great wealth and prosperity upon thy ruin.

Ver. 45. *Moreover, all these curses*—Here some critics have made a division of these prophecies, and have interpreted the preceding part as relating to the former captivity of the Jews, and the calamities which they suffered under the Chaldeans; and the remaining part as referring to their latter captivity, and the calamities which they suffered under the Romans. But "there is no need," says Bishop Newton,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1151.

come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:

46 And they shall be upon thee <sup>b</sup>for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

h Is. 8. 18.  
Ez. 14. 8.

47 <sup>i</sup>Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, <sup>k</sup>for the abundance of all things:

i Neh. 9. 35,  
36, 37.k Ch. 32.  
15.

48 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he <sup>l</sup>shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

l Jer. 28.  
14.

“of any such distinction; there is no reason to think any such was intended by the author: several prophecies of the one part, as well as of the other, have been fulfilled at both periods; but they have all been more amply fulfilling during the latter period, and there cannot be a more lively picture than they exhibit of the state of the Jews at present.” Indeed, the present deplorable state of the Jewish nation so exactly answers these predictions, that it is an incontestable proof of the truth of the prophecy, and consequently of the divine authority of the Scriptures. And their destruction by the Romans, far more dreadful than the former, shews that their sin in rejecting Christ was more provoking to God than idolatry itself, and left them more under the power of Satan. For their captivity in Babylon cured them effectually of idolatry in seventy years. But under this last destruction they continue above 1700 years incurably averse to their own Messiah, the Lord that bought them.

Ver. 46. *They* (these curses now mentioned) *shall be upon thee for a sign*—This, indeed, they have been in a most wonderful and astonishing manner. Since man was first placed on the earth, never was there a people that were such a sign to all the inhabitants of it as the Jews have been. Never did any other people experience such a strange series of events; never were calamities like their's; never were people so dispersed, and carried into captivity, and yet kept so entire and separate, and thereby made a spectacle and sign to all nations. Though the above verse was written above 3000 years ago, yet do the nations of the earth see it in full force at this day! The seed of this very people still remain, and their state is such, as makes them for a sign and a wonder over the face of the earth. What a striking and wonderful evidence is this of the divinity of the Holy Scriptures! Who but God, *that declareth the end from the beginning*, could declare this, and bring it to pass? O God, very

49 <sup>m</sup>The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, <sup>n</sup>as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1151.

m Jer. 5.

15. &amp; 6.

23. 23.

Luke 19.

63.

n Jer. 49.

40. &amp; 49.

22. Lam.

4. 19. Ez.

17. 3. 12.

Hos. 8. 1.

† Heb.

hear.

† Heb.

strong of

Jacc.

Prov. 7.

15. Ec. 4.

1. Dan.

8. 23.

o 2 Chron. 36.

17. Is. 47.

6.

p Ver. 32.

Is. 1. 7. &amp;

62. 8.

50 A nation <sup>†</sup>of fierce countenance, <sup>o</sup>which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:

51 And he shall <sup>p</sup>eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which *also* shall not leave thee *either* corn, wine, or oil, *or* the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

52 And he shall <sup>q</sup>besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in

q 2 Kings

25. 1, 2, 4.

wonderful art thou! Thou makest thine enemies to bear witness to thy truth, and advance thy honour!

Ver. 48. *He shall put a yoke of iron about thy neck*—That is, cruel thralldom, and rigorous oppression, Jer. xxvii. 11, 12. This is highly just, that they who refused the reasonable service of God, should be made slaves to their enemies; and, instead of the easy yoke of God, should be put under a yoke of iron, see 2 Chron. xii. 8.

Ver. 49. *The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far*—“The Chaldeans might be said to come from far, in comparison of the Moabites, Philistines, and other neighbouring nations, which used to infest Judea,” see Jer. v. 15, and vi. 22. And they are represented as pursuing them with the swiftness of eagles, Lam. iv. 19. But the Romans, no doubt, were chiefly intended. “They were truly brought ‘from far, from the end of the earth;’ Vespasian and Adrian, the two great conquerors and destroyers of the Jews, both coming from commanding here in Britain. The Romans too, from the rapidity of their conquests, might very well be compared to eagles, and perhaps not without an allusion to the standard of the Roman armies, which was an eagle, and their language was more unknown to the Jews than the Chaldee.” Bishop Newton.

Ver. 50. *A nation of a fierce countenance*—Such were the Chaldeans, who, according to the historian, “slew the young men” of the Jews “in the house of the sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age.” Such also were the Romans, who, Josephus says, when they entered Gadera, shewed mercy to no age, out of hatred to the nation, and remembrance of former injuries. They made the like slaughter at Gamala, “not so much as sparing young children, but every one snatching up many, cast them down from the citadel.”

Ver. 52. *He shall besiege thee in all thy gates*—Thus did



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

r Lev. 26.  
29. Kings  
6. 29, 29.  
Jer. 19. 9.  
Lam. 2.  
20. & 4.  
10. Bar.  
2. 3.  
† Heb.  
belly.

53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own †body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

54 So that the man that is tender among you and very delicate, †his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward †the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave:

55 So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.

Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, see 2 Kings xviii. 9, 10, and *ibid.* ver. 13, and *ibid.* xxv. 10. But this prediction was especially fulfilled by the Romans, to whom the best fortified places in Judea were forced to yield, as may be seen in Josephus's History of the Jewish War, which is the best commentary on this part of the prophecy. And the Jews might well be said to trust in their high and fenced walls; for they seldom ventured to fight in the open field. In particular, they confided in the strength and situation of Jerusalem, as the Jebusites, the former inhabitants of the place, had done before them, 2 Sam. v. 6, 7.

Ver. 53. *Thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body*—The stoutest and most obstinate resistance will avail you nothing; all the advantage you will gain by it will be to suffer such long and pressing straits by the siege, as will force you, after thousands have perished with hunger, to feed upon the flesh of one another. This prediction was repeatedly fulfilled, especially when Vespasian and his son Titus begirt Jerusalem so closely, that the besieged were reduced to a most grievous famine, which forced them, after they had eaten up their horses and other creatures, to eat even their own children, whom parents, who had used to live delicately, Moses here foretels, should themselves eat up privately, and let none share with them.

Ver. 54, 55. *His eye shall be evil towards his brother*—His wants will make him throw off all distinction of, and compassion for, his nearest and dearest relations. Hunger will make him snatch the meat out of the mouths of his own children, and grudge every morsel that they eat. Accordingly Josephus informs us, that wives forced away the

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56 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, †her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,

57 And toward her †young one that cometh out †from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.

58 If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear †this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;

59 Then the LORD will make thy plagues †wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and

† Heb. 54.

† Heb.  
after-  
birth.  
x Gen. 49  
10.

† Ex. 6. 8.

† Dan. 9  
13.

meat out of the very mouths of their husbands, children of their parents, and, what was yet more unnatural, mothers of their infants, taking away from them, as they lay languishing in their arms, the very last support of life. Nay, he tells us, that "in every house, if there appeared any semblance of food, a battle ensued, and the dearest friends and relations fought with one another, snatching away the miserable provisions of life." So literally were the words of Moses fulfilled! *Bel. Jud. lib. v. cap. 10, sect. 3, and lib. vi. cap. 3, sect. 3.*

Ver. 56, 57. *The tender and delicate woman—shall eat her children—secretly*—Not in order to escape the infamy of the action, but lest others should have a share with her. *In the siege and straitness*—This was fulfilled about 600 years after the time of Moses, among the Israelites, when Samaria was besieged by the king of Syria, and two women agreed together, the one to give up her son to be boiled and eaten that day, and the other to deliver up her son to be dressed and eaten the next, and one of them was eaten accordingly, 2 Kings vi. 28. It was fulfilled again about 900 years after Moses, in the siege of Jerusalem, before the Babylonish captivity, Baruch ii. 1—3, Lam. iv. 10. And again it was fulfilled above 1500 years after Moses, in the last siege of Jerusalem by Titus; Josephus informing us particularly of a noble woman's killing and eating her own sucking child, and she did it, as Moses says she should do it, *secretly*; for, according to Josephus, when she had boiled and eaten half she covered up the rest, and kept it for another time. many different times, and distant periods, hath this been fulfilled, to the perpetual reproach of the Jewi

A. M. 2557.  
B. C. 1451.

of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 7. 15. 60 Moreover he will bring upon thee all <sup>a</sup> the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.

61 Also every sickness, and every plague, which *is* not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD <sup>†</sup>bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

† Heb. cause to ascend.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 4. 27.

62 And ye <sup>b</sup> shall be left few in number, whereas ye were <sup>c</sup> as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 10. 23.  
Neh. 9. 23.

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for never was the like done, either by Greek or Barbarian. See the fruit of being abandoned of God!—Nothing is too barbarous for such to do.

Ver. 62. *Ye shall be left few in number*—“Not to mention here any other of the calamities and slaughters which the Jews have undergone, there was, in the last siege of Jerusalem by Titus, an infinite multitude, saith Josephus, who perished by famine; and he computes that, during the whole siege, the number of those who were destroyed by that and by the war amounted to eleven hundred thousand, the people being assembled from all parts to celebrate the pass-over. And the same author hath given us an account of 1,240,490 destroyed in Jerusalem and other parts of Judea, besides 99,200 made prisoners, as Basnage has reckoned them up from that historian's account.” Bishop Newton. Another Jewish writer relates, that there were above 116,000 dead bodies of the rich and honourable men of Jerusalem carried out at one gate of the city during the siege, besides those which were carried out at other gates, and thrown over the wall. But when the city was taken, the massacre was dreadful. Titus would have put an end to it, but could not. His men killed all, except the most vigorous, whom they shut up in the porch of the women. The youngest and most beautiful of these were reserved to grace Titus's triumph. Those above seventeen years of age were sent bound into Egypt, to be employed in some public works there; and great numbers of others were sent into several cities of Syria, and other provinces, to be exposed on the public theatres, to exhibit fights, or to be devoured by wild beasts. So that the whole number of Jews who perished in this war is computed at upwards of 1,400,000. Besides these, however, a vast number perished in caves, woods, wildernesses, common sewers, &c. of whom no computation could be made. Encycl. Brit. Add to the above, that the slaughter was very great which was afterwards made of them in the wars of Julius Severus, sent against them by Adrian, when fifty of their strongest fortresses were razed, and 985 of their most noble and populous towns were sacked and consumed by fire, insomuch that, as Dion expresses it, “all Judea was in a manner laid waste, and left as a desert.” But indeed there

63 And it shall come to pass, *that* <sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1451.</sup> as the LORD <sup>d</sup>rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD <sup>e</sup>will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ch. 30. 9.  
Jer. 32.  
41.Prov. 1.  
26. Is. 1.  
24.

64 And the LORD <sup>f</sup>shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other: and <sup>g</sup>there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and stone.

Lev. 26.  
33. Ch. 4.  
27. 28.  
Neh. 1. 9.  
Jer. 16.  
13.

Ver. 36.

65 And <sup>h</sup>among these nations <sup>h</sup>Amos 9.4.

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is no nation on earth that hath been exposed to so many persecutions and massacres. Their history abounds with them. And if God had not given them a promise of a numerous posterity, the whole race would many times have been extirpated.

Ver. 63. *The Lord will rejoice over you, to destroy you*—His just indignation against you will be so great, that it will be a pleasure to him to take vengeance on you. For though he doth not delight in the death of a sinner in itself, yet he doth delight in glorifying his justice upon incorrigible transgressors, seeing the exercise of all his attributes must needs please him, else he were not perfectly happy. *And ye shall be plucked from off the land, &c.*—This was fulfilled, when the king of Assyria carried the ten tribes into captivity, and planted other nations in their stead; and when the king of Babylon carried away the other two tribes; and especially when the Romans took away their place and nation, not to mention other captivities and transportations of them. “Afterwards, when the emperor Adrian had subdued the rebellious Jews, he published an edict, forbidding them, upon pain of death, to set foot in Jerusalem, or even to approach the country round about. Tertullian and Jerome say, they were prohibited from entering Judea. From that time to this, their country hath been in the possession of foreign lords and masters, few of the Jews dwelling in it, and those only of a low, servile condition.”

Ver. 64. *The Lord shall scatter thee among all people*—According to Nehemiah, chap. i. 8, 9, these words were fulfilled in the Babylonish captivity; but they have been far more amply fulfilled since the great dispersion of the Jews by the Romans. “What people have been scattered so far and wide as they? And where is the nation that is a stranger to them, or to which they are strangers? They swarm in many parts of the East, are spread through most of the countries of Europe and Africa, and there are several families of them in the West Indies. They circulate through all parts, and are, as one may say, the brokers of the whole world.” Bishop Newton.

Ver. 65. *Among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall thy foot have rest*—They have been so far from

<sup>A.M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1451.</sup> shalt thou find no ease, neither shall  
<sup>i Lev. 26.</sup>  
<sup>36.</sup> the sole of thy foot have rest: <sup>1</sup>but  
the LORD shall give thee there a  
trembling heart, and failing of eyes,  
<sup>k Lev. 26.</sup>  
<sup>16.</sup> and <sup>k</sup>sorrow of mind:

66 And thy life shall hang in doubt  
before thee; and thou shalt fear day  
and night, and shalt have none as-  
surance of thy life:

finding rest, that they have been banished from city to city, from country to country. In many places they have been banished and recalled, and banished again. Several remarkable instances of this kind are mentioned by Bishop Newton here, to whom the reader is referred. In some of them the Jews must have suffered much, particularly when, in the latter end of the fifteenth century, they were banished from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella. At that time, according to Mariana, there were 170,000 families; or as some say, 800,000 persons, who left the kingdom. Abarbanel, a Jewish writer, gives the following account of this their last expulsion from Spain. He says, "Three hundred thousand of them, old and young, men and women, (among whom he was one,) went away on foot, upon one day, not knowing whither to go. Some went into Portugal, others into Navarre, where they conflicted with many calamities: For some became a prey, or perished by famine and pestilence; and therefore others committed themselves to sea, hoping to find a quiet seat in some other countries. But on the sea they met with new disasters; for many were sold for slaves, when they came on any coast, many were drowned, many burnt in the ships which were set on fire. In short, all suffered the punishment of God the avenger: For, after all this, a plague came and swept away the rest of the miserable wretches, who were hated by all mankind; so all that vast number perished by some calamity or other, except a very few." Some who sought for rest in the kingdom of Fez, lived there a long time upon grass, and eat its very roots, and then died, and their bodies lay exposed, none being so charitable as to bury them.

The Jewish writer just quoted, mentions some taking refuge in Portugal. They paid dearly for this liberty to John II. but within a few years were expelled from thence also by his successor. And in the beginning of the next century, a dreadful massacre was made of them at Lisbon, for three days together, where they were not suffered to die of their deadly wounds, but were dragged by their mangled limbs into the market place, where the bodies of the living and the slain, with others half alive, half dead, were burnt together in heaps. Two thousand of them perished in this barbarous manner. Parents durst not mourn for their children, nor children sigh for their parents, when they saw them haled to the place of torment. Fear so dispirited them, as an historian relates, that the living in their aspect did not much differ from the dead, so that they were exactly in the condition Moses here describes, when he says, *And the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.*

Ver. 66. *Thy life shall hang in doubt*—Either because

67 <sup>1</sup>In the morning thou shalt <sup>A.M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1451.</sup> say, Would God it were even! and <sup>1</sup>Job 7. 4.  
at even thou shalt say, Would God  
it were morning! for the fear of  
thine heart wherewith thou shalt  
fear, and <sup>m</sup>for the sight of thine eyes <sup>m</sup>Ver. 34.  
which thou shalt see.

68 And the LORD <sup>n</sup>shall bring thee <sup>n</sup>Jer. 44. 7.  
into Egypt again with ships, by the <sup>Hos. 9. 13.</sup>  
<sup>& 9. 3.</sup>

thou art in the hands of thy enemies that have power, and want not the will, to destroy thee: or, because of the terrors of thy own mind, and the guilt of thy conscience making thee to fear, even where no fear is.

Ver. 68. *The Lord shall bring thee into Egypt*—Which was literally fulfilled under Titus, when multitudes of them were carried thither and sold for slaves. *With ships*—This expression seems to be intended to remind them of that time, when they went over the sea without ships, God miraculously drying up the sea before them, a time which now they would have occasion sadly to remember. *By the way whereof*—That is, to which place or part of the world, viz. Egypt, *I spake unto thee, thou shalt see it no more again*; referring to what he had said, chap. xvii. 16. This is also well illustrated by the bishop. "They had come out of Egypt triumphant, but now they should return thither as slaves. They had walked through the sea as dry land at their coming out, but now they should be carried thither in ships. They might be carried thither in the ships of the Tyrian or Sidonian merchants, or by the Romans, who had a fleet in the Mediterranean, and this was a much safer way of conveying so many prisoners, than sending them by land. It appears from Josephus, that in the reigns of the two first Ptolemies many of the Jews were slaves in Egypt. And when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, of the captives who, as we have observed on ver. 62, were sent into Egypt, those under 17 were sold: but so little care was taken of these captives, that 11,000 of them perished for want. The markets were overstocked with them, so that Josephus says in another place, they were sold with their wives and children at the lowest price, there being many to be sold, but few purchasers." And we learn from St. Jerome, "that after their last overthrow by Adrian, many thousands of them were sold, and those who could not be sold, were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants." Hegessipus also says, "There were many captives offered for sale, but few buyers, because the Romans disdained to take the Jews for slaves; and there were not Jews remaining to redeem their countrymen."

We have quoted thus largely from Bishop Newton's able Exposition of these predictions of Moses, because we believe more clear and convincing proof cannot be given of their accomplishment, and are apprehensive that many of our readers have it not in their power to consult his excellent volumes on the Prophecies, from which these extracts are taken. His concluding observation is worthy of peculiar attention. "Here are instances of prophecies delivered above 3,000 years ago, and yet, as we see, fulfilling in the world at this very time: and what stronger proof can we desire of the divine legation.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
o Ch. 17. 16.

way whereof I spake unto thee, °Thou shalt see it no more again : and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bond-men and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.

CHAP. XXIX.

*The preface of God's covenant, ver. 1. A recital of his dealings with them, ver. 2—8. A solemn exhortation to keep covenant with God, ver. 9—17. A severe threatening to them that break it, ver. 18—28. The end of the revealed will of God, ver. 29.*

**T**HESSE are the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside °the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

a Ch. 5. 2, 3.

2 ¶ And Moses called unto all

of Moses? How these instances may affect others, I know not; but for myself, I must acknowledge they not only convince but astonish me beyond expression. They are truly, as Moses foretold they would be, *a sign and a wonder for ever.* "I have heard of a wicked man" (says Mr. Henry,) "who, on reading these threatenings, was so enraged, that he tore the leaf out of his Bible." But to what purpose is it to deface a copy, while the original remains upon record in the divine counsels, by which it is determined, that *the wages of sin is death,* whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Let us all learn from hence then, to *stand in awe and not sin.*

CHAP. XXIX. Ver. 1. *These are the words of the covenant*—Having thus repeated and enlarged upon the laws formerly delivered at Horeb, shewn this new generation the covenant they were under, and the time and manner of their renewing it, after they had entered Canaan; and having thus pathetically expatiated on the blessings and curses annexed to it, Moses summoned again the whole assembly, to press them to a careful obedience by considerations of the most powerful nature. *Beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb*—Not a different covenant from that Exod. xxiv. 3—8, but a renewal of the same with some additions.

Ver. 2. *Ye have seen all that the Lord did*—Some of them had seen, when they were young, the plagues which God had brought upon Pharaoh and his people, in order to accomplish their deliverance; and others from them had understood these things, which is often termed seeing, both in the Scriptures and elsewhere.

Ver. 4. *The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive*—Which he would have done, had you sincerely and earnestly desired and asked it of him; and you are inexcusable that you have not, considering his signal mercies on the one hand,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
b Ex. 19. 6.

Israel, and said unto them, °Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;

3 °The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles;

4 Yet °the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

5 °And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: °your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

6 °Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I am the LORD your God.

7 And when ye came unto this

and awful judgments on the other, of which you have had such great experience, and which call loudly upon you to humble yourselves before him in true repentance, and seek his grace to enable you to understand and improve by such extraordinary dispensations and wonderful works. For he does not speak thus to excuse their wickedness, but to direct them to whom they must have recourse for a good understanding of God's works; and to intimate that although the hearing ear, and the seeing eye, be the workmanship of God, yet their want of these was their own fault, and the just punishment of their former sins; their present case being like theirs in Isaiah's time, who first shut their own eyes and ears that they might not see and hear, and would not understand, and then by the righteous judgment of God, had their eyes and ears closed, that they should not see, and hear, and understand. God's readiness to do us good in other things, is a plain evidence, that if we have not grace, that best of gifts, it is our own fault and not his: he would have gathered us, and we would not.

Ver. 5, 6. *Your clothes waxed not old*—See on chap. viii. 4. *Ye have not eaten bread*—Common bread purchased by your own money, procured by your own labour, or made by your own hands, but heavenly and angelical bread. *Neither have ye drunk wine*—But only water out of the rock, and the water was made both pleasant and refreshing. The meaning is, that they were not nourished by the ordinary means of sustenance, but were constantly supported by a miraculous supply from God, who graciously fed them for a course of years without any labour of their own. *That I am the Lord*—That I am Jehovah, that is, the Being who can bring to pass whatever I will, see on Exod. vi. 3, omnipotent and all-sufficient to provide for you without the help of any creatures, and *your God*, in covenant with you, who have a true affection to you, and a fatherly care of you.

<sup>1</sup> place, <sup>h</sup> Sihon the king of Heshbon, and <sup>h</sup> Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them:

<sup>8</sup> And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>9</sup> <sup>k</sup> Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may <sup>l</sup> prosper in all that ye do.

<sup>10</sup> ¶ Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel,

<sup>11</sup> Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that *is* in thy camp, from <sup>m</sup> the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water:

<sup>12</sup> That thou shouldest <sup>†</sup> enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and <sup>n</sup> into his oath, which the

LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:

<sup>13</sup> That he may <sup>o</sup> establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and *that* he may be unto thee a God, <sup>PAS</sup> <sup>p</sup> Ex. 6. 7. he hath said unto thee, and <sup>q</sup> as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

<sup>14</sup> Neither with you only <sup>r</sup> do I make this covenant and this oath;

<sup>15</sup> But with *him* that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, <sup>s</sup> and also with *him* that *is* not here with us this day:

<sup>16</sup> (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by;

<sup>17</sup> And ye have seen their abominations, and their <sup>†</sup> idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them:)

<sup>18</sup> Lest there should be among you

Ver. 10—13. *Ye stand—before the Lord your God*—They were assembled at the tabernacle, from whence he delivered these words to them by the Priests and Levites, chap. xxvii. 9, 14. *Thy stranger*—Such strangers as had embraced their religion: all sorts of persons, yea, even the meanest of them. *Into covenant, and into his oath*—A covenant confirmed by a solemn oath. Heb. בְּאֵלֶיךָ, *bealutho*, his *adjuration, execration, or curse*; for they entered into this covenant with imprecations upon themselves, if they did not perform faithfully their engagements.

Ver. 13. *That he may establish thee*—Here is the summary of that covenant whereof Moses was the mediator; and in the covenant relation between God and them, all the precepts and promises of the covenant are included. That they should be established for a people to him, to fear, love, obey, and be devoted to him, and that he should be to them a God, to make them holy and happy; and a due sense of the relation we stand in to God, as our God, and the obligation we are under to him as his people, is enough to bring us to all the duties, and all the comforts of the covenant. And does this covenant include nothing spiritual? nothing that refers to eternity?

Ver. 15. *So also with him that is not here*—With your posterity. For so the covenant was made at first with Abraham and his seed, by which, as God engaged himself to continue the blessing of Abraham upon his posterity, so he also engaged them to the same duties which were required of Abraham. Thus it is even among men, where a king confers an estate upon a subject, and his heirs for ever, upon some certain conditions, all his heirs who enjoy that benefit, are

obliged to the same conditions. It may likewise include those who were then constrained to be absent, by sickness, or any necessary occasion. Nay, one of the Chaldee Paraphrasts reads it, “All the generations that have been from the first days of the world, and all that shall arise to the end of the whole world, stand with us here this day.” And thus, taking this covenant as a typical dispensation of the covenant of grace, it is a noble testimony to the Mediator of that covenant, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Ver. 16. *Egypt*—Where you have seen their idolatries, and learned too much of them, as the golden calf shewed, and therefore have need to renew your covenant with God; where also we were in dreadful bondage, whence God alone hath delivered us; to whom therefore we are deeply obliged, and have all reason to renew our covenant with him. *We came through the nations*—With what hazard, if God had not appeared for us!

Ver. 18. *Lest there be among you man or woman*—These words are to be considered as connected with ver. 14, 15, and as signifying the end for which he engaged them to renew their covenant with God, that none of them might revolt from him to serve other gods. *Lest there should be a root*—An evil heart inclining you to such cursed idolatry, and bringing forth bitter fruits: or rather, some sacred or subtle apostate from the true God and his religion, secretly lurking and working as a root under ground, and spreading his poison to the infection of others; for both the foregoing and following words speak of some particular person. *Gall and wormwood*—Which though for the present it may please

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
t Ch. 11. 16. t man, or woman, or family, or tribe,  
whose heart turneth away this day  
from the LORD our God, to go and  
serve the gods of these nations; "lest  
there should be among you a root that  
beareth || † gall and wormwood ;  
19 And it come to pass, when he  
heareth the words of this curse, that  
he bless himself in his heart, saying,  
I shall have peace, though I walk <sup>w</sup> in  
the ||imagination of mine heart, <sup>x</sup> to  
add † drunkenness to thirst:  
20 ¶ <sup>y</sup> The LORD will not spare  
him, but then <sup>z</sup> the anger of the LORD  
and <sup>a</sup> his jealousy shall smoke against  
that man, and all the curses that are  
written in this book shall lie upon  
him, and the LORD <sup>b</sup> shall blot out  
his name from under heaven.  
21 And the LORD <sup>c</sup> shall separate  
him unto evil out of all the tribes of  
Israel, according to all the curses of

the covenant that † are written in  
this book of the law:

22 So that the generation to come  
of your children that shall rise up  
after you, and the stranger that shall  
come from a far land, shall say, when  
they see the plagues of that land, and  
the sicknesses † which the LORD hath †  
laid upon it;

23 And that the whole land there-  
of is brimstone, <sup>d</sup> and salt, and burn-  
ing, that it is not sown, nor beareth,  
nor any grass groweth therein, <sup>e</sup> like  
the overthrow of Sodom and Go-  
morrah, Admah and Zeboim, which  
the LORD overthrew in his anger,  
and in his wrath:

24 Even all nations shall say,  
'Wherefore hath the LORD done thus  
unto this land? what *meaneth* the  
heat of his great anger?

25 Then men shall say, Because

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
† Heb. 11  
written.

† Heb.  
where-  
with the  
LORD  
hath  
made it  
tick.  
d Ps. 107. 34.  
Jer. 17. 6.  
Zeph. 2.  
9.  
e Gen. 19.  
24, 25.  
Jer. 20. 16.

f 1 Kings 9.  
8, 9. Jer.  
22. 9, 9.

his fancy, yet in the end will produce bitter fruits; not only distasteful to God, but also destructive to yourselves. The word which we translate *gall* is thought to signify some noxious and poisonous herb, but what herb, is difficult to say. It is rendered *hemlock*, Hosea x. 4, and is commonly joined with wormwood, as here, Jer. ix. 15; Lam. iii. 19; Amos vi. 12. To this passage the apostle alludes, Heb. xii. 15, *Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you.*

Ver. 19. *The words of this curse*—This oath and execration, wherein he swore he would keep covenant with God, and that with a curse pronounced against himself, if he did not perform it. *Bless himself*—Flatter himself in his own eyes, with vain hopes, as if God did not mind such things, and either could not, or would not punish them. *Peace*—Safety and prosperity. *Of mine heart*—Though I do not follow God's command, but my own devices. *To add drunkenness to thirst*—The words may be rendered, *to add thirst to drunkenness*, and so the sense may be, that when he hath multiplied his sins, and made himself as it were drunk with them, yet he is not satisfied therewith, but still whets his appetite, and provokes his thirst after more, as drunkards often use means to make themselves thirst after more drink. This is well deserving of our most serious consideration. Moses here assures the Israelites that, how much soever they might flatter themselves with hopes of peace and safety on account of their privileges, none of these would avail them at all, if they forsook the law of God, and apostatized from his worship and service. This people, however, notwithstanding this solemn warning, did, in after ages, confide in those outward privileges, and that at a time when they lived in the open violation of the divine commands. *The temple, the temple of the Lord!* was their cry and their confidence,

as if the having that among them, had been sufficient to save and render them prosperous and happy, even although they defiled it with their abominations. But they found by sad experience, that the threatenings denounced by Moses against the violators of God's law, were fulfilled. Let us all take warning by this, and neither as a nation, nor as individuals, dare to promise ourselves security and peace, while we walk in the imagination of our own hearts, and live in sin and forgetfulness of God.

Ver. 20, 21. *His jealousy shall smoke against that man*—Shall burn and break forth like flame and smoke from a furnace. None shall be punished more exemplarily than those who abuse the goodness of God, and turn his grace into wantonness. *Shall blot out his name*—Shall destroy his person, and the remembrance of him from among men, suffering no posterity to survive him, to perpetuate his name or memory. *Shall separate him unto evil*—Unto some exemplary plague; he will make him a monument of his displeasure to the whole land. *According to all the curses of the covenant*—For the covenant made with them, though a covenant of grace, had curses as well as blessings belonging to it, however averse the person here referred to, might be to believe it.

Ver. 22, 23. *So that the generation*—Heb. *And the generation*: for it appears to be a new paragraph, the sense whereof is, Whenever your wickedness shall arrive at such a height as to bring upon your nation the terrible desolations before spoken of, all considerate people around you will be convinced, that it is the effect of the just judgment of God upon your disobedience to his laws, and a perfect fulfilment of the very threats now left on record. *The whole land is brimstone and salt*—Is burnt up and made barren for the sins of its inhabitants.



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and *whom* he had not † given unto them:

Or, who had not given to them any portion.  
† Heb. divided.  
Dan. 9. 11, 13, 14.

27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, <sup>e</sup>to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

1 Kings 14. 16. 9 Chron. 7. 30. Ps. 59. 5. Prov. 9. 26.

28 And the LORD <sup>b</sup>rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.

29 ¶ The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but those *things* which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.

Ver. 26. *Whom he had not given*—For their worship, but had divided unto all nations, for their use and service. So he speaks here of the sun, and moon, and stars, which were the principal gods worshipped by the neighbouring nations.

Ver. 29. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God*—That is, the counsels and purposes of God concerning persons or nations, and the reasons of his dispensations towards them, together with the time and manner of inflicting judgments or shewing mercy, are hidden in his own bosom, and not to be pried into, much less fathomed by us. *But those which are revealed*—Viz. That if we rebel against him, he will pour out all these judgments upon us, except by true repentance, and turning to him, we prevent it. *Belong to us and to our children*—Are the proper objects of our inquiries, that thereby we may know our duty, and by complying with it, may be kept from such terrible calamities as these now mentioned. To explain this a little further: Having mentioned the amazing judgments of God upon the whole land and people of Israel, and foreseeing the utter extirpation, which would come upon them for their wickedness, he makes this declaration, either to check the curiosity of such as would be ready to inquire into the time and manner of so great an event; or to satisfy the scruples of those, who, perceiving God to deal so severely with his own people, when in the meantime, he suffered those nations which were guilty of grosser idolatry and impiety, than the generality of the Jews were, to live and prosper in the world, might thence take occasion to deny his providence, or question the equity of his proceedings. The ways and judgments of God, he says, though never unjust, are often hidden from us, unsearchable by our shallow capacity, and matter for our admiration, not our inquiry: But the things which are revealed by God in his word, must be attended to and considered, that we may

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

## CHAP. XXX.

Promises upon their repentance, ver. 1—10. The righteousness of faith set before them, ver. 11—14. Life and death offered to their choice, ver. 15—20.

AND <sup>a</sup>it shall come to pass, when <sup>b</sup>all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and <sup>c</sup>thou shalt call *them* to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,

Lev. 26. 40.  
Ch. 28.

2 And shalt <sup>d</sup>return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

Ch. 4. 99.  
20. 1 Kings 8. 47, 48.

Neh. 1. 9. 15. 55. 7.  
Lam. 3. 40. Joel 2. 12, 13.

3 <sup>e</sup>That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will re-

Ps. 106. 45. & 136. 1. Jer. 39. 14. Lam. 3. 22, 32.

be duly influenced by them. Thus Moses concludes his prophecy of the rejection of the Jews, just as St. Paul concludes his discourse on the same subject, when it began to be fulfilled, exclaiming in a manner equally pathetic, *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out* Rom. xi. 33.

CHAP. XXX. Ver. 1. *When all these things are come upon thee*—Having been thus large in setting before them the consequences of apostasy from God and his service, Moses now turns his discourse to the great encouragement, which such as had been disobedient would have from the mercy of God to return to him in true repentance. *The blessing*—When thou art obedient. *The curse*—When thou becomest rebellious. *Which I have set before thee*—Have propounded to thy consideration and choice. *And thou shalt call to mind*—The benefits of obedience, and miseries of disobedience; shalt reflect seriously upon thy ways, and the end to which they will certainly lead: in which consideration true repentance begins.

Ver. 2. *And shalt return unto the Lord*—Here is a further description of true repentance. It is a *returning unto* the Lord, in humiliation, shame, and sorrow, and yet with confidence in him, as *our God*, with a fixed purpose of obeying him universally and heartily in future. This the Jews did, as a nation, in some measure, after they were carried captive to Babylon, since which time we read nothing of their idolatry. But they degenerated into other sins, which made them reject the Messiah when he was sent to them, for which they are punished to this day, and will be till they repent and be converted, Rom. xi. 23—26, Luke xxi. 24.

Ver. 3. *The Lord will turn thy captivity*—That is, will bring back thy captives, as the following words imply. In-



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
turn and <sup>f</sup>gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

Ps. 147. 2.  
Jer. 32.  
St. Ez. 34.  
13. & 36.  
24.  
Ch. 28. 64.  
Neh. 1. 9.  
4 <sup>g</sup>If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee :

5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it ; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.

Ch. 10. 16.  
Jer. 32.  
39. Ez. 11.  
19. & 20.  
26.  
6 And <sup>h</sup>the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

7 And the LORD thy God will put

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.  
all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.

8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

9 <sup>i</sup>And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good : for the LORD will again <sup>k</sup>rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers : Ch. 28. 11.  
Ch. 28. 63.  
Jer. 32.  
41.

10 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the

deed *captivity* is often put for *captives*, Psal. xiv. 7, and lxxviii. 18; Judg. v. 12. This was fulfilled in part when they returned from Babylon, and will be more completely fulfilled when they shall turn from ungodliness, and believe with their heart unto righteousness in Jesus of Nazareth, as the Son of God, and true Messiah. But surely not before; for as they were cast out of their own land for rejecting him, it is not to be supposed that they will be restored to it till they receive him. Nor is there any intimation in any part of Scripture that they shall. Their repentance and reformation must precede their obtaining this mercy, see Rom. xi. 26. Thus Moses here, *When thou shalt return unto the Lord with all thy heart and all thy soul, then the Lord will have compassion upon thee, and gather thee from all the nations, &c.* Till then any efforts that may be used to re-establish them in Canaan, will prove ineffectual.

Ver. 4. *If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven*—This part of the prophecy has been fulfilled; they have been thus driven away. *From thence will the Lord gather thee*—Not the widest and most distant dispersion of any of thy tribes shall cause them to be finally lost. But God, upon the before-mentioned condition, will so order it that you shall in the most material instances recover your ancient state. Nehemiah pleads this promise in his prayer for the restoration of Jerusalem, Neh. i. 8, 9. And it was in part fulfilled when Cyrus issued a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, that all the Jews might return, if they pleased, into their own land, Ezra i. 1—5. But the promise is generally considered as having a further view; and as respecting their restoration to their own country in the latter days, after this their long and last dispersion. The Jews themselves apply it to their present condition, being of opinion that God hath appointed a time for their deliverance, and that if they repent he will shorten the days of their banishment. But, as we have just observed, they must also

believe in Jesus of Nazareth, as the true Messiah, before they be restored.

Ver. 5. *He will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers*—There are in this, and several other prophecies concerning the restoration of the Jews, such magnificent descriptions of it, as do by no means appear to have been sufficiently fulfilled in any restoration yet past; and therefore are to be accomplished in a more complete one yet to come, after their conversion, in principle and practice, to true Christianity.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord*—Or, *For the Lord will circumcise thine heart*, will by his word and Spirit change and purge thy heart from all thine idolatry and wickedness, and incline thy heart to love him. God will first convert and sanctify thee, the fruit whereof shall be, that thou shalt return and obey God's commandments, ver. 8, and then shalt prosper in all things, ver. 9. This promise principally, respects the times of the gospel, and still remains to be accomplished, at least in the full sense; for, though, after the Babylonish captivity, they never returned to idolatry, yet they degenerated into endless superstitions and corruptions of heart, resting merely in the outward ceremonies of religion, without any sincere love to God and substantial piety. Hence they rejected the Son of God preaching conversion of heart, regeneration, spiritual worship, and a kingdom *not of this world*.

Ver. 9. *For good*—Whereas thou didst formerly receive these mercies for thy hurt, now thou shalt have them for thy good, thy heart shall be so changed, that thou shalt not now abuse them, but employ them to the glory of God the giver. *Over thee for good*—To do thee good; as he did rejoice to destroy thee.

Ver. 10. *If thou wilt hearken*—This is added to warn them, that they should not receive the grace of God in vain, and to teach them that the grace of God doth not discharge

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451. law, *and* if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul:

1 Is. 45. 19. ¶ For this commandment which I command thee this day, <sup>1</sup>it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.

m Rom. 10.  
6, &c. ¶ <sup>m</sup>It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

¶ <sup>13</sup>Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

¶ <sup>14</sup>But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

a Ver. 1, 19.  
Ch. 11. 26. ¶ See ¶ I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;

¶ <sup>16</sup>In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451. and multiply; and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

¶ <sup>17</sup>But if thine heart turn away, so that thou will not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them;

¶ <sup>18</sup>I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, *and that* ye shall not prolong *your* days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

¶ <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

¶ <sup>20</sup>That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Issac, and to Jacob, to give them.

man's obligation to his duty, nor excuse him for the neglect of it. It is observable, that Moses calls God, *the Lord thy God*, twelve times in these verses. In the threatenings of the former chapter, he is all along called *the Lord*, a God of power, and the judge of all. But in the promises of this chapter, *the Lord thy God*, a God of grace; and in covenant with thee.

Ver. 11. *This commandment*—The great command of loving and obeying God, which is the sum of the law, of which, yet he doth not here speak as it is in itself, but as it is mollified and accompanied with the grace of the gospel. The meaning is, that though the practice of God's laws be now far from us, and above our strength, yet, considering the advantage of gospel grace, whereby God enables us to do our duty, it is near and easy to us, who believe. And so this well agrees with Rom. x. 6, &c. where St. Paul applies this place to the righteousness of faith. *Is not hidden*—Heb. *Is not too wonderful for thee*, not too hard for thee to know and do. The will of God, which is but darkly manifested to other nations, Acts xvii. 27, is clearly and fully revealed unto thee: thou canst not pretend ignorance or invincible difficulty.

Ver. 12—14. *In heaven*—Shut up there, but it hath been thence delivered and published in thy hearing. *Neither beyond the sea*—The knowledge of this commandment is not

to be fetched from far distant places, to which divers of the wise Heathens travelled for their wisdom; but it has been brought to thy very doors and ears, and declared to thee in this wilderness. *In thy mouth*—Thou knowest it so well, that it is the matter of thy common discourse. *In thy heart*—In thy mind, (as the heart is very commonly taken) to understand and believe it. In a word, the law is plain and easy: but the gospel is much more so.

Ver. 19. *Choose life*—They shall have life that choose it: they that choose the favour of God, and communion with him, shall have what they choose. They that come short of life and happiness, must thank themselves only. They would have had them, if they had chosen them, when they were put to their choice: but they die, because they will die.

Ver. 20. *That thou mayest love the Lord thy God*—Here he shews them in short, what their duty is; *To love God as the Lord*, a being most amiable, and as *their God*, a God in covenant with them: as an evidence of their love, to *obey his voice* in every thing, and by constancy in this love and obedience, to *cleave to him* all their days. And what encouragement had they to do this? *For he is thy life and the length of thy days*—He gives life, preserves life, restores life, and prolongs it, by his power, though it be a frail life:

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CHAP. XXXI.

Moses encourages the people and Joshua, ver. 1—8, 23. Delivers to the priests the law, to be read every seventh year, ver. 9—13. God informs Moses of his approaching death, and the future apostacy of Israel, ver. 14—18. Orders him to write a song, which should be a testimony against them, ver. 19—22. Moses gives the law to the Levites to lay up beside the ark, and bids them assemble the people to hear his song, ver. 24—30.

**A**ND Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel.

<sup>a</sup> 2 And he said unto them, I <sup>a</sup>am an hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more <sup>b</sup>go out and come in: also the LORD hath said unto me, <sup>c</sup>Thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

<sup>d</sup> 3 The LORD thy God, <sup>d</sup>he will go over before thee, and he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, <sup>e</sup>as the LORD hath said.

<sup>f</sup> 4 And the LORD shall do unto them <sup>f</sup>as he did to Sibon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom he destroyed.

<sup>g</sup> 5 And <sup>g</sup>the LORD shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according unto all the

commandments which I have commanded you.

<sup>6</sup> Be strong and of a good courage, <sup>k</sup>fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, <sup>h</sup>he it is that doth go with thee; <sup>m</sup>he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

<sup>7</sup> ¶ And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, <sup>n</sup>Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD, <sup>o</sup>he it is that doth go before thee; <sup>p</sup>he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

<sup>9</sup> ¶ And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, <sup>r</sup>which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

<sup>10</sup> And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the <sup>s</sup>year of release, <sup>t</sup>in the feast of tabernacles,

<sup>11</sup> When all Israel is come to

and by his presence, though it be a forfeited life. He sweetens life by his comforts, and completes all in life everlasting.

CHAP. XXXI. Ver. 1, 2. *Went and spake*—Continued to speak, an usual Hebrew phrase. *Go out and come in*—Perform the office of a leader or governor, because my death approaches.

Ver. 6. *Be strong*—In faith in God. *He will not fail thee nor forsake thee*—Will not leave thee to thyself, but will be always present with thee to assist and make thee successful in thy undertakings. This promise, though made at this time, particularly to Israel and Joshua, yet belongs to all believers, Heb. xiii. 5.

Ver. 7. *Moses*—said to him in the face of all Israel—Let any should question or deny his authority, after Moses's death. *Be strong and of good courage*—The same exhortation and promise are given to him in particular, that were before given to them all, because he was to bear the charge of them all,

and the toil and burden of governing them, and conducting their affairs.

Ver. 9. *Moses wrote this law*—Largely so called, comprehending not only the contents of this book of Deuteronomy, but the whole law or doctrine delivered unto him, contained in these five books. Or, rather, it is probable, the whole Pentateuch is here intended, which is the meaning of the word *law* in many parts of Scripture. *And delivered it unto the priests*—Who were in duty bound to be peculiarly conversant with it, to keep it carefully and religiously, and to bring it forth upon occasion, and instruct the people out of it. *And unto all the elders*—The magistrates, whose office it was to see that these laws of God were duly observed. The Jews allege that Moses, having delivered one copy unto the priests, gave one likewise to each tribe, which he committed to the care of the elders of it.

Ver. 10, 11. *The year of release*—The most proper time that could be chosen for the purpose, when they were freed from debts, and troubles, and cares of a worldly nature, and

<sup>a</sup> Ex. 7. 7.  
Ch. 24. 7.

<sup>b</sup> Num. 27.  
17. 1 Kings  
3. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Num. 20.  
12. & 27.  
13. Ch. 3.  
27.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. 9. 3.

<sup>e</sup> Num. 27.  
21. Ch. 3.  
28.

<sup>f</sup> Ch. 2. 21.

<sup>g</sup> Num. 21.  
24, 23.

<sup>h</sup> Ch. 7. 2.

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<sup>i</sup> Josh. 10.  
25. 1 Chro.  
27. 12.  
<sup>k</sup> Ch. 1. 23.  
& 7. 16.  
<sup>l</sup> Ch. 20. 4.  
<sup>m</sup> Josh. 1.  
2. Heb.  
13. 4.

<sup>n</sup> Ver. 22.  
Ch. 1. 23.  
& 3. 26.  
Josh. 1. 4.

<sup>o</sup> Ex. 12. 21,  
22. & 23.  
14. Ch. 9.  
2.  
<sup>p</sup> Josh. 1. 5,  
9. 1 Chro.  
28. 20.

<sup>q</sup> Ver. 25.  
Ch. 17. 19.  
<sup>r</sup> Num. 4.  
15. Josh.  
3. 2.  
1 Chro. 15.  
12, 14.

<sup>s</sup> Ch. 15. 7.  
<sup>t</sup> Lev. 23.  
24.

A. M. 2555. B. C. 1461.  
 u Ch. 16. 16. appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, x Josh. 8. 24, 26. 9 Kings 22. 9, Neh. 8. 1, 2, 3, &c. J Ch. 4. 10. <sup>2</sup>thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

12 Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law:

s Ch. 11. 2. a Ps. 78. 6, 7. 13 And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

b Num. 27. 13, Ch. 24. a. c Ver. 23. Num. 27. 19. 14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die; call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented them-

A. M. 2556. B. C. 1451. selves in the tabernacle of the congregation.

d Ex. 33. 9. 15 And the LORD appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

16 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.

17 Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?

at liberty to attend to the reading of it without distraction; and when all Israel were required to appear before the Lord, even the women and children, ver. 12. *Thou shalt read*—The chief governor was either to do it himself, or take care that it was done by the priests, and others, who had the charge of instructing the people. Thus, Joshua himself read all the words of the law before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers, Josh. viii. 34. Josiah and Ezra did the same, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, Neh. viii. 2; but Jehoshaphat employed the priests and Levites to do it, 2 Chron. xvii. 9. *This law, before all Israel, in their hearing*—It was to be read from this original copy, for the greater solemnity of the action, and that it might make a deeper and more lasting impression on their minds. The pious Jews, who had copies of the law, doubtless read it frequently in their houses. Some portion of it was read in the synagogues every sabbath-day, Acts xv. 21. In Jehoshaphat's time it was read by his command in the different cities of Judah, and the people were instructed out of it by the priests and Levites; but at every year of release it was to be read, not only publickly to all the people, but throughout.

Ver. 14. *That I may give him a charge*—Immediately from myself, for his great encouragement, and to gain him more authority with the people.

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt sleep with thy fathers*—Sleep is a common word for death, and, to those who believe a resurrection, has a peculiar propriety, to remind them, that death shall not have dominion over them for ever, but that they shall awake as certainly as they fall asleep. *This people will*

go after the gods of the strangers—That is, the Canaanites, who will be turned out of their possessions, and become as strangers in the land. This aggravates their folly, to worship such gods as could neither preserve their friends, nor annoy their enemies. What a convincing proof is this, that these sacred writings are indeed divine! For what human knowledge could or would have pronounced this, at a time when the whole people were undoubtedly actuated with the greatest willingness, and the strongest resolution to keep the commandments of God? Or what mere human legislator would, at the same time that he gave his laws, have left it upon record that his people would certainly forsake and break them?

Ver. 17. *Then my anger shall be kindled against them*—So it was upon their first defection to idolatry, Judg. ii. 14, and so it continued to be in all ages, as we read in that and the following sacred books. *I will hide my face from them*—A metaphor borrowed from kings, who will not allow those who have offended them to come into their presence and see their face. It signifies, I will withdraw my favour and my help. Whatever outward troubles we are in, if we have but the light of God's countenance, we are safe; but if God hide his face from us, then we are undone. *Are not these evils come upon us because God is not among us?*—Here we see the true source of most national, domestic, and personal troubles, the absence of God, or his withdrawing his power, protection, and blessing. This made so remarkable a change in their affairs, that it could not but at last make them reflect on the cause of it. See Judg. iii. 9, 15, and iv. 3.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

18 And <sup>a</sup>I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.

19 ¶ Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be <sup>o</sup>a witness for me against the children of Israel.

20 For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, <sup>p</sup>and waxen fat; <sup>q</sup>then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.

21 And it shall come to pass, <sup>r</sup>when many evils and troubles have befallen them, that this song shall testify <sup>t</sup>against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for <sup>s</sup>I know their imagination <sup>t</sup>which <sup>t</sup>they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

22 Moses therefore wrote this song

D Ch. 22. 15.  
Neh. 9. 45.  
36. Hos.  
13. 6.

q Ver. 16.

r Ver. 17.

v Heb. before.

s Hos. 5. 3.  
A 13. 5, 6.

t Amos 5. 25, 26.

v Heb. do.

the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.

23 ¶ And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, <sup>x</sup>Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them: and I will be with thee.

24 ¶ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of <sup>y</sup>writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

25 That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying,

26 Take this book of the law, <sup>z</sup>and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there <sup>a</sup>for a witness against thee.

27 <sup>b</sup>For I know thy rebellion, and thy <sup>c</sup>stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

28 Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears,

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

u Ver. 14.

x Ver. 7.  
Josh. 1. 6.

y Ver. 9.

z 2 Kings  
22. 5.

a Ver. 19.

b Ch. 9. 24.  
& 32. 30.c Ex. 32. 9.  
Ch. 9. 6.

Ver. 19. *Now, therefore, write this song*—Recorded in the next chapter, the contents of which were put into a song, that they might be better learned, and more fixed in their minds and memories. For it has always been thought the most profitable way of instructing people, and communicating things to posterity, to put them into verse: for which reason Aristotle reports, that people anciently sung their laws. And Tully tells us it was the custom of the ancient Romans to have the virtues and praises of their famous men sung at their feasts. *Teach it the children of Israel*—Cause them to learn and understand it, and have it daily in their mouths. *That this may be a witness for me*—Of my kindness in giving them so many blessings, of my patience in bearing so long with them, of my clemency in giving them such fair and plain warnings, and of my justice in punishing such an incorrigible people.

Ver. 21. *This song shall testify against them as a witness*—That they were sufficiently admonished of their duty, and forewarned what would be the consequence of their defection from me and my worship, chap. xxxii. 18, 19, and be a clear evidence that the calamities which befall them are judgments sent from me for the punishment of their transgressions. How ought this to be remarked with wonder!

For, to this very day, above 3000 years after, this song is a strong proof and demonstration, both to Jews and Christians, that Moses did indeed speak by the commandment of God. *I know their imagination*—Inclination to idolatry, which they do not check as they ought: and some of them do not only cherish it in their hearts, but, as far as they can and dare, secretly practise it, as may be gathered from Amos v. 25, Acts vii. 43.

Ver. 25, 26. *The Levites*—The priests, ver. 9, who also were Levites. *Put it in the side*—Or, *by the side of the ark*, as the same word is rendered, 1 Sam. vi. 8. For it does not appear that it was laid up within the ark, it being expressly said that there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, 1 Kings viii. 9, 2 Chron. v. 10. Probably this was the very same book, which, after having been some way misplaced, was found in the house of the Lord in the days of Josiah, and publicly read by the king himself, for a testimony against the people, who were then almost ripe for ruin.

Ver. 28—30. *Gather unto me all the elders*—It is probable that Moses, having spoken to the people what he was commanded, dismissed them again till he should write the following song; which having done, he summoned the elders,

A. M. 3553. d  
B. C. 1451. and call heaven and earth to record  
a Ch. 30. 19.  
& 32. 1. against them.

e Ch. 52. 5.  
Judg. 9.  
19. Hos. 9.  
9. 29 For I know that after my death  
f Ch. 28. 15. ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and  
turn aside from the way which I have  
commanded you; and evil will befall  
e Gen. 49. 1.  
Ch. 6. 30. you in the latter days; because ye  
will do evil in the sight of the LORD,  
to provoke him to anger through the  
work of your hands.

30 And Moses spake in the ears  
of all the congregation of Israel the  
words of this song, until they were  
ended.

## CHAP. XXXII.

*The song of Moses contains the preface, ver. 1, 2.  
A high character of God, ver. 3—6. A recital of*

A. M. 3553,  
B. C. 1451. the great things God had done for them, and of  
their carriage towards him, ver. 7—18. A predic-  
tion of judgments for their aggravated impieties,  
ver. 19—35. A promise of vengeance upon their  
enemies, and deliverance for a remnant, ver. 36  
—43. An exhortation annexed, ver. 44—47.  
Orders given to Moses to go up to the mount and  
die, ver. 48—52.

**G**IVE ear, O ye heavens, and I  
will speak; and hear, O earth,  
the words of my mouth.

a Ch. 4. 26.  
A 30. 19.  
& 31. 28.  
Ps. 50. 3.  
Is. 1. 2.  
Jer. 2. 12.  
& 6. 19.  
Is. 55. 10.  
11. 1 Cor.  
3. 6, 7, 9. 2 My doctrine shall drop as the  
rain, my speech shall distil as the  
dew, as the small rain upon the  
tender herb, and as the showers upon  
the grass:

d 1 Chro. 29.  
11.  
e 2 Sam. 22.  
3. & 24. 3.  
Ps. 18. 2.  
31. 46.  
Hab. 1. 19.  
f 2 Sam. 22.  
31. 3 Because I will publish the name  
of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness  
unto our God.

4 He is the rock, his work is

(and people, ver. 30.) to deliver to them, from his own mouth,  
what he had written. *Moses spake in the ears of all the  
congregation*—Pronounced himself, with an audible voice, to  
the representatives of the congregation, and afterwards or-  
dered to be repeated to the people of every tribe, the follow-  
ing song or hymn.

CHAP. XXXII. Ver. 1. "This very sublime ode," says  
Dr. Kennicott, "is distinguished even by the Jews, both in  
their manuscripts and printed copies, as being poetry. In  
our present translation it would appear to much greater ad-  
vantage if it were printed hemistically: and the translation  
of some parts of it may be much improved." We subjoin  
his translation of the following verses as a specimen.

1. "Let the heavens give ear, and I will speak;  
and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.
2. My doctrine shall drop, as the rain;  
my speech shall distill, as the dew,  
as the small rains upon the tender herb,  
and as the showers upon the grass.
3. Verily, the name of JEHOVAH will I proclaim;  
ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
4. He is the rock, perfect is his work;  
for all his ways are judgment:  
a God of truth, and without iniquity:  
just and right is He.
5. They are corrupted, not his, children of pollution;  
a generation, perverse, and crooked!
6. Is this the return, which ye make to JEHOVAH?  
O people, foolish and unwise!  
Is not He thy Father, thy Redeemer?  
He, who made thee, and established thee?"

*Give ear, O ye heavens—hear, O earth—By appealing, in  
this solemn manner, to the heavens and the earth, in the*

beginning of this song, Moses intended to signify, 1, The  
truth and importance of its contents, which were such as  
deserved to be known by all the world: and, 2, The stu-  
pidity of that perverse and unthinking people, who were less  
likely to hearken and obey, than the heavens and the earth  
themselves. 3, He hereby declares also the justice of the  
divine proceedings towards them, according to what he had  
said, chap. xxxi. 28. See Job xx. 27. Or, heaven and earth  
are here put for the inhabitants of both, angels and men:  
both will agree to justify God in his proceedings against  
Israel, and to declare his righteousness, Psalm l. 6, Rev.  
xix. 1, 2.

Ver. 2. *My doctrine shall drop as the rain*—As nothing is  
more grateful to the thirsty earth than gentle showers, so  
there cannot be any thing more acceptable to those who are  
desirous of knowing the Divine will than the revelation of it.  
And as the dew and rain gently falling, soften and refresh  
the earth, producing both verdure and fertility; so my  
doctrine, or the words I am going to speak, if received into  
people's minds in faith and love, will cause them to grow  
in grace and goodness, and produce the fruits of righteous-  
ness. Or it may be rendered, *Let my doctrine drop, &c.*  
Accordingly the learned Bishop Patrick understands this as  
a prayer, that his words, which were sent from heaven to  
them, might sink into their hearts and soften them, as the  
rain doth the earth, and so make them fruitful in obe-  
dience.

Ver. 3. *I will publish the name of the Lord*—His glorious  
excellencies and righteous actions, by which he hath made  
himself known, as a man is known by his name; and by  
which it will appear, both that there is no blame to be laid  
upon him, whatsoever befalls you, and that it is gross mad-  
ness to forsake such a God for dumb idols. *Ascribe ye—*  
As I am about to publish the majesty and glory of God, so  
do you also acknowledge it.

Ver. 4. *He is a rock*—Stable in his nature, invincible in

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.

5 Dan. 9.  
37. Rev.

15. 3.  
h Jer. 10.

10.

1 Job 24. 10.  
Pa. 92. 15.

† Heb. He  
hath cor-  
rupted to  
himself.

h Ch. 31. 29.

† Or, that  
they are  
not his  
children,  
that is  
their lot.

1 Matt. 17.

17. Luke  
9. 1. Phil.  
2. 15.

m Pa. 114.  
12.

n Is. 63. 16.

o Pa. 74. 2.

p Jer. 15.  
15. 27. 11.  
& 44. 2.

† Heb. generation and generations.

perfect: for 'all his ways are judgment: <sup>h</sup>a God of truth and <sup>i</sup>without iniquity, just and right is he.

5 † <sup>k</sup>They have corrupted themselves, || their spot is not *the spot* of his children: *they are* a <sup>l</sup>perverse and crooked generation.

6 Do ye thus <sup>m</sup>requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? *is not* he <sup>n</sup>thy father *that* hath <sup>o</sup>bought thee? hath he not <sup>p</sup>made thee, and established thee?

7 ¶ Remember the days of old, consider the years of †many genera-

tions: 'ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

8 When the most High <sup>r</sup>divided to the nations their inheritance, when he <sup>s</sup>separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

9 For 'the LORD's portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the †lot of his inheritance.

10 He found him <sup>t</sup>in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilder-

A.M. 2653.  
B.C. 1451.

q Ex. 15. 14.  
Ps. 44. 1.

& 78. 3, 6.

r Zech. 9. 2.  
Acts 17.

26.

s Gen. 11. 2.

t Ex. 15. 14.  
& 19. 2.

1 Sam. 10.  
1. Ps. 78.

71.

† Heb. corr.

u Ch. 6. 15.  
Jer. 2. 6.  
Hos. 12. 5.

his power, fixed and immutable in his counsels, promises, and ways; so that if there should be a sad change in your affairs, remember that this proceeds from yourselves, and from the change of your ways towards God, and not from God, *with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning*, Jam. i. 17. *His work is perfect*—All his works, whether of creation, providence, or grace, and all his actions are unblamable, perfect, wise, and righteous. *All his ways are judgment*—His dealings with you his people, and his administrations in the world towards all mankind, are just and holy in the highest degree. *A God of truth*—Ever faithful and constant to his promises. This seems to be mentioned in opposition to the infidelity and inconstancy of Israel, which he speaks of afterwards. *And without iniquity*—Although we are often ignorant of the methods and reasons of the Divine procedure, yet it is as impossible there should be injustice or iniquity in God, as that infinite and unchangeable wisdom should act foolishly, or essential goodness should degenerate into malice, or, in the Scripture language, that light should become darkness. *Just and right is he*—Righteous in all that he doth. How should he do wrong, all whose actions are necessarily founded on perfect and immutable wisdom, justice, and equity?

Ver. 5. *They have corrupted themselves*—Notwithstanding that God hath fully displayed these excellencies in his dealings with the Israelitish nation, yet how corrupt and ungrateful hath been their behaviour! *Their spot*—The wickedness with which they are stained, *is not of his children*—Plainly shews they are not his children, but of their father the devil, John viii. 44. God's children have no such spot. Indeed, the text does not affirm that they have any spot at all. The Hebrew לא בני מומם, *lo banau mumam*, may be properly rendered as in the margin, or, as Le Clerc has it, according to the Samaritan version, *The sons of pollution are not his*. The true characteristic of the sons of God is, to imitate and resemble God, 1 John iii. 10. It is true they are not without infirmities of various kinds, from which none dwelling in flesh are exempt. But they do not give that name to known sin, which they are always careful to avoid, and to walk in all well-pleasing before God. On the contrary, the Israelites are here denominated *a perverse and*

*crooked generation*. Froward and untractable; irregular and disorderly. In opposition to such characters the sons of God are described, Phil. ii. 15, as "being blameless and harmless in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, shining as lights in the world, and holding forth the word of life."

Ver. 6. *O foolish people and unwise!*—Fools and double fools! Fools indeed, to disoblige one on whom you so entirely depend! Who hath bewitched you! To forsake your own mercies for lying vanities! *Bought thee*—That hath redeemed thee from Egyptian bondage. *Made thee*—Not only in a general by creation, but in a peculiar manner by making thee his peculiar people. *Established*—That is, renewed and confirmed his favour to thee, and not taken it away, which thou hast provoked him to do.

Ver. 7. *The days of old*—The events of ancient days, or former ages, and thou wilt find that I had a respect unto thee, not only in Abraham's time, but long before it.

Ver. 8. *Their inheritance*—When God, by his providence, allotted the several parts of the world to several people, which was done, Gen. x. and xi. *When he separated*—Divided them in their languages and habitations according to their families. *He set the bounds*—That is, he disposed of the several lands and limits of the people, so as to reserve a sufficient place for the great numbers of the people of Israel. And therefore he so guided the hearts of several people, that the posterity of Canaan, which was accursed of God, and devoted to ruin, should be seated in that country which God intended for the children of Israel, that so when their iniquities were ripe, they might be rooted out, and the Israelites might come in their stead.

Ver. 9. *The Lord's portion is his people*—Highly prized and loved by him, Exod. xix. 5, 6; q. d. The Israelites are that portion of mankind whom God was pleased to redeem out of bondage, and to make his peculiar people. It is no wonder, therefore, that he has so great a regard for them, and takes special care of them.

Ver. 10. *He found him in a desert land*—Not by chance, but as it were looking out and seeking for him. He did, indeed, manifest himself to Israel in Egypt; but it was in the wilderness of Sinai that God found him in an eminent man-



A. M. 3554.  
B. C. 1491.  
Or, compassed him about.  
Deut. 4. 36.  
Ps. 17. 8.  
Prov. 7. 2.  
Zech. 2. 8.  
Ex. 19. 4.  
Ch. 1. 21.  
Is. 31. 5.  
A. 46. 4. & 68. 9. Hos. 11. 2.

ness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

12 So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

13 He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he

might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;

14 Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.

15 But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat,

A. M. 3555.  
B. C. 1455.  
Job 39. 6.  
Ps. 81. 16.  
Ps. 24. 16.  
& 167. 14.  
Gen. 49. 11.  
Ch. 33. 4.  
Is. 44. 3.  
1 Sam. 2. 9.  
Ch. 31. 90.  
Neh. 9. 25.  
Ps. 17. 10.  
Jer. 2. 7.  
& 5. 7. 38.  
Hos. 13. 6.

ner, revealed his will to him, entered into covenant with him, and imparted himself, and his grace and blessing to him. By this word *found* he also signifies both their lost condition in themselves, and that their recovery was not from themselves, but only from God, who sought and found them out by his grace. It ought to be observed, however, that the Hebrew word *מָצָא*, here rendered *found*, signifies also to *suffice*, or provide sufficiently for, as appears from Numb. xi. 22; Josh. xvii. 16; Judg. xxi. 14; and some other passages. And this sense of the word agrees best to the context here; for it cannot be said so properly, that God found the Israelites in the desert, as that he sustained them, and provided sufficiently for them there. Accordingly it is so rendered by the Seventy and Chaldee, the Samaritan and Arabic versions. Compare chap. viii. 15, Jer. ii. 6. *In a waste howling wilderness*—In a place destitute of all the necessities and comforts of life, which also was a type of that desolate and comfortless condition in which all men are before the grace of God finds them out; where, instead of the voices of men, is nothing heard but the howlings and yellings of ravenous birds and beasts. *He led him*—He conducted him from place to place by his cloudy pillar and providence. Or, he compassed him about by his provident care, watching over him and preserving him on every side. *As the apple of his eye*—As men use to keep the apple of their eye, that is, with singular care and diligence, this being as a most tender, so a most useful part. What a striking idea does this give us of the care which God took of Israel. And similar to this is the care which he takes of all his spiritual Israel, his true people and servants.

Ver. 11. *As an eagle stirreth up her nest*—The nest is here put for the young ones in the nest. The eagle is observed by Naturalists to have a most tender affection to her young, and therefore the care of God over Israel is here well illustrated thereby. By her voice she encourages and stirs them up to fly, hovers over them, bears and defends them by her strength; and for their preservation she is peculiarly fitted, by the quickness of her eye in espying danger, by her swiftness and great strength, as well as by her strong affection for them. *Taketh them, beareth them on her wings*—The eagle is said to take her young ones upon her wings, while they are so weak and feeble that they fail in their attempts to fly, and to support them till they acquire strength to commit themselves to the air. But the expression, *on her wings*, may mean, *as on her wings*, that is, gently, tenderly, and

safely, as if she did not carry them in her claws for fear of hurting them, but upon her wings.

Ver. 12. *So*—With such tenderness and care, the Lord alone did lead him—When they were shut up in Egypt, as in their nest, whence they durst not venture to fly or stir, he taught, and encouraged, and enabled them to fly out from that bondage, he dealt tenderly with them, bearing with their infirmities, keeping them from all harms. *There was no strange god with him*—To assist him at that work, or to deliver them. The more unworthy they, in giving to idols a share in that worship which they owe to God only.

Ver. 13. *He made him ride on the high places*—To conquer their strongest holds on the mountains, and their cities fenced with walls of the greatest height and strength. *To ride upon*, being, in the phraseology of Scripture, to subdue and conquer. Or, he put him in possession of a country full of lofty and fruitful mountains, and therefore called the high places of the earth. *To suck honey out of the rock*—Placed him in a country where honey flowed from the very rocks, the bees making it in the holes thereof, or in the hollow trees that grew upon or among the rocks. *Oil out of the flinty rocks*—Olive-trees growing and bearing fruit best in rocky or hilly places. The expressions are proverbial, and denote a most fertile land.

Ver. 14. *Milk of sheep*—Le Clerc renders it, *Milk of sheep and goats*; the Hebrew word signifying both. *With fat of lambs*—Or, lambs well fattened. The fat, indeed, wherewith the inwards were covered, was not to be eaten by them, but offered to God; yet that fat which was mixed with the flesh they might eat. *Bashan*—A place famous for excellent cattle. *Fat of kidneys of wheat*—With the finest of the grains of wheat, compared to kidneys in their shape and colour; or with large and plump corn, affording plenty of flour. *The pure blood of the grape*—This metaphor, as well as the preceding, is very elegant and natural, on account of the great resemblance between red wine and blood, and it is also a very animated expression.

Ver. 15. *Jeshurun*—Israel, called *Jeshurun*, both here and chap. xxxiii. 5, 26, as also Isai. xlv. 2. Some consider the word as being derived from *שָׁר*, *shur*, to see, and think the appellation was given them because they were so highly favoured with divine manifestations. But it is much more probable that it is derived from *יָשָׁר*, *jashar*, to be right, upright, or righteous, and that they are called *Jeshurun*, because they were a people professing righteousness, and were governed

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1461.

thou art grown thick, thou art covered *with fatness*; then he <sup>b</sup>forsook God *which* <sup>i</sup>made him, and lightly esteemed the <sup>k</sup>Rock of his salvation. 16 <sup>l</sup>They provoked him to jealousy with *strange gods*, with abominations provoked they him to anger. 17 <sup>m</sup>They sacrificed unto devils, *not to God*; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods that came*

h Ch. 31. 16.  
Is. 1. 4.  
i Ver. 6. 15.  
51. 13.  
k 2 Sam. 22.  
47. Ps. 89.  
26. & 95. 1.  
l 1 Kings 14.  
92. 1 Cor.  
10. 22.  
m Lev. 17.  
7. Ps. 106.  
37. 1 Cor.  
10. 20.  
Rev. 9. 20.  
Or, which were not  
God, Ver. 21.

newly up, whom your fathers feared <sup>n</sup>not. <sup>o</sup>Of the Rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast <sup>p</sup>gotten God that formed thee.

18 <sup>o</sup>Of the Rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast <sup>p</sup>gotten God that formed thee.

19 <sup>q</sup>And when the LORD saw it, he <sup>r</sup>abhorred *them*, <sup>s</sup>because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

20 And he said, <sup>t</sup>I will hide my

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1461.

n Is. 17. 10.

o Jer. 2. 32.

p Judg. 2.

q Or, despoiled.  
r Lam. 2. 6.  
s Is. 1. 2.

t Ch. 31. 17.

by righteous laws. Moses might also give them this name by way of instruction, to remind them what they ought to be, and by way of reproof, to shew them what a shame it was that they should degenerate so far from their name and profession. *Waxed fat and kicked*—As well fed cattle are wont to do: he grew insolent and rebellious against God, and against his word and Spirit. Moses here, transported in his mind to future scenes, speaks in the prophetic style, which often represents future events as actually present, or already past, to denote the certainty of the things foretold. The meaning is, that Israel, in the days of their prosperity, would make a very bad use of the blessings bestowed on them, would spurn at the yoke of God's law, and become wanton and ungovernable, like pampered horses. *And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation*—That is, his mighty Saviour and Deliverer; q. d. I see the time approaching, when they will notoriously abuse the goodness of God, and behave with the utmost ingratitude towards the Author of all their mercies. The Hebrew word *נֶבֶל*, *jenabel*, which we render, *He lightly esteemed*, signifies, *He rejected with the greatest contempt*. Thus the Jews, in after ages, rejected their Messiah, who was, in the most eminent sense, the Rock of their salvation, and thereby again most awfully fulfilled this prophecy, after they had fulfilled it several times before. But prosperity is but too apt to make men forget and forsake God, and lightly to esteem both him and his salvation.

Ver. 16, 17. *They provoked him to jealousy*—Speaking after the manner of men. See on Numb. xxv. 11. The word expresses, not only the hot displeasure and indignation of God, but also the ground of it, which was Israel's falseness to him, whom they had accepted as their husband, and their spiritual whoredom with other gods. *They sacrificed unto devils*—Not that they actually considered their gods under the notion of *devils*; but, whatever pretext they might have for their idolatry when they sacrificed, they really did it unto *devils*, the *wasters and destroyers* of mankind, as the Hebrew word *שְׂדִיִּים*, *shedim*, here used, is thought to signify, and as the devil is called, Rev. ix. 11. Some, indeed, think it is a word of the same import with *שְׂעִירִים*, *segnirim*, Lev. xvii. 7, a name given to *dæmons*, either because they were conceived to haunt waste places, or to appear in the form of goats. To *devils*, or *dæmons*, the Israelites sacrificed their sons and daughters, when they sacrificed them unto the idols of Canaan, Ps. cvi. 36—38. But these idols may here and elsewhere be termed *devils*, because devils brought them into the world in opposition to the true God, and gave answers by them, and in and through them received men's worship. Many of the heathen considered their idols as a sort of lower gods, and

pretended to worship the supreme God by them: but Moses here takes off this mask, and shews the Israelites, that in worshipping these idols they worshipped devils, whose will they hereby obeyed, and whose work and service they promoted. *And not to God*—For God utterly rejected those sacrifices which they offered to him together with idols. *To gods whom they knew not*—Had no experience of receiving any good from them, or *who knew not them*, as the words may be rendered; that is, who had never bestowed any benefits upon them. As, on the contrary, the true God says, Hos. xiii. 5, *I did know thee in the wilderness*, which the Chaldee interprets, *I supplied thy necessities*. *New gods*—Not simply or absolutely, for some of them had been worshipped for many generations; but in comparison of the true God, who is the Ancient of days, Dan. vii. 9, and who was worshipped from the beginning of the world. Moses may, however, also intend to signify, that they had not so much as the plea of ancient custom, or tradition, for the worship of many of their idols, and that they were so prone to idolatry, that every new object or mode of heathen superstition caught their fancy, and drew them away from their allegiance to the true God. *Whom your fathers feared not*—Worshipped not: and concerning whom they had no superstitious dread, (as the word *שֵׁנָרָא*, *segnaru*, here used, imports,) no fear lest they should be hurt by them if they did not worship them, which fear differs essentially from that pious fear and reverence which we owe to the true God. He means, they were such gods as could neither do good nor evil, Jer. x. 5.

Ver. 18, 19. *Of the Rock that begat thee*—Of God, one of whose titles this is; or of Christ, the Rock that is said to have followed the Israelites in the wilderness, 1 Cor. x. 4, of which they drank, and whom they tempted. Moses still speaks in the prophetic style, representing what appeared present to his prophetic view, as if it had already happened. *The provoking of his sons and daughters*—Such they were by calling and profession. Daughters are here expressly named, because the women were notoriously guilty of provoking God by idolatry. Thus we read, Jer. vii. 18, "The women knead dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings to other gods, that they may provoke me to anger." And again, Jer. xlii. 15, "The women burned incense to other gods." And, in Ezek. viii. 14, "The women sat weeping for Tammuz."

Ver. 20. *I will see what their end will be*—I will make them and others see what the fruit of such actions shall be. *No faith*—No fidelity. They were notoriously perfidious, and had so often broke their covenant with God, that they were not to be trusted when they made profession of repent-

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
1. 30. 9. Matt. 17. 17.  
Ver. 16. Ps. 78. 59.  
1 Sam. 17. 21, Kings 16. 13, 26. Ps. 31. 6. Jer. 9. 19. & 10. 8. & 11. 92. Jon. 2. 8. Acts 14. 15.  
Hos. 1. 10. Rom. 10. 19.  
Jer. 15. 14. & 17. 4. Lam. 4. 11.  
Or, hath burned.

face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith.

21 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the low-

est hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

24 They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

25 The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Or, hath consumed.

Is. 26. 15.  
Ps. 7. 13. 13. Ez. 5. 16.

Heb. burning coals, Hab. 3. 5.

Lev. 26. 32.

Lam. 1. 20. Ez. 7. 15. 2 Cor. 7. 5.

Heb. From the chambers.  
Heb. bereave.

ance. To the truth of this their whole history bears witness. But besides this, in another sense, they were destitute of faith. They did not truly believe the words God had spoken to them; they had not faith either in his promises or threatenings. And they put no trust or confidence in his glorious perfections, in his power, love, or faithfulness. Alas! how justly may God make the same complaint concerning many professors of Christianity! They are children in whom is no faith. They have not a firm reliance on the truth and importance of what God has spoken, and on the divine attributes engaged to make it good. Whatever is not the object of their senses, they either believe but faintly, or not at all. Here is the great failing of most professors of the true religion, the grand source of their sins and miseries. For it is faith only that can unite man to God, and produce love and obedience: it is this only that can raise him from earth to heaven! Reader! hast thou faith? Remember, without faith it is impossible to please God. From this verse to the 29th, Moses personates God speaking.

Ver. 21. They have provoked me to anger with their vanities—By vanities, here are meant the fictitious deities of the nations, with whose worship the Israelites corrupted themselves. See Jer. viii. 19, xiv. 22. I will move them to jealousy, &c.—God here threatens to repay their frequent revolts from him in their own kind, in a way most mortifying to their proud spirits; by causing the very Gentile nations whom they much despised, not only to become their masters and conquerors, but also to be taken into his covenant, while they themselves were excluded from it, see Matt. xxi. 43, 44. Rom. x. 19. With those that are not a people—With the heathen nations, who were none of God's people, who scarce deserved the name of a people, as being without the knowledge and fear of God, which is the foundation of all true policy and government, and many of them destitute of all government, laws, and order. And yet these people God declares he will take in their stead, receive them, and reject the Israelites, which, when it came to pass, how desperately did it provoke the Jews to jealousy! A foolish nation—So the Gentiles were both in the opinion of the Jews, and in truth and in reality, notwithstanding all their pretences to wisdom, there being nothing more foolish or brutish than the worship of idols.

Ver. 22. For a fire is kindled in mine anger—In this

verse, are predicted the dreadful calamities which God would bring upon the land of Judea, in words which seem to import the total ruin of it. Devouring judgments are here compared to fire, as they are also, Ezek. xxx. 8, Amos ii. 5. And from hence to verse 28, the destruction of their city and country by the Romans, and the dreadful calamities which they have suffered since in different ages, seem chiefly to be intended. And shall burn to the lowest hell—Or to the lowest part of the earth, as the word שְׁאוֹל, sheol, here rendered hell, signifies, Num. xvi. 30—33. Most destructive calamities are meant, judgments that should never cease, till they had overturned the whole Jewish constitution. And set on fire the foundations of the mountains—That is, subvert their strongest fortresses, yea Jerusalem itself, founded on the holy mountains, which was perfectly fulfilled in its destruction by Titus. And, according to Josephus, Titus himself, though an heathen, saw and acknowledged the hand of God in the affair. For observing the vast height of the walls, the largeness of every stone, and the exact order wherein they were laid and compacted, he cried out, "God was with us in this war, it is he that drove the Jews from these munitions. For what could the hands of men, or machines have availed against such towers!" Perhaps it may not be improper to mention here, as a further illustration of this prophecy, and its accomplishment, what is related, not only by the Christian writers of that age, Chrysostom, Sozomen, and Socrates, but also Ammianus Marcellinus, an heathen historian, that when Julian the Apostate, ordered the temple of Jerusalem to be rebuilt, with a view to give the lie to our Saviour's prophecy concerning it, "terrible globes of fire burst out, near the foundations, which overturned all, burnt the workmen, and made the place so inaccessible, that they desisted from the attempt." See Bishop Warburton's book, entitled Julian.

Ver. 23—25. I will spend mine arrows upon them—Even empty my quiver, and send upon them all my plagues, which, like arrows shot by a skilful and strong hand, shall speedily reach, and certainly hit, and mortally wound them. The judgments of God are often compared to arrows, Job vi. 4; Psal. xxxviii. 2, and xci. 5. They shall be burnt with hunger—Here these arrows or plagues are enumerated; the first of them is famine, with which they are therefore said to be

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.

a Ez. 20.  
15, 16, 23.

e Jer. 19. 4.

f Ps. 110. 9.  
g Or, Our  
high  
hand, and  
not the  
LORD.  
hath done  
all this.

i Is. 27. 11.  
Jer. 4. 92.  
k Ch. 5. 29.  
l Ps. 81. 13.  
& 107. 43.  
m Luke 19.  
41.

young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of grey hairs.

26 <sup>d</sup> I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:

27 Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries <sup>e</sup> should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should <sup>f</sup> say, **|| Our hand is high, and the LORD hath not done all this.**

28 For they are a nation void of counsel, <sup>g</sup> neither is there any understanding in them.

29 <sup>h</sup> O that they were wise, that

burnt; because it burns and parches the inward parts of the body. This threatening was awfully fulfilled in their destruction by the Chaldeans, when, according to Jeremiah, their visages became black as a coal, through famine; and their skin withered like a stick, Lam. iv. 8. And devoured with burning heat—From fevers, or carbuncles, or other inflaming distempers. Destruction by wild beasts and poisonous serpents, is threatened in the next clause, and ver. 25, by the sword. So that all God's four sore judgments were to be employed against them. *Serpents of the dust*—That creep upon and eat the dust, Gen. iii. 14, and lurk in it, that they may surprise unwary passengers, Gen. xlix. 17. *The sword without, and terror within*—In the field they shall be exposed to the sword of their enemies, and at home shall die with fear, or shall destroy their own lives, lest they should fall into the hands of their destroyers.

Ver. 27, 28. *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy—Their rage against me*, as it is expressed, Isa. xxxvii. 28, 29: their furious reproaches against my name, as if I were cruel to my people, or unable to deliver them. This is spoken after the manner of men; and the meaning is, that it would have been righteous in God to cut them entirely off, and wipe out their very memory from the earth; but such a sudden and final destruction of a people in whose behalf God had done so much, for establishing his true worship among them, and for conveying it from them to the rest of the world, would have occasioned those heathens to insult God himself, by ascribing their destruction to their own valour, or to the power of their idols, and not to his righteous judgment. Therefore, to prevent this wrong construction of such desolating judgments, it became the divine wisdom to defer the execution of them. We find Moses more than once representing before God, the blasphemous reflections which the heathen would make, in case of the total destruction of the Israelitish nation, as an argument to avert the effects of the divine displeasure. *Void of counsel*—Their enemies are ignorant and foolish, and therefore would readily form such a false and foolish judgment upon things.

Ver. 29, 30. *O that they were wise—O that they would*

they understood this, <sup>i</sup> that they would consider their latter end!

30 How should <sup>k</sup> one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock, <sup>l</sup> had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?

31 For <sup>m</sup> their rock is not as our Rock, <sup>n</sup> even our enemies themselves <sup>o</sup> being judges.

32 For <sup>o</sup> their vine <sup>p</sup> is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:

33 Their wine is <sup>p</sup> the poison of dragons, and the cruel <sup>q</sup> venom of asps.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

r Is. 47. 7.  
Lam. 1. 9.

s Jer. 26.  
6. Josh.  
23. 10.  
t Chro. 34.  
24. 16. 20.  
17.  
u Ps. 44. 12.  
Is. 50. 1.  
& 62. 3.

v 1 Sam. 2.  
w 1 Sam. 6.  
x Jer. 40.  
3.

y Is. 1. 10.  
z Or, is  
worse  
than [the]  
vine of  
Sodom,  
&c.

aa Ps. 58. 4.  
ab Ps. 140. 3.  
ac Rom. 3.  
13.

duly and wisely consider the dealings of God towards them, and so happily prevent the evils that will otherwise befall them in the generations to come. *How should one chase a thousand*—One Israelite. *Except their rock had sold them*—Their God, who was their refuge and defence, had quitted them, and delivered them up to the will of their enemies. *Shut them up*—As it were, in the net which their enemies had laid for them.

Ver. 31. *Their rock is not as our rock*—The gods of the heathen are not wise, and powerful, and gracious, like Jehovah. *Our enemies being judges*—Who, by their dear-bought experience, have often been forced to acknowledge that our God is far mightier than they and their false gods together.

Ver. 32. *Their vine is the vine of Sodom*—God had planted Israel a noble vine, a right seed, but they turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine, Jer. ii. 21. Their principles and practices became corrupt and abominable. *Their grapes are grapes of gall*—Their fruits are loathsome to me, mischievous to others, and at last will be pernicious to themselves. And so Josephus, their own countryman, describes them before their last destruction, when he says, their city was so wicked, that if the Romans had not fallen upon them, the earth would have opened its mouth and swallowed them up, or thunder and lightning from heaven must have destroyed them as it did Sodom: for "they were a more atheistical nation than those who suffered such things." And in another place, that "there was no work of wickedness that was not committed, nor can one imagine any thing so bad, that they did not do; endeavouring publicly, as well as privately, to exceed one another, both in impiety towards God, and injustice to their neighbours."

Ver. 33. *Their wine is the poison of dragons*—An expression of the same import with the former, signifying their fruits or works to be most depraved and pernicious, Rev. xvii. 2, and so resembling the poison of dragons. *The cruel venom of asps*—The venom of asps is called *cruel*, because it is accounted the most subtle and acute of all poisons, instantly penetrating into the vital parts.

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.

34 *Is* not this <sup>1</sup>laid up in store with me, *and* sealed up among my treasures?

35 <sup>a</sup>To me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in *due* time: for <sup>1</sup>the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

36 <sup>u</sup>For the LORD shall judge his people, <sup>2</sup>and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that *their* <sup>†</sup>power is gone, and <sup>3</sup>there is none shut up, or left.

37 And he shall say, <sup>2</sup>Where *are* their gods, *their* rock in whom they trusted.

38 Which did eat the fat of their

a Ps. 94. 1.  
Ecc. 28.  
1. Rom.  
12. 19.  
Heb. 10.  
30.  
2 Pet. 2.  
3.

a Ps. 135.  
14.  
x Judg. 2.  
18. Ps.  
106. 45.  
Jer. 31.  
20. Joel  
2. 14.  
2 Mac. 7.  
6.  
† Heb.  
hand.  
y 1 Kings  
16. 10. &  
21. 21.  
2 Kings 9.  
5. & 14.  
26.  
z Judg. 10.  
14. Jer. 2.  
25.

sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, *and* be <sup>†</sup>your protection.

39 See now that <sup>a</sup>I, *even* I, *am* he, and <sup>b</sup>there is no god with me: <sup>1</sup>I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand.

40 <sup>u</sup>For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

41 <sup>1</sup>If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; <sup>1</sup>I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

42 I will make mine arrows <sup>5</sup>drunk with blood, and my sword shall

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† Heb. an  
hiding  
for you.

a Ps. 102.  
27. Is. 41.  
4. & 48. 12.  
b Ch. 4. 35.  
Is. 45. 5.  
18. 52.  
c 1 Sam. 2.  
6. 2 Kings  
5. 7. Job  
5. 15. Ps.  
69. 20.  
105. 36. 1.  
Tob. 14.  
2. Wis. 16.  
13.  
d Gen. 14.  
22. Ec. 8.  
8. Num.  
14. 30.  
e 1s. 27. 1.  
W. 31. 5. x  
66. 16. Ez.  
21. 9. 10.  
14. 20.  
f Is. 1. 24.  
Nah. 1. 2.  
g Jer. 46.  
10.

Ver. 34. *Is not this laid up in store with me?*—That is, all their wickedness spoken of before, or the vengeance he is going to mention in the following verses. This, by Le Clerc, and many others, is referred to the vengeance which God would inflict on the enemies of the Jews. But surely the verses, with which it is immediately connected, whether preceding or following, render it much more probable, that the vengeance which should come on the Jews themselves, is intended, q. d. My long-suffering towards them, may make them think I have forgotten their sins: but I remember them punctually. They are *sealed up as in a bag*, Job xiv. 17, and as men seal up their treasures. Or, the allusion may be to deeds signed and sealed, and kept safely in a cabinet, though not presently executed and in that case, the meaning will be, that the execution of the vengeance was a thing notified and determined in the mind of God, but that the time was reserved with him as a profound secret, known only to himself.

Ver. 35. *To me belongeth vengeance*—As the supreme Lord and Judge of the world, whose power no force can resist, from whose knowledge no secret can be concealed, and from whose justice no art can escape. *Their feet shall slide*—Though they think themselves immovably fixed in their power and prosperity, they shall certainly be visited with national judgments, and overthrown. *In due time*—Though not so soon as some may expect, yet in that time, when it shall be thought most proper, when they have filled up the measure of their sins. *At hand*—Heb. *is near*. So the Scripture often speaks of those things, which are at many hundred years distance, to signify, that though they may be afar off as to our measures of time, yet in God's account they are near, they are as near as may be; when the measure of their sins is once full, the judgment shall not be deferred.

Ver. 36. *For the Lord, &c.*—The Hebrew particle, here rendered *For*, may be properly translated *Nevertheless*, as it is Isaiah ix. 1. For here, it seems, a new paragraph begins; and having spoken of the dreadful calamity which would

come upon his people, he now turns his discourse into a more comfortable strain, and begins to shew that after God had sorely chastised them, he would have mercy upon them, and turn their captivity. *Judge his people*—Shall plead their cause, shall protect and deliver them. *Repent*—Of the evil he hath brought upon them. *None shut up*—Either in their strong cities, or castles, or other hiding places, or in the enemy's hands or prisons, whence there might be some hope or possibility of redemption; and none left, as the poor and contemptible people are neglected and usually left by the conquerors in the conquered land, but all seem to be cut off and destroyed.

Ver. 37, 38. *He shall say*—The Lord, before he deliver his people, will first convince them of their former folly in forsaking him for idols. *Which did eat*—That is, to whom you offered sacrifices and oblations, after the manner of the Gentiles. *Let them rise up and help you*—If they can. Or, perhaps, instead of, *He shall say*, ver. 37, it may be better rendered, *One shall say; or, It shall be said*. And then the meaning will be, Whoever beholds these judgments with due consideration, will be convinced of the vanity and unprofitableness of these imaginary deities, to whom they offered their sacrifices, without receiving the least benefit from them.

Ver. 39. *See now*—Open your eyes and be convinced by your own sad experience, what vain and impotent things idols are. *I am he*—The only true, omnipotent, and irresistible God. *There is no god with me*—As I have no superior, so neither have I any equal. *I kill and I make alive*—I am the arbiter of life and death, the dispenser of prosperity and adversity, and the author of national changes and revolutions, whether in the way of mercy or judgment. We may observe, that it is usual in Scripture language, to represent extreme calamities under the notion of *death*, and to express happiness and prosperity by the word *life*.

Ver. 40—42. *I lift up my hand to heaven*—I solemnly swear I will do what here follows. It was the custom to stretch out the hand in swearing, Gen. xiv. 22. *And say, I*

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451. devour flesh; *and that* with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of <sup>h</sup>revenges upon the enemy.

n Joh 13. 26.  
Jer. 39.  
14. Lam.  
2. 8.  
Or,  
Praise  
His peo-  
ple, ye  
nations:  
or, Sing  
ye.  
Rom. 15.  
10.  
k Rev. 6.  
10. & 19.  
9.  
Ver. 41.  
m Ps. 85. 1. 43 ¶ <sup>i</sup>Rejoice, O ye nations, *with* his people: for he will <sup>k</sup>avenge the blood of his servants, and <sup>l</sup>will render vengeance to his adversaries, and <sup>m</sup>will be merciful unto his land, *and* to his people.

l Or, Jo-  
shua. 44 ¶ And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and ¶ Hoshea the son of Nun.

45 And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel:

n Ch. 6. 6.  
& 11. 18.  
Ex. 40. 4. 46 ¶ And he said unto them, <sup>a</sup>Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.

*live for ever*—And surely as I live for ever, I will whet my sword, &c. *If I whet*—If once I begin to prepare for war, and for the execution of my sentence. *Mine hand take hold on judgment*—The instruments of judgments, the weapons of war. A metaphor from warriors that take their weapons into their hands, when they intend to fight. *Glittering sword*—Heb. *The lightning of my sword*. A similitude which shews God's judgments to be swift, powerful, and terrible, Ezek. xxi. 10; Zech. ix. 14. *I will render vengeance to mine enemies*—No power shall be able to stop or hinder my proceedings. *I will make my arrows drunk with blood*—I will execute vengeance upon them to the full. A strong poetical figure, implying the abundance of blood that should be shed. *The blood—of the captives*—Whom thy sword hath sorely wounded, though not utterly killed. *The beginning of revenges*—When once I begin to revenge myself and people upon mine and their enemies, and will go on and make a full end.

Ver. 43. *Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people*—So the Seventy, a translation followed by St. Paul, Rom. xv. 10, where this passage is quoted, and where we are directed to consider it as a prediction of the bringing in of the Gentiles, to share the privileges of the gospel, and become one church of God in conjunction with the Jews. Or, if it be translated more literally, according to the Hebrew, *Rejoice, O ye nations, (or Gentiles) his people*; that is, being now his people, the sense will be much the same. Either way, the words seem evidently to relate to the last great deliverance of the Jews and their conversion to Christianity, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles, which undoubtedly will be the completion of the divine dispensations, and will spread peace and happiness over all the earth. He therefore calls upon all the nations of the earth to rejoice, in prospect of this great event, which they had all reason to do, consider-

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451.  
o Ch. 30. 19.  
Lev. 18.  
5. Prov.  
8. 2. 32.  
& 4. 29.  
Rom. 10.  
8. 47 For it is not a vain thing for you; <sup>o</sup>because it *is* your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong *your* days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

p Num. 47.  
12, 15. 48 ¶ <sup>p</sup>And the LORD spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying,

q Num. 33.  
47, 48. Ch.  
34. 1. 49 Get thee up into this <sup>q</sup>mountain Abarim, *unto* Mount Nebo, which *is* in the land of Moab, that *is* over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession.

r Num. 20.  
25, 28. &  
33. 29. 50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as <sup>r</sup>Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people:

s Num. 20.  
11, 12, 13.  
& 27. 14. 51 Because <sup>s</sup>ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at

ing the singular advantages which all nations would enjoy at that time, and upon that occasion.

Ver. 44. *He and Hoshea*—Or Joshua. Probably Moses spoke it to as many as could hear him, while Joshua, in another assembly, at the same time, delivered it to as many as his voice could reach. Thus Joshua, as well as Moses, would be a witness against them, if ever they forsook God.

Ver. 46, 47. *Set your hearts unto all the words, &c.*—Having concluded his prophetic song or hymn, he addressed himself afresh to them in a pathetic exhortation, to weigh and remember well the contents of it, and seriously to improve it, in a hearty and careful observance of the laws he had given them, and by training up their children in the same obedience. *It is not a vain thing*—It is not an unprofitable or contemptible work I advise you to, but well worthy of your most serious care. *It is your life*—Temporal, spiritual, and eternal; the way to, and means of happiness here and hereafter.

Ver. 48, 49. *That self-same day*—Now he had finished his work, why should he desire to live a day longer? He had indeed formerly desired and prayed that he might go over Jordan: but now he is entirely satisfied, and saith no more of that matter. *Nebo*—A ridge, or top of the mountains of Abarim.

Ver. 50. *And die in the mount*—Not immediately, but after he had blessed the people, as in the next chapter. *Be gathered unto thy people*—We seem to be compelled to understand this of the soul of Moses, to be associated in paradise with the souls of the just, here termed his people; in which sense it is taken by some of the Jewish writers. For if it were to be interpreted of his body only, or chiefly, it could hardly be said to be sense, since the people of Moses were not buried in Mount Abarim. See on Gen. xxv. 8.

Ver. 51, 52. *Because ye trespassed*—God reminds him



A. M. 2552. R. C. 1451. the waters of || Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin: because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.

52 <sup>u</sup> Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.

CHAP. XXXIII.

*The blessing of Moses. He pronounces them all blessed, in what God had done for them already, ver. 1—5. He pronounces a blessing upon each tribe, ver. 6—25. He pronounces them all in general blessed, on account of what God would be to them, and do for them, if they were obedient, ver. 26—29.*

of the sin he had committed long before, and this Moses records as an acknowledgment, made at his death, of God's justice, and a warning to all people not to distrust or disobey the voice of God. It is good for the holiest of men to die repenting even of their early sins. *Yet thou shalt see the land*—And see it as the earnest of that better country, which is only seen with the eye of faith. What is death to him who has a believing prospect and a steadfast hope of eternal life?

CHAP. XXXIII. Ver. 1. *The blessing wherewith Moses blessed Israel*—He is said to bless them, by praying to God with faith for his blessing upon them; and by foretelling the blessing which God would confer upon them. And Moses calls himself the man of God; that is, the servant or prophet of God, to acquaint them, that the following prophecies were not his own inventions, but divine inspirations.

Ver. 2. *The Lord came*—Namely to the Israelites; manifested himself graciously and gloriously among them. He begins with this, that he may, in the first place, make them sensible of that most signal blessing which God had bestowed upon them, in choosing them to be his peculiar people. *From Sinai*—Beginning at Sinai, where the first appearance of God was. *And rose up from Seir unto them, &c.*—The plain meaning of the words is, that the same divine presence, which was manifested to them on Mount Sinai, accompanied them through all their journeys and encampments, especially about Mount Seir and Paran, the principal places of their abode, till they came to the plains of Moab, where they were now encamped. *Rose up from Seir*—Namely, when, upon the removal of the cloud of glory, they marched from the neighbourhood of Idumea, in which is Mount Seir. The original word signifies, that his presence rose upon them like the sun from the mount, Mal. iv. 2, and spread abroad his beams upon them from Paran, viz. when they encamped below that mount, whither they came from the wilderness of Sinai, Numb. x. 12, and xiii. 1, 2, 3. Here God eminently manifested his presence and goodness, both in giving the people flesh, which they desired, and in appointing the seventy elders, and pouring forth his Spirit upon them. *He came*

AND this is <sup>a</sup> the blessing, where- with Moses <sup>b</sup> the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.

2 And he said, <sup>c</sup> The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with <sup>d</sup> ten thousands of saints: from his right hand *went* † a fiery law for them.

3 Yea, <sup>e</sup> he loved the people; <sup>f</sup> all his saints are in thy hand: and they <sup>g</sup> sat down at thy feet; every one shall <sup>h</sup> receive of thy words.

4 <sup>i</sup> Moses commanded us a law,

A. M. 2552. R. C. 1451. <sup>a</sup> Gen. 49. 28. <sup>b</sup> Ps. 90. title <sup>c</sup> Ex. 19. 18, 20. Judg. 5. 4, 5. Hab. 3. 2. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 68. 17. Dan. 7. 10. Acts 7. 53. Gal. 3. 19. Heb. 2. 2. Rev. 5. 11. & 9. 16. <sup>e</sup> Heb. a fire of law. <sup>f</sup> Ex. 19. 3. Ch. 7. 7, 8. Ps. 47. 4. Hos. 11. 1. Mal. 1. 2. <sup>g</sup> Ch. 7. 6. 1 Sam. 2. 9. Ps. 50. 5. Luke 10. 39. Acts 29. 3. <sup>h</sup> Prov. 2. 1. <sup>i</sup> John 1. 17. & 7. 19.

with ten thousands of his saints—Or, holy ones, that is, angels, who attended him at the giving of the law, Psal. lxxviii. 17; see also Acts vii. 53, Gal. iii. 19, and Heb. ii. 2. *From his right hand*—An allusion to the manner of men, who ordinarily both write and give gifts with their right hands. Thus God both wrote and gave the law. *A fiery law*—The law is termed fiery, because, like fire, it is of a searching, purging, and inflaming nature; because it inflicts fiery wrath on sinners for the violation of it, and principally because it was delivered out of the midst of fire.

Ver. 3. *He loved the people*—The tribes of Israel. The sense is, this law, though delivered with fire, and smoke, and thunder, which might seem to portend nothing but hatred and terror, yet in truth was given to Israel in great love, as being the great mean of their temporal and eternal salvation. Yea, he embraced the people, and laid them in his bosom! So the word signifies, which speaks not only the dearest love, but the most tender and careful protection. All God's saints or holy ones, that is, his people, are in thy hand, that is, under God's care, to protect, direct, and govern them. These words are spoken to God; the change of persons, his and thy, is most frequent in the Hebrew tongue. This clause may farther signify God's kindness to Israel, in upholding them when the fiery law was delivered, which was done with so much terror, that not only the people were ready to sink under it, but even Moses did exceedingly fear and quake. But God sustained Moses and the people, in or by his hand, whereby he, in a manner, covered them, that no harm might come to them. *At thy feet*—Like scholars to receive instructions. He alludes to the place where the people waited, when the law was delivered, which was at the foot of the mount. *Every one*—Of the people will receive or submit to thy instructions and commands. This may respect either the people's promise when they heard the law, that they would hear and do all that was commanded; or, their duty to do so.

Ver. 4. *Moses commanded us a law*—Moses has been thought by some to speak this of himself, in the third person, because he intended the contents of this chapter, like the preceding song, to be learned by the Israelites, and repeated in



A. M. 2553. k  
B. C. 1451.

k Ps. 119.  
111.  
1 Gen. 36.  
31. Judg.  
9. 2. & 17.  
6.  
m Ch. 32.  
15.

even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

5 And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

their own persons. They are therefore supposed to say, *Moses commanded us a law, &c. The inheritance of the congregation*—The law is called their *inheritance*, because the obligation to observe it was hereditary, passing from parents to their children, and because this was the best part of their inheritance, the greatest of all those gifts which God bestowed upon them. So the Psalmist thought, “Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever,” Psal. cxix. 111.

Ver. 5. *And—Or, For, he was king*—Not indeed in title, but in reality, being under God, their supreme governor and lawgiver; and therefore, by his authority, required them to observe these laws. *When the tribes were gathered together*—When the princes and people met together, for the management of public affairs, Moses was owned by them as their king and lawgiver. Le Clerc, however, and many others think, that *God*, and not *Moses*, is here intended, he being indeed the king and lawgiver of the Jews especially, and not *Moses*. *Moses* elsewhere, sufficiently intimates, that he was not their king, chap. xvii. 14. And so does Samuel, who acted in a character similar to that of *Moses*, 1 Sam. viii. 7.

Ver. 6. *Let Reuben live, and not die*—Though Reuben deserves to be cut off, or greatly diminished and obscured, according to Jacob's prediction, Gen. xlix. 4, yet God will spare them, and give them a name and portion among the tribes of Israel. All the ancient paraphrasts refer this to the other world, so far were they from expecting temporal blessings only. “*Let Reuben live in life eternal*,” says Onkelos, “and not die the second death.” “*Let Reuben live in this world*,” so Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum, “and not die that death which the wicked die in the world to come.” *Let not his men be few*—As the word *not* is wanting in the Hebrew, we may render the clause more properly, *Though his men be few*. This best agrees with Jacob's prophecy, Gen. xlix. 4, That he should *not excel*, and yet *live*, that is, should still subsist, and be in some measure, a flourishing tribe, though less numerous than some others. Le Clerc renders it, *Let his dead men (מתים, methaim, mortales ejus) be few*. Which prayer, he thinks, *Moses* put up for them, because this tribe appear to have been greatly diminished in the wilderness, see on Numb. xxvi. 7. Here is no mention of Simeon; but this tribe is thought by some to be included in the blessing of Reuben, to whom Simeon was next in birth, and who stood most in need of the same blessing, for *no* tribe was more impaired in the wilderness than Simeon's. See on Numb. xxvi. 14. Others think that tribe is included in the blessing of Judah, with whose possessions their's were mixed, Josh. xix. 1. And what makes this the more probable, is, that he was joined with Judah in those wars against the Canaanites, in which the divine aid is implored for Judah. But the Alexandrian MSS. of the Septuagint reads this verse thus, *Let Reuben live, and not die, and let the men of Simeon be many, or not few*.

6 ¶ Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few. A. M. 2553. B. C. 1451.

7 ¶ And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be Gen. 49.6.

Ver. 7. *And this is the blessing of Judah*—As these words are used of none of the rest, so they seem to denote that Judah's blessing was more remarkable than the rest. Judah is here put before Levi, because it was to be the royal tribe. This benediction, as Bishop Sherlock argues, cannot relate to the time when it was given: for then Judah's hands were very sufficient for him, this tribe being by much the greatest of the twelve tribes, as appears by two different accounts, of the forces of Israel, in the book of Numbers, Numb. i, and xxvi, and there was more reason to put up this petition for several other tribes, than for Judah. Besides, what is the meaning of *bringing Judah to his people*? How were he and his people at this time separate? What means, likewise, the other part of the petition, *Be thou an help to him from his enemies*? This petition supposes a state of distress; yet what distress was Judah in at this time, at least what greater distress than the other tribes? The ancient Targums, and some old versions, understand the first petition of *bringing Judah back to his people*, to be only a request in his behalf, for safe return from the day of battle; but was there not the same reason for the same petition in behalf of every tribe? Nay, how much better would it have suited Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, who left their people, and their settlements, on the other side of Jordan, and passed over the river in the very front of the battle, to assist their brethren? Josh. iv. 12.

But if you refer this prophecy to the prophecy of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10, and to the continuance of the *sceptre of Judah* after the destruction of the other tribes, every expression is natural and proper, and suited to the occasion. Do but suppose *Moses*, in the spirit of prophecy, to have had a sight of the state of affairs, when all the people were in captivity, and you will see how this *prophetic* prayer answers to that state. All the tribes were in captivity, the ten tribes in Assyria, and Judah in Babylon; but it was implied in Jacob's prophecy, that Judah should *retain the sceptre*, and return again: for Judah only, therefore, does *Moses* pray, that *he may come to his people again*.

*Let his hand be sufficient for him*—Good reason was there for this petition, for scarcely were his hands sufficient at the return from Babylon. The tribe of Judah, Numb. xxvi. 22, in *Moses's* time, consisted of 76,500, reckoning only those of twenty years old and upward. But upon the return from Babylon, Judah, with Benjamin, the Levites, and the remnant of Israel, made only 42,360, Ezra ii. 64; and in so weak a state they were, that Sanballat, in great scorn, said, “What do these feeble Jews?” Neh. iv. 2. *Be thou an help to him from his enemies*—The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are convincing proofs of the great difficulties and oppositions, which the Jews found in setting up their temple and city. Once their enemies had so prevailed, that orders came from the court of Persia, to stop all their proceedings: and, even at last, when Nehemiah came to their assistance, with a new commission from Artaxerxes, they were so beset with ene-

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Ps. 146. 5.  
Ex. 29. 30.  
Ex. 17. 7.  
Num. 20.  
13. Ch. 5.  
2. 3. 16.  
Ps. 81. 7.

sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

8 ¶ And of Levi he said, ¶ Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

9 Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own chil-

dren: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

10 ¶ They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: ¶ they shall put incense † before thee, and whole burnt-sacrifice upon thine altar.

11 Bless; LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Jer. 18.  
18. Mal.  
2. 5. 6.  
Or, Let them teach, &c.  
Lev. 10.  
11. Ch. 17.  
9. 10. 11.  
& 24. 8.  
Ex. 44. 23.  
24. Mal.  
2. 7.  
Or, let them put incense.  
Ex. 30. 7.  
8. Num.  
16. 40.  
1 Sam. 2.  
28.  
† Heb. at thy nose.  
y Lev. 1. 9.  
18. 17. Ps. 51. 10. Ez. 43. 27. z 2 Sam. 24. 24. Ps. 20. 3. Ez. 20. 40, 41. & 45. 67.

mies, that the men employed in building the wall, every one, with one of his hands, wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon, Neh. iv. 17.

Lay these two prophecies now together: and they will explain each other. Jacob foretels that Judah's sceptre should continue till Shiloh came: which is in effect foretelling that the sceptres of the other tribes should not continue so long. Moses in the spirit of prophecy sees the desolation of all the tribes; he sees the tribes of the kingdom of Israel carried away by the Assyrians, the people of Judah by the Babylonians; he sees that Judah should again return weak, harassed, and scarcely able to maintain himself in his own country: for them, therefore, he conceives this prophetic prayer: *Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, &c.* See Dodd.

Ver. 8. *Of Levi, he said*—Said to God in prayer. *Let thy Thummim, &c.*—That is, the Thummim and Urim which are thine, O Lord, by special institution and consecration, (understanding thereby the ephod, in which they were put, the high-priesthood to which they were appropriated, and withal the gifts and graces signified by them, and necessary for the discharge of that high-office) *be with thy holy one*, that is, with that priest whom thou hast consecrated to thyself, and who is holy in a more peculiar manner than the people are. He means, let the family of Aaron perpetually retain the priesthood, and be endued with that uprightness in the discharge of their duty, and that light and knowledge in divine things, which are signified by the Thummim and Urim. Notwithstanding this blessing, the Urim and Thummim were lost in the captivity, and never restored under the second temple. But they have their full accomplishment in Jesus Christ, God's Holy One, and our great High Priest, of whom Aaron was but a type. With him, who had lain in the Father's bosom from eternity, the Urim and Thummim shall ever remain, for he is the wonderful and everlasting Counsellor. *Whom thou didst prove at Massah*—That is, try and rebuke, but yet didst not take away the priesthood from him. *With whom thou didst strive*—Whom thou didst reprove and chastise. Le Clerc, however, refers these words to the people. *Whom thou, O Israel, didst prove or tempt at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive, &c.* which happened twice. See Exod. xvii. 2, and Numb. xx. 2. In both these places it appears that Aaron was tempted; and tried, and strove against by the people, no less than Moses.

Ver. 9. *Who said to his father, &c.*—*I have not seen him*—That is, I have no respect unto them in comparison of

God and my duty. The meaning is, Who followed God and his command fully, and executed the judgment enjoined, without any respect of persons. It appears to refer to the whole tribe of Levi, who, fired with a holy zeal for God and his worship, performed impartial execution on the worshippers of the golden calf, not excepting even their nearest relations that were concerned in that wickedness, see Exod. xxxii. 26—29. *They kept thy covenant*—When the rest broke their covenant with God by that foul sin of idolatry, that tribe kept themselves pure from that infection, and adhered to God and his worship. Some also include herein their impartiality in the administration of justice, that they had not accepted, nor should accept, the persons of any, not even their relations. To which we may add, that the office of the priests and Levites, which engaged their constant attendance, at least by turns, at God's altar, laid them under a necessity of being frequently absent from their families, which they could neither take such care of, nor make such provision for, as other Israelites might. This constant self-denial they submitted to, that they might observe God's word, and keep the covenant of priesthood. And all those, even under the gospel, who are called to minister in holy things, should remember that it is their duty to sit loose to the relations and interests which are dearest to them in this world, and prefer the fulfilling of their ministry before the gratifying the best friend they have, Acts xx. 24, and xxi. 13. Our Lord Jesus knew not his mother and his brethren, when they would have taken him from his work, Matt. xii. 48.

Ver. 10. *They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law*—And that both as preachers in their religious assemblies, reading and expounding the law, Neh. vii. 7, 8, and as judges, determining doubtful and difficult cases that should be brought before them, 2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9. The priests' lips were to keep this knowledge for the use of the people, who were to ask the law at their mouths, Mal. ii. 7. Even Haggai, a prophet, consulted the priests in a case of conscience, Hag. ii. 12. *They shall put incense before thee*—They shall be the sole ministers at the altar.

Ver. 11. *Bless, Lord, his substance*—Because he hath no inheritance of his own, and therefore wholly depends upon thy blessing. *The work of his hands*—All his holy administrations, which he fitly calls *the work of his hands*, because a great part of the service of the Levites and priests was done by the labour of their hands and bodies, whereas the service of evangelical ministers is more spiritual and heavenly.

A.M. 2853.  
B.C. 1451.

12 ¶ And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him: and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

13 ¶ And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

14 And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things † put forth by the † moon,

† Heb. *Christ forth.*  
† Heb. *moons.*

*Smite*—He prays thus earnestly for them, because he foresaw they who were to teach, and reprove, and chastize others, would have many enemies; and because they were, under God, the great preservers and upholders of religion, and their enemies were the enemies of religion itself.

Ver. 12. *Of Benjamin*—Benjamin is put next to Levi, because the temple, where the work of the Levites lay, was upon the edge of the lot of this tribe. And it is put before Joseph, because of the dignity of Jerusalem (part of which was in this lot) above Samaria, which was in the tribe of Ephraim; likewise, because Benjamin adhered to the house of David, and to the temple of God, when the rest of the tribes deserted both. *The beloved of the Lord*—So called in allusion to their father Benjamin, who was the beloved of his father Jacob; and because of the kindness of God to this tribe, which appeared both in this, that they dwelt in the best part of the land, as Josephus affirms, and in the following privilege. *Shall dwell in safety by him*—Shall have his lot nigh to God's temple, which was both a singular comfort and safeguard to him. *Shall cover*—Shall protect that tribe continually while they cleave to him. *He*—The Lord shall dwell, that is, his temple shall be placed, *between his shoulders*, that is, in his portion, or between his borders, as the word rendered shoulder is often used, see Numb. xxiv. 11. And this was truly the situation of the temple, on both sides whereof was Benjamin's portion. And though Mount Zion was in the tribe of Judah, yet Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, was in the tribe of Benjamin.

Ver. 13—15. *And of Joseph*—Including both Ephraim and Manasseh. In Jacob's blessing, that of Joseph is the largest; and so it is here. *His land*—His portion shall be endowed with choice blessings from God. *Of heaven*—That is, the precious fruits of the earth, brought forth by the influences of heaven, the warmth of the sun, and the rain which God will send from heaven. *The deep*—The springs of water bubbling out of the earth: perhaps it may likewise refer to the great deep, the abyss of waters, which is supposed to be contained in the earth. *By the sun*—Which opens and warms the earth, cherishes and improves, and in due time ripens the seeds and fruits of it. *The moon*—Which by its moisture refreshes and promotes them. Heb. *Of the*

A.M. 2853.  
B.C. 1451.

15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

16 And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

17 His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of † unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to

c Gen. 49.  
d Hab. 3. 6.  
e Ex. 3. 2.  
f Acta 7.  
g Gen. 49.  
h 1 Chro. 5.  
i Num. 22.  
j Ps. 92.  
k Heb. *an unicorn.*  
l 1 Kings 22. 11. Ps. 44. 5.

*moons, or months*, that is, which it bringeth forth in the several months, or seasons, of the year. *The chief things*—That is, the excellent fruits, as grapes, olives, figs, &c. which delight in mountains, growing upon, or the precious minerals contained in, their mountains and hills, called ancient and lasting, that is, such as have been from the beginning of the world, and are likely to continue to the end of it, in opposition to those hills, or mounts, which have been cast up by man.

Ver. 16. *And for the precious things of the earth*—And in general for all the choice fruits which the land produceth in all the parts of it, whether hills or valleys. *Fulness thereof*—That is, the plants, and cattle, and all creatures that grow, increase, and flourish in it. *The good will*—For all other effects of the good will and kindness of God, who not long since did for a time dwell or appear in the bush to me in order to the relief of his people, Exod. iii. 2. *Of Joseph*—That is, of Joseph's posterity. *Him that was separated from his brethren*—His brethren separated him from them by making him a slave, and God distinguished him from them by making him a prince. The preceding words might be rendered, *My dweller in the bush*. That was an appearance of the Divine Majesty to Moses only, in token of his particular favour. Many a time had God appeared to Moses; but now he is just dying he seems to have the most pleasing remembrance of the first time that he saw the visions of the Almighty. It was here God declared himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so confirmed the promise made to the fathers, that promise which our Lord shews, reaches as far as the resurrection and eternal life.

Ver. 17. *His glory is like the firstling of his bullock*—Or the prime and fairest bullock of the herd: for things that excel in their kind are called *first-born* in Scripture. The beauty and strength of this tribe is compared to this stately creature, and a bullock being the best emblem of power among the beasts of the pasture, it seems to be here used to denote the superior honour and dignity of the house of Joseph above the rest of the tribes of Israel. Indeed, a bullock, as Bochart shews, was formerly used as an image of kingly power and dignity, and therefore seems here to denote the kingdom which Ephraim should obtain in Jeroboam and his successors. *His horns are like the horns of*

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Gen. 48.  
19.  
the ends of the earth: and <sup>k</sup>they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

18 ¶ And of Zebulun he said, <sup>l</sup>Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out: and, Issachar, in thy tents.

19 They shall <sup>m</sup>call the people unto the mountain; there <sup>n</sup>they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck <sup>o</sup>of the abundance of the seas, and <sup>p</sup>of treasures hid in the sand.

20 ¶ And of Gad he said, Blessed <sup>q</sup>be he that <sup>r</sup>enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head.

21 And <sup>p</sup>he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, <sup>s</sup>was he <sup>t</sup>seated; and <sup>u</sup>he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the LORD; and his judgments with Israel.

22 ¶ And of Dan he said, Dan

*an unicorn*—An horn is a common Scripture emblem of power and force. So this is a farther description of the house of Joseph. *With them he shall push the people together*—That is, throw down all that oppose him, particularly the Canaanites. *To the ends of the earth*—That is, of the land of Canaan. *The ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh*—Or, *such are*, &c. i. e. These blessings belong to the two numerous branches of the house of Joseph. Here he ascribes to Ephraim ten thousands, and to Manasseh only thousands; thus foreshewing, that Ephraim the younger was to be the more numerous of the two, as Jacob had before prophesied of them.

Ver. 18. *Rejoice, Zebulun*—Thou shalt prosper, and have cause of rejoicing. *In thy going out*—1, To war, as this phrase is often used. 2, To sea, in way of traffic, because their portion lay near the sea. And in both respects his course is opposite to that of Issachar, who was a lover of peace and pasturage. He is here joined with Zebulun, both because they were brethren by father and mother too, and because their possessions lay near together. *In thy tents*—Thou shalt give thyself to the management of land and cattle, living quietly in thy own possessions.

Ver. 19. *They*—Zebulun, of whom Moses takes more special notice. And so, having despatched Issachar in two words, he returns to Zebulun. *Shall call the people*—The Gentiles, either those of Galilee, which was called Galilee of the Gentiles, who were their neighbours; or people of other nations with whom they had commerce, which they endeavoured to improve, in persuading them to worship the true God. *The mountain*—That is, to the temple, which Moses knew was to be seated upon a mountain. *Sacrifices of righteousness*—Such as God requires. The trafficking abroad with heathen nations shall not make them forget their duty at home, nor shall their distance from the place of sacrifice hinder them from coming to it to discharge that duty. *Of the abundance of the sea*—They shall grow rich by the traffick of the sea, and shall consecrate themselves and their riches to God. *Hid in the sand*—Such precious things as either, 1, Are contained in the sand of the sea and rivers, in which sometimes there is mixed a considerable quantity of gold and silver. Or, 2, Such as grow in the sea, or are fetched from the sandy bottom of it, as pearls, coral, ambergrease. Or, 3, Such as, being cast into the sea by shipwrecks, are cast upon the shore by the workings of the sea. This, however, Le Clerc refers, with Jonathan, to their enriching themselves by making glass of a kind of sand

found upon their coasts. For the river Belus, famous for its glassy sands, of which alone glass was for a long time manufactured, was in the territories of the Zebulunites. These glassy sands are mentioned by several authors. But *treasures hid in the sand*, may import the same as *sucking of the abundance of the seas*, i. e. enriching themselves by naval commerce.

Ver. 20. *Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad*—That bringeth him out of his straits and troubles, which he was often engaged in, because he was encompassed with potent enemies. *As a lion*—Safe and secure from his enemies, and terrible to them when they rouse and molest him. *Teareth the arm*—Utterly destroys his enemies, both the head, the seat of the crown, their dignity and principality, and the arm, the subject of strength, and instrument of action; both chief princes, and their subjects.

Ver. 21. *He provideth the first part for himself*—The first-fruits of the land of promise, the country of Sihon, which was first conquered, and which he is said to *provide for himself*, because he asked and obtained it of Moses, and was the first who viewed his portion in the promised land. *There, in a portion of the lawgiver, &c.*—This is obscurely expressed, but the meaning seems to be, He was there settled in a portion, or settlement, allotted him by Moses the Jewish legislator himself, whereas the portions beyond Jordan were given to the several tribes by Joshua, according to the direction of the lot. Or perhaps this part of the land is termed *a portion of the lawgiver*, because, lying beyond Jordan, it was the only part which Moses was permitted to enter upon. *Was he seated*—Hob. כָּסוּ, *sapun*, covered, or protected: for their wives and children were secured in their cities, while many of the men went over to the war in Canaan. *He came with the heads of the people, &c.*—Or, with the princes, captains, or rulers of the people; that is, under their command and conduct. Or, as רֹשֵׁה, *roshee*, may be understood, with the first, or in the front of the people, as the Syriac renders it; for this tribe, and their brethren, whose lot fell beyond Jordan, were to march into Canaan before their brethren. Thus, again, he speaks, in the prophetic style, of a thing as already done, because he foresaw it would be done. *He executed the justice of the Lord*—Or, his just judgment against the Canaanites, as the rest of the Israelites did.

Ver. 22. *A lion's whelp*—Courageous, and generous, and strong, and successful against his enemies. *Which leapeth from Bashan*—Because there were many and fierce lions

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

v Josh. 19.  
47. Judg.  
18. 27.

o Gen. 49.  
21.

e Job. 19.  
27. &c.

u Gen. 49.  
20.

x Job 29. c.

is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.

23 ¶ And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD: possess thou the west and the south.

24 ¶ And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.

in those parts, whence they used to come forth, and leap upon the prey. Or this may refer either to the particular victories obtained by Sampson, who was of the tribe of Dan, or to a more general achievement of that tribe, when a party of them surprised Laish, which lay in the farthest part of the land of Canaan from them. And the mountain of Bashan lying not far from that city, from whence they probably made their descent upon it, thus leaping from Bashan.

Ver. 23. *Satisfied with favour*—With the favour of God. That only is the favour that satisfies the soul. They are happy indeed that have the favour of God; and they shall have it that place their satisfaction in it. *And full with the blessing of the Lord*—Not only with corn, wine, and oil, the fruit of the blessing, but with the blessing itself, the grace of God; according to his promise and covenant. *Possess thou the west and the south*—Or, the sea and the south, as the Hebrew word is. Not the midland sea, and the south of Canaan; for, according to Josephus, with whom all the Jewish writers agree, this tribe possessed the east and the north of the country, in Upper Galilee; but the sea of Gennesaret, or Tiberias, which was its border on one side, and the south from the last mentioned tribe, viz. that of Dan.

Ver. 24. *Let Asher*—Who carries blessedness in his very name, be blessed with children—He shall have numerous, strong, and healthful children. *Acceptable to his brethren*—By his sweet disposition, and winning carriage. *In oil*—He shall have such plenty of oil, that he may not only wash his face, but his feet also in it. This prophetic blessing was remarkably fulfilled; for Asher's portion abounded with the best and most remarkable oil, which was the most famed of all Canaan's productions. Compare Job xxix. 6, and Gen. xlix. 20.

Ver. 25: *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass*—They must have had great plenty of both these metals before they could make, or rather adorn, their shoes with them, as was the custom among some nations. But we may render the words, *Under thy feet shall be iron and brass*, viz. mines of those metals; or, thy bolts, or bars, shall be iron and brass, for so the word, here rendered shoes, is translated, Can. v. 5, Neh. iii. 3, 6, 13, 14, 15. Sidon, which was famous among the heathens for its plenty of brass, was in the tribe of Asher; and Sarepta is thought to have had its name from the brass and iron which were melted there in great quantities. *As thy days, thy strength shall be*—Thy strength shall not be diminished with age, but thou shalt have the vigour of youth even in thine old age; thy tribe shall grow stronger and stronger. Or the words may mean, that, during their

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

Or, Under thy shoes shall be iron.

y Ch. 4. 9.

z Ex. 15. 11.

Jer. 10. 6.

a Ch. 32. 15.

b Ps. 68. 4.

c Ps. 90. 1.

d Ch. 9. 3.

4, 6.

25 ¶ Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

26 ¶ There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

27 The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the

continuance as a tribe, they should not meet with any remarkable disasters, or be brought low, but continue in their full strength.

Ver. 26. *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun*—These are the last words that ever Moses wrote, perhaps the greatest writer that ever lived upon the earth. And this man of God, who had as much reason to know both as ever any mere man had, with his last breath magnifies both the God of Israel, and the Israel of God. Having blessed every particular tribe, he concludes with declaring the happiness of the whole nation, especially in this, that their God was not like the vain and foolish gods of other nations, but that eternal and infinite Being, who is matchless and inimitable in all perfections, and who had undertaken to be their protector, provider, and saviour, notwithstanding, and in defiance of, all their enemies. *Who rideth upon the heavens in, or to thy help*—Who, in sending thee help; rides upon the heavens with the greatest state and magnificence, and makes them subservient to his will, by employing thunder, lightning, hail-stones, and all the artillery of the skies in thy behalf. *His riding on the heavens*, denotes the greatness and glory in which he manifests himself to the upper world, and the use he makes of the influences of heaven, and the products of the clouds, in bringing to pass his own counsels in this lower world. All these he manages and directs, as a man doth the horse he rides on. *In his excellency on the sky*—Or, *In his magnificence on the clouds*; that is, when he is pleased to display his grandeur and awful majesty in thy behalf, he rides upon the clouds, raises such storms and tempests as demonstrate those parts of nature to be entirely under his power and control.

Ver. 27. *The eternal God*—He who was before all worlds, and will be when time shall be no more. *Is thy refuge*—Or, thy habitation, or mansion-house, (so the word signifies,) in whom thou art safe, and easy, and at rest, as a man in his own house. Every true Israelite is at home in God: the soul returns to him, and reposes in him. And they that make him their habitation, shall have all the comforts and benefits of an habitation in him. *And underneath are the everlasting arms*—The almighty power and infinite goodness of God, which protects and comforts all that trust in him, in their greatest straits and distresses. *He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee*—He shall expel the Canaanites, and make room for you in their country. And shall say, *Destroy them*—That is, shall give you power, as well as authority, to root them out. For to say, is to command, and what he commands he gives power to execute. And has he not commanded believers to destroy in themselves all sin? all evil

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. enemy from before thee; and shall say, **Destroy them.**

e Num. 23.  
9, Jer. 32.  
6. & 33.  
16.  
f Ch. 8. 7, 8. **28** Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: *the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.*

g Gen. 27.  
22. Ch. 11.  
11.  
h Ps. 144.  
14.  
i 2 Sam. 7.  
22.  
k Ps. 115. 9.  
10, 11. **29** Happy art thou, O Israel: *who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.*

l 2 Sam. 22.  
45. Ps. 18.  
44. & 65.  
3. & 91.  
15.  
m Or, shall be subdued.  
n Ch. 32. 15.

CHAP. XXXIV.

*Moses having finished his testimony, finishes his life. Here is, The view Moses had of the land, ver. 1—4.*

*His death, burial, and age, ver. 5—7. Israel's mourning for him, ver. 8. His successor, ver. 9. His character, ver. 10—12.*

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

**AND** Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,

a Num. 27.  
12. & 34.  
47. Ch. 32.  
49.  
b Or, the hill.  
c Ch. 3. 27.  
9 Mac. 22.  
6.  
d Gen. 14.  
14.

2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,

e Ch. 11. 24.

3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.

f Jer. 1.  
16. & 4.  
13 2 Chro.  
25. 16.

4 And the LORD said unto him,

temper and corrupt inclinations, as well as all sinful words and actions? and will he not give them power so to do, if they apply to him for it?

Ver. 28. *Israel shall dwell in safety alone*—Either, 1, In safety, although they be alone, and have no confederates to defend them, but have all the world against them, yet my single protection shall be sufficient for them. Or, 2, Distinct and separated from all other nations, with whom I will not have them to mingle themselves. *The fountain*—That is, the posterity of Jacob, which flowed from him as waters from a copious fountain, in great abundance. So the expression is used, Psal. lxxviii. 26. The fountain is here put for the river, or streams which flow from it, as Jacob, or Israel, who is the fountain, is often put for the children of Israel. The Hebrew word, however, which we render fountain, often signifies an eye, and the sense here may be, *The eye of Jacob shall look upon a land of corn, &c.* Also *his heavens shall drop down dew*—That is, those heavens, or that air, which hangs over his land, shall water it with refreshing dews, and render it fruitful in corn, wine, and other products of a most fertile country. Thus Moses confirms to Jacob's seed the blessing which Isaac gave to Jacob himself, Gen. xxvii. 28.

Ver. 29. *Happy art thou, O Israel*—Wanting words sufficiently to express their happiness, he breaks out into admiration of it. *Who is like unto thee!*—So highly favoured as thou art? *O people, saved of the Lord*—Preserved, protected, and provided for by Omnipotence. Surely this is a privilege of which no nation can boast but yourselves. *The shield of thy help*—By whom thou art sufficiently guarded against all assailants: and *the sword of thy excellency*—Or, thy most excellent sword; that is, thy strength, and the author of all thy past or approaching victories. Those in whose hearts is the excellency of holiness, have God himself for their shield and sword. They are defended by the whole armour of God: His word is their sword, and faith their shield. *And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee*—Who said they would destroy thee: or, at least, that they would never

submit. *And thou shalt tread upon their high places*—Their strong holds, palaces, and temples. Thus shall the God of peace tread Satan under the feet of all believers, and that shortly.

CHAP. XXXIV. Ver. 1. *Moses went up*—When he knew the place of his death, he cheerfully mounted the hill to come to it. Those who are well acquainted with another world, are not afraid to leave this. When God's servants are sent for out of the world, the summons runs, "Go up and die!" *From the plains of Moab*—In which was their last station before they entered into Canaan, Numb. xxxiii. 48. *To the top of Pisgah*—Which appears to have been the highest top of these mountains. And from hence God enabled him to take a particular view of the several quarters of the land of Canaan. *Unto Dan*—To that city which after Moses's death was called so: The mention of Dan in this verse, and the account of Moses's death and burial, and of some particulars after he had left the world, ver. 5—9, shew that this chapter was not written by Moses, but probably by Samuel, Ezra, or some other of the prophets who succeeded him.

Ver. 2, 3. *All Naphtali*—The land of Naphtali, which, together with Dan, was in the north of Canaan, as Ephraim and Manasseh were in the midland parts, and Judah on the south, and the sea on the west. So these parts, lying in the several quarters, are put for all the rest. He stood in the east, and saw also Gilead, which was in the eastern part of the land, and thence he saw the north, and south, and west. *The utmost sea*—The midland sea, which was the utmost bound of the land of promise on the west. *The south*—The south quarter of the land of Judah, which is towards the salt sea. *The city of palm-trees*—Jericho, so called from the multitude of palm-trees which were in those parts, as Josephus and Strabo write. From whence, and the balm there growing, it was called Jericho, which signifies odoriferous, or sweet-smelling.

Ver. 4. *I have caused thee to see it*—For though his sight was good, yet he could not have seen all Canaan, a hundred



<sup>f</sup> **This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.**

<sup>h</sup> **5 ¶ So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.**

**6 And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against**

**Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.**

**7 ¶ And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.**

**8 ¶ And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.**

**9 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom;**

and sixty miles in length, and fifty or sixty in breadth, if his sight had not been miraculously assisted and enlarged. He saw it at a distance. Such a sight the Old Testament believers had of the kingdom of the Messiah. And such a sight believers have now of the glory that shall be revealed. Such a sight have we now of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, which shall cover the earth. Those that come after us shall undoubtedly enter into that promised land; which is a comfort to us, when we find our own carcasses falling in this wilderness.

**Ver. 5. So Moses the servant of the Lord died**—He is called the servant of the Lord, not only as a good man, (all such are his servants,) but as a man eminently useful, who had served God's counsels in bringing Israel out of Egypt, and leading them through the wilderness. And it was more his honour to be the servant of the Lord, than to be king in Jeshurun. Yet he dies. Neither his piety nor his usefulness would exempt him from the stroke of death. God's servants must die, that they may rest from their labours, receive their recompense, and make room for others. But when they go hence, they go to serve him better, to serve him day and night in his temple. The Jews say, God sucked his soul out of his body with a kiss. No doubt he died in the embraces of his love.

**Ver. 6. And he**—That is, the Lord, the immediate and only antecedent to the pronoun *he*; **buried him**—Using, no doubt, the ministry of angels for this purpose. Some, indeed, who are of opinion that there was nothing miraculous in his death or burial, propose rendering the words, *He was buried*; arguing, in defence of this interpretation, that active verbs in the Hebrew are often taken passively. This may be true, but still upon the very face of the narrative, it evidently appears, that the manner, both of his death and burial, was miraculous. He died, it is said, *according to the word of the Lord*, who commanded him to go up to the mount and die there, as soon as he had viewed the promised land, chap. xxxii. 49, 50, and that at a time when *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*, ver. 7, and when certainly he had no symptom of any disease or weakness about him. And if there was nothing miraculous in his burial; if the Lord did not bury him, but he was buried by some of the people, and if by some, no doubt by thousands and myriads; why is it said, nay, how could it with truth be said, as it is in the next clause, *No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day*? Surely, the plain and obvious meaning of this is, not as the

same persons would interpret it, "That, when this was written, time, which brings all things to decay, had left no footsteps of Moses's monument, or had worn out the remembrance of the place where his body was laid," but that no man ever knew of his sepulchre, as well as that none knew of it then. And the reason which has generally been assigned for God's concealing from the Israelites the place where he was interred, viz. to prevent their superstition and idolatry, must be thought sufficient by those who recollect how these Israelites burnt incense, long after this, to the brazen serpent, which Moses made, and would probably much more have paid some superstitious, if not religious honour to his body, or the relics thereof, if they could have been found. Nor is the interpretation that, with a reference hereto, has usually been put upon Jude 9, which speaks of Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses, so unreasonable or unlikely as some would insinuate. But of this when we come thither.

**Ver. 7. Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died**—But though he lived the full length of human life, and to an age which, in others that live up to it, is accompanied with many diseases and infirmities; yet this had made little or no alteration in him. By a miraculous work of God, in mercy to his church, and for the support of the great cause committed to him, it appears the full vigour of every faculty, both of body and mind, was preserved to him to his dying hour.

**Ver. 8. Thirty days**—Which was the usual time of mourning for persons of high place and eminency. It is a debt owing to the surviving honour of deceased worthies, to follow them with our tears, as those who loved and valued them, are sensible of the loss of them, and humbled for the sins which have provoked God to deprive us of them.

**Ver. 9. Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom**—And other gifts and graces also, but wisdom is mentioned as being most necessary for the government to which he was now called. **For Moses had laid his hands upon him**—Whereby he committed to him the supreme authority after his departure, and implored the gifts of the Divine Spirit to qualify him for it. In like manner the laying on of hands, as a sign of dedicating persons to offices, was accompanied with prayer in the times of the apostles, Acts vi. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6. **And the children of Israel hearkened unto him**—That is, they submitted themselves respectfully to Joshua, as to the supreme governor, whom God had appointed them instead, and by the hands of Moses.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

f Gen. 12. 7.  
& 13. 15.  
& 15. 18.  
& 26. 3.  
& 28. 13.  
g Ch. 3. 27.  
& 32. 52.

h Ch. 32. 50.  
Josh. 1. 1.  
2.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
1 Jude 9.

Ch. 31. 4.

1 Gen. 27. 1.  
& 48. 10.  
Jo-h. 14.  
10, 11.

Heb. moisture.  
Heb. fled.  
1451.

m Gen. 50.  
3, 10.  
Num. 30.  
29. Ec. 38.  
16, 17.

n Is. 11. 2.  
Dan. 6. 3.



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Numb. 27.  
15, 25.

for <sup>o</sup>Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Ch. 18. 15, 19.  
Ex. 33. 11.  
Numb. 12.  
6, 9. Ch. 5. 4.  
Ch. 4. 24.  
& 7. 19.

10 ¶ And there <sup>p</sup>arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,  
11 In all <sup>t</sup>he signs and the won-

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

ders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land,

12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

Ver. 10. *There arose not a prophet since—like unto Moses*—And yet it is said, Deut. xviii. 15, that God would raise up a prophet, from the midst of Israel, like unto Moses. Whence it follows, that this promise was not fulfilled either in Joshua or Samuel, and the best of the Jews confess, that it should not be fulfilled till the Messiah came. From these words it plainly appears, that this chapter, at least this verse, could not have been written till long after Moses's death, when a great number of prophets had been known in Israel. *Whom the Lord knew face to face*—Whom God did so freely and familiarly converse with. This was the pre-eminence of Moses above all the prophets, that he enjoyed a nearer and more familiar intercourse with God than any of them did. See on Numb. xii. 8.

Ver. 11, 12. *In all the signs, &c.*—In these also Moses excelled all the prophets, doing more miracles than any, yea, than all that succeeded him. But the prophet, whom God raised up like unto Moses in the latter days, not only equalled, but exceeded him in this, as well as in every other re-

spect. *Which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel*—Moses wrought all his miracles publicly, the whole congregation being witnesses of them. But Moses was greater than any of the prophets of the Old Testament in another most important respect. By him God gave the law, and moulded and formed the Jewish church; whereas, by the other prophets he only sent particular reproofs, directions, and predictions. But as far as the other prophets came short of him, our Lord Jesus went beyond him. Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ as a son: Christ's miracles were more illustrious, his communion with the Father more intimate; for he was in his bosom from eternity. Moses lies buried: but Christ is "sitting at the right hand of God," and "of the increase of his government there shall be no end." And thus, with the death of this eminent prophet and lawgiver, endeth the Pentateuch, containing the sacred history of the world, and of the Abrahamic family in particular, for the first 2,553 years, viz. from the creation to the arrival of the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

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THE  
BOOK OF JOSHUA.

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ARGUMENT.

*In this Book, and those that follow, to the end of ESTHER, we have the history of the Jewish nation. These books, to the end of the Second Book of Kings, the Jewish writers call נביאים ראשונים, nebiaim rishonim, The former Prophets, or, The First Book of the Prophets: as being written by prophets, men divinely inspired. Indeed it is probable they were collections of the authentic records of the nation, which some of the prophets were divinely directed and assisted to put together. It seems the substance of the several histories was written, under divine direction, when the events had just happened, and long after put into the form wherein they stand now, perhaps all by the same hand.*

*In the five Books of MOSES we had a full account of the rise and constitution of the Old Testament church, the miracles by which it was established, and the laws and ordinances by which it was to be governed. And a nation that had statutes and judgments so righteous, one would think, should have been very holy. But, alas! a great part of the history is a representation of their sins and miseries. For the law made nothing perfect; that was to be done by the bringing in of the better hope.*

*The Book of JOSHUA, containing the history of about twenty-seven years, if not written by him, was at least collected out of his journals or memoirs. It contains the history of Israel under the command of JOSHUA: how he presided over them, I. In their entrance into Canaan, chap. i—v. II. In their conquest of Canaan, chap. vi—xii. III. In the distribution of the land among the tribes of Israel, chap. xiii—xxi. IV. In the establishment of religion among them, chap. xxi—xxiv. In all which he was a great example of wisdom, courage, fidelity, and piety.*

*To be a little more particular—In this book is recited the confirmation of JOSHUA's succession to MOSES, by the attestation of wonderful facts, or miracles, which GOD did by him, in bringing the Israelites, under his conduct, into the land of Canaan. The actual settlement of them in this promised land, and that in so short a time, and with so little loss, was a punctual accomplishment of the divine predictions to Abraham and the succeeding patriarchs: predictions of so early a date, so often renewed in many particular circumstances, and every one of these so exactly fulfilled, cannot but be esteemed a great confirmation, both to the Israelites themselves then, and to us now, of the authority of their religion, and of the truth of those writings wherein it is contained. By the destruction of the seven nations, who, it appears, abounded in wickedness to a very high degree, and had even, we are expressly told, filled up the measure of their iniquity, GOD demonstrated his divine justice and providence over the whole world, and his determination to punish the wickedness of every nation, when it is at its height. The account of the division of the land, shews that a very careful provision*

CHAP. I.

was made for a constant and uninterrupted distinction of tribes, families, and genealogies; thence to preserve, and clearly to ascertain, the genealogy of CHRIST, in whom was to be completed all the purposes of this dispensation. In the conclusion of the book, JOSHUA, after having divided the land, and set up the tabernacle at Shiloh, and settled every thing according as it was ordered by GOD to MOSES; calls the people together, and represents to them how fully every thing had been fulfilled to them which the LORD their GOD had promised them, and spoken concerning them; and from hence he takes occasion to exhort them to serve HIM alone, and no other gods. Upon the whole, in this history we may see, 1, Much of GOD and his providence; his power in the kingdom of nature; his justice in punishing the Canaanites; his faithfulness to his covenant with the patriarchs; his kindness to his people: 2, Much of CHRIST and his grace; JOSHUA being, in many respects, an eminent type of him.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter, 1, God appoints Joshua to govern in the stead of Moses, and gives him instructions and encouragement, ver. 1—9. 2, He enters on his office immediately, giving orders to the officers, and to the two tribes and an half, ver. 10—15. 3, The people accept him as their governor, ver. 16—18.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. 24. 13.  
<sup>b</sup> Deut. 1.  
<sup>c</sup> Deut. 34.  
<sup>d</sup>

**N**OW after the death of MOSES the servant of the LORD, it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 <sup>b</sup> Moses my servant is dead; now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the

land which I do give to them, even <sup>a</sup> to the children of Israel. <sup>A. M. 2553. B. C. 1451.</sup>

3 ¶ <sup>c</sup> Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. <sup>Deut. 11. 24. Ch. 14. 9.</sup>

4 <sup>d</sup> From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. <sup>d Gen. 15. 18. Ex. 23. 31. Num. 34. 3.—12.</sup>

5 ¶ <sup>e</sup> There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: <sup>e</sup> as I was with Moses, so <sup>f</sup> <sup>e</sup> Deut. 7. 24. <sup>f</sup> Ex. 3. 12.

CHAP. I. Ver. 1. After the death of Moses—Either immediately after it, or when the days of mourning for Moses were expired. Joshua was appointed and declared Moses's successor in the government before this time; and here he receives confirmation from God therein. *The servant of the Lord*—This title is given to Moses here, and ver. 2, as also Deut. xxxiv. 5, and is repeated, not without cause, to reflect honour upon him, to give authority to his laws and writings, in publishing whereof he acted as God's servant, in his name: and that the Israelites might not think of Moses above what was meet, remembering that he was not the Lord himself, but only the Lord's servant, and therefore not to be too pertinaciously followed in all his institutions, when the Lord himself should come and abolish part of the Mosaical dispensation; it being but reasonable that he, who was only a servant in God's house, should give place to him who was the son, and heir, and lord of it. *The Lord spake*—Either in a dream or vision, or by Urim, Numb. xxvii. 21. *Moses's minister*—Who had waited upon Moses in his great employments, and thereby been privy to his manner of government, and so was prepared for it.

Ver. 2. Now therefore arise—Let not the withering of the most useful hands be the weakening of ours. When God has work to do, he will either find or make instruments fit

to carry it on. Moses the servant is dead, but God the master is not, he lives for ever. *This Jordan*—Which is now near thee, which is the only obstacle in thy way to Canaan. *The land which I give*—That is, I am now about to give thee actual possession of it, as I formerly gave a right to it by promise.

Ver. 3, 4. Every place—That is, within the following bounds. *This Lebanon*—Emphatically, as being the most eminent mountain in Syria, and the northern border of the land; or this which is within thy view. *Hittites*—Of the Canaanites, who elsewhere are called Amorites, Gen. xv. 16, and here Hittites, the Hittites being the most considerable and formidable of them all. *The great sea*—The midland sea, great in itself, and especially compared with those lesser collections of waters, which the Jews called seas. "But the Israelites never possessed all this land." To which it may be answered, 1, That was from their own sloth and cowardice, and disobedience to God, and breach of those conditions upon which this promise was suspended: 2, Though their possessions extended not to Euphrates, yet their dominions did, and all those lands were tributary to them in David's and Solomon's time.

Ver. 5. I was with Moses—To assist him against all his enemies, and in all the difficulties of governing this stiff-

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.  
Deut. 31.  
8, 21. Ver.  
9, 17. Ch.  
3, 7. & 6.  
27, 15, 43.  
2, 6.  
Deut. 31.  
6, 5. Heb.  
13, 5.  
Deut. 31.  
7, 23.  
Or, thou  
shalt  
cause this  
people to  
inherit  
the land,  
&c.

**I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.**

**6** <sup>i</sup> Be strong and of a good courage: for **unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.**

**7** Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, <sup>k</sup> which Moses my servant commanded thee; <sup>l</sup> turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest **prosper whithersoever thou goest.**

Num. 27.  
23. Deut.  
31, 7. Ch.  
11, 15.  
Deut. 5.  
32, & 28.  
14.  
Or, do  
wisely.  
Deut. 29.  
9.  
Deut. 17.  
18, 19.  
Ps. 1, 2.

**8** <sup>m</sup> This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but <sup>n</sup> thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way

necked people, which Joshua might justly fear no less than the Canaanites. *Forsake thee*—I will not leave thee destitute, either of inward support, or of outward assistance.

Ver. 6. *Be strong and of a good courage*—Joshua, though a person of great courage and resolution, whereof he had given sufficient proof, yet needed these exhortations, partly because his work was great, and difficult, and long, and in a great measure new; partly because he had a very mean opinion of himself, especially if compared with Moses; and remembering how perverse and ungovernable that people were, even under Moses, he might very well suspect the burden of ruling them would be too heavy for his shoulders.

Ver. 7. *Commanded thee*—Remember, that though thou art the commander of my people, yet thou art my subject, and obliged to observe all my commands. *To the right hand or to the left*—That is, in any kind, or upon any pretence; which plainly shews, that God's assistance, promised to him and the Israelites, was conditional, and might justly be withdrawn upon their breach of the conditions. *Whithersoever thou goest*—That is, whatsoever thou doest. Men's actions are often compared to ways, or steps, by which they come to the end they aim at. This charge, given by God himself to Joshua, highly deserves our notice. Though Joshua was to be, in his place, as great a man as Moses; though the Lord was to do signs and wonders by him, as he did by the hand of Moses; and though he was to settle the people in the promised land, which Moses was not allowed to do, yet he was to do according to all the law which Moses had commanded. And we find that, amidst all his successes, and all the wonders that the Lord did by him, Joshua made the book of the law the guide of his conduct, strictly adhering to it in every point, and always recommending the strict observation of it to the people. In this he is an example worthy of the imitation, as of all professors of Christianity in general, so of all Christian magistrates and generals, in

prosperous, and then thou shalt **have good success.**

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.  
Or, do  
wisely.  
Ver. 9.  
Deut. 31.  
7, 5, 22.  
Ps. 97, 1.  
Jer. 1, 9.

**9** <sup>o</sup> Have not I commanded thee? **Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.**

**10** ¶ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

**11** Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, **Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.**

Ch. 3, 2.  
Deut. 9.  
1, & 11, 31.

**12** ¶ And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,

**13** Remember <sup>r</sup> the word which **Moses the servant of the LORD com-**

Num. 32.  
20, —24.  
Ch. 22, 2.  
3, 4.

particular, who are under equal obligations to make God's laws or revealed will the rule of their conduct, in all affairs, public and private. For no man's dignity or dominion, how great soever, sets him above the law of God.

Ver. 8, 9. *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth*—That is, thou shalt constantly read it, and upon occasion discourse of it, and the sentence which shall come out of thy mouth, shall in all things be given according to this rule. *Day and night*—That is, diligently study, and upon all occasions consider what is God's will, and thy duty. The greatness of thy place and employments shall not hinder thee from this work, because this is the only rule of thy private actions, and public administrations. *Have not I commanded thee?*—I, whom thou art obliged to obey: I, who can carry thee through every thing I put thee upon: I, of whose faithfulness and almighty power thou hast had great experience!

Ver. 10, 11. *The officers of the people*—Those who commanded under Joshua, in their respective tribes and families, attended him for orders, which they were to transmit to the people. *Prepare you victuals*—For although manna was given them to supply their want of ordinary provisions in the wilderness; yet they were allowed, when they had opportunity, to purchase other provisions, and did so, Deut. ii. 6, 28. And now, having been some time in the land of the Amorites, and, together with manna, used themselves to other food, with which that country plentifully supplied them, they are warned to furnish themselves therewith for their approaching march. *Within three days*—These words, though placed here, seem not to have been delivered by Joshua till after the return of the spies, such transpositions being frequent in Scripture. And hence it is, that these three days, mentioned here, are again repeated below, after the history of the spies, Josh. iii. 2.

Ver. 13, 14. *Which Moses commanded you*—His charge to you, and your promise to him. *Rest*—That is, a place

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

manded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.

14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren <sup>†</sup>armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them,

† Heb. <sup>mar-</sup> shall be by <sup>see :</sup> 29  
Ex. 13. 15.

15 Until the LORD hath given your brethren rest, as *he hath given* you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: <sup>\*</sup>then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sun-rising.

† Ch. 22. 4.  
&c.

16 ¶ And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go.

17 According as we hearkened

unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God <sup>'</sup>be with thee, as he was <sup>'</sup>with Moses.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

† Ver. 5.  
1 Sam. 20.  
13. 1 Kings  
1. 27.

18 Whosoever *he be* that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall he put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.

CHAP. II.

*Joshua sends spies to Jericho, ver. 1. Rahab receives and conceals them, ver. 2—7. Her agreement with them for the safety of herself and family, ver. 8—21. The return of the spies, and the account given by them, ver. 22—24.*

AND Joshua the son of Nun <sup>¶</sup>sent <sup>\*</sup>out of Shittim two men: to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and <sup>b</sup>came into an harlot's house, named <sup>c</sup>Rahab, and <sup>†</sup>lodged there.

Or, had sent.  
a Num. 25. 1.

b Heb. 11. 31. Jam. 2. 26.  
c Matt. 1. 5.  
† Heb. lay.

of rest, as that word signifies. *Before your brethren*—In the front of all of them; which was but reasonable, because they had the advantage of their brethren, having actually received their portion, which their brethren had only in hope; because they were freed from those impediments which the rest were exposed to, their wives, and children, and estates being safely lodged; and to prevent their withdrawing themselves from the present service, which they otherwise would have had temptations to do, because of the nearness of their habitations. *Armed*—For by this time they were well furnished with arms, which they had either from the Egyptians, Amalekites, or Amorites, from whom they had taken them; or, by purchase, from those people by whose borders they passed. *Men of valour*—All such were obliged to go over if occasion required it, but Joshua took only some of them, because they were sufficient for his purpose, and because it was proper some should be left, both to secure their own wives, children, and possessions, and to prevent their enemies on that side from giving them disturbance, while engaged in their enterprise upon Canaan.

Ver. 16, 17. *And they answered*—Not the two tribes and a half only, but the officers of all the people, in their name, concurring with the divine appointment, by which Joshua was set over them. Thus must we swear allegiance to our Lord Jesus, as the captain of our salvation. *Will we hearken unto thee*—The same obedience which we owed to Moses, we promise unto thee. *With Moses*—This is not a limitation of their obedience, as if they would not obey him any longer than he was prosperous, but an additional prayer for him.

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As we have hereby promised thee our obedience, so our prayer shall be, that God would bless and prosper thee, as he did Moses.

CHAP. II. Ver. 1. *And Joshua sent*—Or, *had sent*, before the directions, mentioned in the preceding chapter, ver. 10, 11, were given to the officers. This best agrees with ver. 22, of this chapter, and the rest of the narrative. *Two men*—Not twelve, as Moses did, because those were to view the whole land, these but a small parcel of it. *To spy*—That is, to learn the state of the land and people. It is evident Joshua did not this out of distrust; it is probable he had God's command and direction in it, for the encouragement of himself and his army. *Secretly*—With reference not to his enemies, that being the practice of all spies, but to the Israelites; a good caution to prevent the inconveniency which possibly might have arisen, if their report had been discouraging. *Jericho*—That is, the land about Jericho, together with the city. Heb. *The land and Jericho*; that is, especially Jericho. *An harlot's house*—Although the Hebrew word *zonah*, here rendered harlot, does also sometimes signify an *inn-keeper*, or one who sells provisions; yet, as the former is certainly the common meaning of the term, and the sense in which it must frequently be necessarily taken, see Gen. xxxiv. 31, Judg. xi. 1, Hos. i. 2, and as Rahab is called an *harlot* by two Apostles, Heb. xi. 31; James ii. 25, who use an expression of no such equivocal meaning, it seems evident she had once been an harlot, though undoubtedly was now reformed. *They lodged there*

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.  
4 P. 127. 1.  
F. ov. vi.  
64

2 And <sup>d</sup>it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to-night, of the children of Israel to search out the country.

3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.

9 Sam. 17.  
19, 20.

4 <sup>e</sup>And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were:

5 And it came to pass *about the time* of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

Ex. 1. 17.  
2 Sam. 17.  
19.

6 But <sup>f</sup>she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

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7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

8 ¶ And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;

9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that <sup>g</sup>your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land <sup>h</sup>† faint because of you.

Gen. 35.  
5. Ex. 23.  
27. Deut.  
2. 25. &  
11. 25.  
Heb.  
mess, Ex.  
15. 15.

10 For we have heard how the LORD <sup>b</sup>dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and <sup>i</sup>what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon, and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

Ex. 14.  
21. Ch. 4.  
24.  
Num. 21.  
21, 31, 35.

11 And as soon as we had <sup>k</sup>heard these things, <sup>l</sup>our hearts did melt, neither <sup>†</sup>did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you:

Ex. 15 14.  
15.  
Ch. 5. 1.  
& 7. 5. Is.  
13. 7.  
Heb. rosc  
up.

—Or, *lay down*, as the same word is rendered, ver. 8, composed themselves to rest, but they were hindered from that intention.

Ver. 2, 3. *To night*—This evening. Probably Israel had but one friend in all Jericho, and God directed them to her! Thus, what seems to be most accidental, is often overruled, to serve the great ends of Providence. And those that acknowledge God in their ways, he will guide them with his eye.

Ver. 4. *And the woman*—Or, *But the woman*—had taken and hid them, before the messengers came from the king; as soon as she understood from her neighbours, that there was a suspicion of the matter, and guessed that search would be made. And this is justly mentioned, as a great and generous act of faith, Heb. xi. 31, for she apparently ventured her life upon a steadfast persuasion of the truth of God's word and promise given to the Israelites. *Whence they were*—Her answer, contained in these and the following words, was false, and therefore unquestionably sinful; though her intention was good therein. But it is very probable, she, being an heathen, might think, that an officious lie was not unlawful.

Ver. 6, 7. *Up to the roof*—In those countries the roofs of the houses were made quite flat, and it is probable, it might be customary to lay the stalks of flax upon them, that they might be dried by the heat of the sun. *Fords*—Or, *passages*; that is, the places where people used to pass over Jordan,

whether by boats or bridges. *The gate*—Of the city, to prevent the escape of the spies, if peradventure Rahab was mistaken, and they yet lurked therein.

Ver. 8—11. *Before they were laid down*—To sleep, as they intended. *She came up unto them*—Having got clear of the officers, to the *roof of the house*, where they lay hid. Here she informs them, 1, That the report of the great things God had done for them, had reached Jericho. Not only that they had had an account of their late victories, obtained over the Amorites, in the neighbouring country, on the other side the river; but their miraculous deliverance out of Egypt, and passage through the Red Sea, which had taken place at a great distance, and forty years ago, were remembered and spoken of afresh in Jericho, to the amazement of every body. 2, She tells them what impressions the tidings of these things had made upon the Canaanites: *Your terror is fallen upon us*, ver. 9. *Our hearts did melt*, ver. 11—If she kept a public house, that might have given her an opportunity of understanding the sense of various companies, and of travellers from other parts of the country; so that they could not have known this any way better than by her information; and it would greatly encourage Joshua and Israel, to hear how their enemies were dispirited and cast down; especially as this was the accomplishment of a promise God had made them, that he would *lay the fear and dread of them upon all this land*, Deut. ix. 25; and so it would be an earnest of the accomplishment of all his other promises to them. 3, She

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
m Deut. 1.  
29.

for <sup>m</sup> the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

n 1 Sam. 26.  
14, 15, 17.

o 1 Tim. 5.  
p Ver. 19.

12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto <sup>o</sup> my father's house, and <sup>p</sup> give me a true token :

13 And *that* ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

r Heb. In-  
stead of  
you to  
die.

14 And the men answered her, Our life <sup>†</sup> for your's, if ye utter <sup>\*</sup> not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
q Jud. 1.  
21. Man's  
5. 7.  
r Act. 5.  
29

land, that <sup>a</sup> we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

15 Then she <sup>†</sup> let them down by a cord through the window: for her house *was* upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

16 And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way.

17 And the men said unto her, We *will be* <sup>\*</sup> blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear.

18 <sup>†</sup> Behold, *when* we come into <sup>\*</sup> the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which

hereupon makes profession of her faith in God, and his promise; and perhaps *there was not found so great faith* (all things considered) *no not in Israel*, as in this woman of Canaan. First, She believes God's power and dominion over all the world, ver. 11. *Jehovah your God*—Whom you worship and call upon, is so far above all gods, that he is the only true God; *for he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath*, and is served by all the hosts of both. Secondly, She believes his promise to his people Israel, ver. 9, *I know that the Lord has given you the land*. The king of Jericho, had heard as much as she had of the great things God had done for Israel, yet he cannot infer from thence that the Lord had given them this land; but resolves to hold it out against them to the last extremity. For the most powerful means of conviction will not avail, when despite is done to the Spirit of grace, and his influences are quenched or resisted. But Rahab the harlot, who had only heard of the wonders God had wrought, speaks with more assurance of the truth of the promise made to the fathers, than all the elders of Israel had done, who were eye-witnesses of those wonders, many of whom perished through unbelief of this promise. *Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed*: so Rahab did. O woman, great is thy faith! Let those, who ask, "On what principle she could receive into her house the known enemies of her country, conceal them from the searchers, and dismiss them in safety?" consider this her faith, and the foundation on which it was built, and they will be at no loss for an answer.

Ver. 12, 13. *Swear unto me by the Lord*—Heb. By *Jehovah*, your God, who is the only true God: so she owns his worship, one eminent act whereof is, swearing by his name. *My father's house*—My near kindred, which she particularly names, ver. 13; husband and children, it seems, she had none. And for herself, it was needless to speak, it being a plain and undeniable duty to save their preserver. *True token*—Either an assurance that you will preserve me and mine from the common ruin; or a token which I may pro-

duce as a witness of this agreement, and a means of my security. This is all that she asks. But God did for her more than she could ask or think. She was afterwards advanced to be a princess in Israel, the wife of Salmon, and one of the ancestors of Christ. *All that they have*—That is, their children, as appears from chap. vi. 23.

Ver. 14. *Our life for yours*—We will venture our lives for the security of yours. *Our business*—That is, this agreement of ours, and the condition of it, lest others, under this pretence, should secure themselves. By which they shew both their piety and prudence, in managing their oath with so much circumspection, that neither their own consciences might be ensnared, nor the public justice obstructed.

Ver. 15, 16. *Her house was upon the town-wall*—Which gave her the opportunity of dismissing them when the gates were shut. *She dwelt upon the wall*—Her particular dwelling was there; which may possibly be added, because the other part of her house was reserved for the entertainment of strangers. *Get you to the mountain*—That is, to some of the mountains wherewith Jericho was encompassed, in which also there were many caves where they might lurk. *Three days*—Not three whole days, but one whole day, and part of two days.

Ver. 17. *The men said*—Or, *had said*; namely, before she let them down: it being very improbable, either that she would dismiss them before the condition was agreed on; or that she would discourse with them, or they with her, about such secret and weighty things, after they were let down, when others might overhear them. *Blameless*—That is, free from guilt or reproach if it be violated; namely, if the following condition be not observed.

Ver. 18. *When we come into the land*—That is, over Jordan, and near the city. *This line of scarlet*—The Hebrew word *ripn*, *tickvath*, more properly means, *rope, riband, or web*. Probably the same with which she was about to let them down. *Window*—That it may be easily discerned by our soldiers.



<sup>A. M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1461.</sup> thou didst let us down by: <sup>u</sup> and  
<sup>Ch. 6. 23.</sup> thou shalt <sup>†</sup>bring thy father, and  
<sup>Heb. ga-ther.</sup> thy mother, and thy brethren, and  
all thy father's household, home unto  
thee.

19 And it shall be, *that* whosoever  
shall go out of the doors of thy  
house into the street, his blood *shall*  
*be* upon his head, and we *will be*  
guiltless: and whosoever shall be  
with thee in the house, <sup>x</sup>his blood  
*shall be* on our head, if *any* hand be  
upon him.

<sup>x</sup> Matt. 27.  
<sup>26.</sup>

20 And if thou utter this our bu-  
siness, then we will be quit of thine  
oath which thou hast made us to  
swear.

21 And she said, According unto  
your words, so *be* it. And she sent  
them away, and they departed: and  
she bound the scarlet line in the  
window.

22 And they went, and came unto  
the mountain, and abode there three  
days, until the pursuers were re-  
turned: and the pursuers sought *them*  
throughout all the way, but found  
*them* not.

Ver. 19. *Upon his head*—The blame of his death shall rest wholly upon himself, as being occasioned by his own neglect of the means of safety. *Our head*—We are willing to bear the sin, and shame, and punishment of it. *If any hand be upon him*—So as to kill him.

Ver. 21. *In the window*—Forthwith, partly that the spies might see it hung out before their departure, and so the better know it at some distance; partly lest some accident might occasion a neglect about it.

Ver. 22, 23. *Three days*—Supporting themselves there, with the provisions which Rahab had furnished them with. *The way*—That is, in the road to Jordan, and the places near it, but not in the mountains. *Passed over*—Jordan unto Joshua.

CHAP. III. Ver. 1. *Joshua rose early in the morning*—Not after the return of the spies, as may seem at first view, but after the three days mentioned chap. i. 11, when orders were given to the army, to make all necessary provision for invading the enemies' country. *They came to Jordan—and lodged there*—That night, that they might go over in the day time, that the miracle might be more evident, and unquestionable, and might strike the greater terror into their enemies.

23 ¶ So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all *things* that befel them:

<sup>A. M. 2553.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1461.</sup>

24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly, <sup>y</sup>the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do <sup>†</sup>faint because of us.

<sup>y</sup> Ex. 22. 21.  
<sup>Ch. 6. 2.</sup>  
<sup>& 21. 44.</sup>

<sup>†</sup> Heb. melt,  
<sup>Ver. 9.</sup>

### CHAP. III.

*The people decamp from Shittim, and are directed to follow the ark and sanctify themselves, ver. 1—5. The priests are ordered to go first, ver. 6. Joshua being encouraged and directed of God, tells the people what God is about to do, ver. 7—13. Jordan is divided, and Israel marches through, ver. 14—17.*

**A**ND Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed <sup>a</sup>from Shittim, and came to Jordan, <sup>a</sup> he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 2. 1.

2 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>b</sup>after <sup>b</sup>three days, that the officers went through the host;

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 1. 10.  
<sup>11.</sup>

3 And they commanded the peo-

Ver. 2, 3. *After three days*—The three days mentioned chap. i. 11, either at the end of them, or upon the last of them. *The officers went through the host*—To give them more particular directions, as they had given a general notice before. *They commanded the people*—In Joshua's name, and by his authority. *When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God*—The sign and symbol of his presence, and of his being in covenant with you, and engaged to protect and conduct you, as your God. What greater encouragement could they have than this, that Jehovah was in covenant with them, as their God, and that here was the ark, the token of it, going before them? Usually, and in their common marches, the ark was carried in the middle of the camps, according to the direction given, Num. ii. 17; but now it was to be carried in the front, or at the head of the whole army, as it had been on their first march, when they left Mount Sinai. *And the priests and Levites bearing it*—The Levites of the family of Kohath, had the office of carrying the ark assigned them, Numb. iv. 15; but the priests, all of whom were also Levites, might perform that office, and were appointed to do so on extraordinary occasions. *Then ye shall—go after it*—Towards Jordan, in such a manner as is here described.

<sup>a</sup> M. 2553. <sup>b</sup> C. 1451. <sup>c</sup> Num. 10. <sup>d</sup> Deut. 31. 2, 25. ple, saying, 'When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. 19. 12. 4 'Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go; for ye have not passed *this way* † heretofore.

<sup>f</sup> Ex. 19. 10. <sup>g</sup> Heb. since yesterday, and the third day. 15. <sup>h</sup> Lev. 20. 7. <sup>i</sup> Num. 11. 15. <sup>j</sup> Ch. 7. 13. <sup>k</sup> 1 Sam. 16. <sup>l</sup> Joel 2. 16. 5 ¶ And Joshua said unto the people, 'Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

<sup>a</sup> M. 2553. <sup>b</sup> C. 1451. <sup>c</sup> Num. 4. 15. 6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, 'Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to <sup>h</sup> magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, 'as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command <sup>k</sup> the <sup>l</sup> priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, 'ye shall stand still in Jordan.

Ver. 4. *There shall be a space between you and it*—Thus it was made to appear that the ark needed not to be guarded by the men of war, but was itself a guard to them. With what a noble defiance of the enemy did it leave all its friends far behind, save the unarmed priests that carried it, as perfectly sufficient for its own safety and their's that followed it. *Two thousand cubits*—A thousand yards, at which distance from it the Israelites seem to have been encamped in the wilderness. And because they generally went from their tents to the ark to worship God, especially on the Sabbath-days; hence it hath been conceived, that a Sabbath-day's journey reached only to two thousand cubits. But that may be doubted; for those who encamped nearest the ark, were at that distance from it, and came so far; but the rest were farther from it, and their Sabbath-day's journey was considerably longer. *Come not near unto it*—Partly from the respect they should bear to the ark; but chiefly, that the ark marching so far before them into the river, and standing still there till they passed over, might give them the greater assurance of a safe passage. Thus also the faith of the priests would be tried, and their confidence and courage displayed for an example to the people. *That ye may know the way by which you must go*—May see it, as it were chalked out, or traced by the ark. For had they been allowed to come near, and surround it, none could have had a sight of it but those that were close to it; but as it was at such a distance before them, they would all have the satisfaction of seeing it, when it entered the river, and would be animated by the sight, especially if the pillar of cloud and fire still hovered over it, which some think it did; although others judge it to be more probable that it was now removed. *For ye have not passed this way heretofore*—Therefore, there was the more reason that this provision should be made for their encouragement. This however, had been the character of all their way through the wilderness: it was a way they had not passed before; but this through Jordan was especially such. While we are in this world we must expect and prepare for unusual events, to pass ways we have not passed before. And much more when we go hence, when we pass through the valley of the shadow of death. But if we have

the assurance of God's presence with us we need not fear; that will furnish us with protection and strength, such as we never had, when we come to pass a way we never passed, and to do a work we never did.

Ver. 5. *And Joshua said*—He himself also, as well as the officers, by his direction, spake to the people the day before their passage, and as the matter was very important, he probably went himself from tribe to tribe, to give the orders here mentioned. *Sanctify yourselves*—Not only wash your clothes, and shun all kinds of bodily impurities, (see Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10; Numb. ix. 10.) but purify your minds and hearts, by repentance, and faith, and new obedience, without which, the external purifications of your bodies and garments will be of little avail. In other words, prepare yourselves by seriousness, recollection and prayer, that you may behold with proper regard, reverence, and gratitude, and may fix in your hearts the wonderful display which is about to be made of the divine power in your behalf, and that you may be meet to receive so great a favour as is now about to be conferred upon you.

Ver. 6. *Take up the ark*—Namely, upon your shoulders; for so they were to carry it, Numb. vii. 9. *Before the people*—Not in the middle of them, as you used to do. *And they took up the ark*—They did as they were commanded. And now we may suppose that prayer of Moses to be used, which he addressed to God when the ark set forward, Numb. x. 3. *Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered.*

Ver. 7. *This day will I begin to magnify thee*—That is, to honour thee in a peculiar manner, and gain thee authority, in the sight of all Israel—As the person I have set in Moses's stead, and by whom I will conduct them into the promised land. It has been observed by some, as a remarkable circumstance, that, from the time of Moses to that of Saul, God always signified to the people, by some miracle, whom he had appointed to govern them.

Ver. 8. *The brink of Jordan*—Heb. to the extremity, so far as the river then spread itself, which was now more than ordinary, ver. 15. *Ye shall stand still in Jordan*—Within the waters of Jordan, in the first entrance into the

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1451.

9 ¶ And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.

10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that <sup>m</sup>the living God is among you, and *that* he will without fail, <sup>n</sup>drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of <sup>o</sup>the LORD of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

12 Now therefore <sup>p</sup>take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass, <sup>q</sup>as

river; where they stood for a season, till the river was divided, and then they went into the midst of it, and there abode till all the people were passed over.

Ver. 9, 10. *Come hither*—To the ark or tabernacle, the place of public assemblies. *Hear the words of the Lord your God*—Who is now about to give a proof that he is both the Lord, the omnipotent Governor of heaven and earth, and all creatures, and your God, in covenant with you, having a tender care and affection for you. *Ye shall know*—By experience and sensible evidence. *The living God*—Not a dull, dead, senseless idol, such as the gods of the nations are; but a God of life, and power, and activity to watch over you, and work for you. *Among you*—Is present with you to strengthen and help you.

Ver. 12, 13. *Twelve men*—For the work described, chap. iv. 2, 3. *The ark of the Lord*—That so it may appear this is the Lord's doing, and that in pursuance of his covenant made with Israel. *Of all the earth*—The Lord of all this globe of earth and water, who therefore can dispose of this river and the adjoining lands as he pleaseth. *Cut off*—The waters which now are united shall be divided, and part shall flow down the channel towards the Dead Sea, and the other part that is near the spring of the river, and flows down from it, shall stand still. *They shall stand upon an heap*—Being as it were congealed, as the Red Sea was, Exod. xv. 8, and so kept from overflowing the country. God could by a sudden and miraculous frost have congealed the surface, so that they might all have gone over upon the ice; but that being a thing, it seems, sometimes done even in that country, by the ordinary power of nature, Job xxxviii. 30, it would not have been such an honour to Israel's God, nor such a terror to Israel's enemies. It must therefore be done in such a way as had no precedent, but in the dividing of the Red Sea. And that miracle is here repeated to shew that God has the same power to *finish* that he had to *begin* the salvation of his people, for he is the

soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, <sup>r</sup>the LORD of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they <sup>s</sup>shall stand upon an heap.

14 ¶ And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the <sup>t</sup>ark of the covenant before the people;

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and <sup>u</sup>the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for <sup>x</sup>Jordan overfloweth all his banks <sup>y</sup>all the time of harvest,)

Omega as well as the Alpha; and that the *Word of the Lord*, (as the Chaldee reads it, ver. 7,) the essential Word; was with Joshua as truly as he was with Moses.

Ver. 15. *The feet of the priests were dipped in the brim of the water*—The stream stopped immediately, as if a sluice had been let down to dam it up; so that the waters above swelled, stood on an heap and ran back, and yet, it seems, did not spread themselves over the adjacent lands. When they passed through the Red Sea, the waters were a wall on either hand; here only on the right hand. Thus the God of Nature, when he pleaseth, can change the course of nature, and alter any of its properties; can "turn waters into rocks, and rocks into waters," to serve his own purposes. What can he not do? What will he not do for the perfecting of his salvation of his people? Hear the Psalmist celebrate this work of wonder, in most beautiful and striking language: "When Israel went out of Egypt—Judah was his sanctuary. The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fledest? Thou Jordan that thou wast driven back?" Well might he add, "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of Jehovah, who turneth the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of water." *Jordan overfloweth all the time of harvest*—This is meant, not of wheat harvest, but of the barley harvest, as is manifest from their keeping the passover at their first entrance, chap. v. 10, which was kept on the fourteenth day of the first month, when they were to bring a sheaf of their first fruits, which were of barley. So that this harvest, in those hot countries, fell very early in the spring, when rivers used to swell most; partly because of the rains which had fallen all the winter, partly because of the snows which melted and came into the rivers. And this time God chose that the miracle might be more glorious, more amazing and terrible to the Canaanites; and that the Israelites might be entertained at their first entrance with plentiful and comfortable provisions.

<sup>m</sup> Dent. 5.  
<sup>n</sup> 26. 18am.  
<sup>o</sup> 17. 29.  
<sup>p</sup> 2 King. 19.  
<sup>q</sup> 4. Hos. 1.  
<sup>r</sup> 10. Matt.  
<sup>s</sup> 26. 16.  
<sup>t</sup> 1 Thess.  
<sup>u</sup> 1. 9.  
<sup>v</sup> Ex. 23. 2.  
<sup>w</sup> Deut. 7. 1.  
<sup>x</sup> Ps. 44. 2.

<sup>y</sup> Ver. 13.  
<sup>z</sup> Mic. 4. 13.  
<sup>aa</sup> Zecl. 4.  
<sup>ab</sup> 14. & 6. 5.  
<sup>ac</sup> Ch. 4. 2.

<sup>ad</sup> Ver. 15.  
<sup>ae</sup> 26.

A. M. 3553.  
B. C. 1451.

Ver. 11.

P. 25. 17.  
& 114. 3.

Acts 7. 45.

Ver. 13.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Chro. 19.  
<sup>y</sup> 15. Jer.  
<sup>z</sup> 17. 5. &  
<sup>aa</sup> 49. 19. Ec.  
<sup>ab</sup> 24. 26.  
<sup>ac</sup> Ch. 1. 19.  
<sup>ad</sup> & 3. 10, 13.

A. M. 2333.  
B. C. 1461.1 Kings 4.  
11. A. 1. 46.Deut. 3.  
17.Gen. 14.  
5. Num.  
31. 2.

16 That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside <sup>2</sup>Zaretan: and those that came down <sup>a</sup>toward the sea of the plain, *even* <sup>b</sup>the salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, <sup>c</sup>and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

## CHAP. IV.

*Twelve stones taken up out of the midst of Jordan, and twelve set up there for a memorial, ver. 1—6. The march of the people through Jordan, ver. 10—13. God magnifies Joshua, who commands the priests to come out of Jordan, ver. 14—17. The waters close again, ver. 18, 19. Joshua erects twelve stones in Gilgal for a memorial, ver. 20—24.*

Ver. 16. *Adam*—The city of Adam being more obscure, is described by its nearness to a more known place, then eminent, but now unknown. The meaning is, that the waters were stopped in their course at that place, and so kept at a distance from the Israelites whilst they passed over. *Against Jericho*—Here God carried them over, because this part was, 1, The strongest, as having in its neighbourhood an eminent city, a potent king, and a stout and warlike people. 2, The most pleasant and fruitful, and therefore more convenient, both for the refreshment of the Israelites after their long and tedious marches, and for their encouragement.

Ver. 17. *Stood firm*—That is, in one and the same place and posture; their feet were neither moved by any waters flowing in upon them, nor sunk into any mire, which one might think was at the bottom of the river. And this may be opposed to their standing in the brink of the water when they came to it, as commanded, ver. 8, which was but for a while, till the waters were divided and gone away; and then they were to go farther, even into the midst of Jordan, where they were to stand constantly and fixedly, as this Hebrew word signifies, until all were passed over. *The midst of Jordan*—In the middle and deepest part of the river. This manifests how firmly the priests believed the Word of the Lord, and confided in his power, otherwise they would not have dared to stand so long in the midst of the channel of a river, whose rapid waters stood suspended above them in mountainous heaps, ready every moment to overwhelm them unless miraculously withheld by the power of God.

AND it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man,

3 And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night.

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man;

5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according

CHAP. IV. Ver. 1. *The Lord spake unto Joshua*—This was commanded before, chap. iii. 12, and is here repeated with enlargement, as being now to be put in execution. It is the pious conjecture of the learned Bishop Patrick, that Joshua was gone into some place of retirement, to return thanks immediately for this wonderful mercy! and then God met him, and spake thus to him. Or, perhaps, it was by Eleazar the priest that God gave these and other instructions to Joshua; for though he is not mentioned here, yet, when Joshua was ordained by the imposition of hands to this great trust, God appointed that Eleazar should ask counsel for him, after the judgment of Urim; and at his word Joshua and all the children of Israel were to go out and come in, Numb. xxvii. 21.

Ver. 2—5. *Take you out of every tribe a man*—For the greater evidence, and the more effectual spreading the report of this marvellous work among the tribes. *Where ye shall lodge this night*—That is, in Gilgal, as is expressed, ver. 19, 20. *Whom he had prepared*—That is, appointed for that work, and commanded to be ready for it. *Pass over before the ark*—Or, *Pass back again directly* unto the ark. These twelve men, it seems, re-entered the channel of Jordan, and being dispensed from the prohibition to approach the ark, came near the place where the priests stood, and each loaded himself with a stone as large as he could carry, and such as might afterwards attest to each several tribe that he had seen the bed of the river dry, and the miracle prolonged till the entire execution of the commands of God.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel:

e Ver. 21.  
Ex. 19, 26.  
& 13, 14.  
Deut. 6.  
20. Ps. 44.  
1. & 79, 3.  
4, 5, 6.  
† Heb. to-  
morrow.  
‡ Ch. 4, 12,  
16.

6 That this may be a sign among you, *that* when your children ask *their fathers* † in time to come, saying, *What mean ye by these stones?*

§ Ex. 19, 14.  
Num. 16,  
40.

7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for § a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto

Ver. 6. *That this may be a sign among you*—A monument or memorial of this day's work. Had Joshua given orders to prepare for erecting this memorial of himself, it might have looked like a design to perpetuate his own name and honour, but as it was done by the divine direction, it could be viewed in no other light than as a monument raised to the honour and glory of God, who hath "so done his marvellous works, that they ought to be had in everlasting remembrance," and means devised to preserve among men the memory of them.

Ver. 9. *Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan*—These stones are not the same with those mentioned ver. 5, which a man might carry upon his shoulder. They were undoubtedly very much larger, and probably appeared above the surface of the water, when it was low, or if not, might be seen in it, either from the shore, the river not being broad, or in crossing it by boats, the waters of Jordan being generally very clear. At least they were so placed as to shew that they were some monument of art, and erected there when the channel of the river was dry. *They are there unto this day*—That is, unto the time when this history was written, which might not be till many years after the facts were done, recorded in it. Or, it might be added by Joshua himself in his old age, or by some other holy and divinely inspired man, who inserted this and some such passages, both in this book and in the writings of Moses.

Ver. 10. *The priests stood in the midst of Jordan till every thing was finished*—The constancy of the priests, on this occasion, bears very honourable testimony to their faith and patience; for it must have taken up a considerable time, a whole day, at least, for the passage of six hundred thousand fighting men, besides the numerous people that accompanied them, with their baggage and provisions, and for the

the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

9 ¶ And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.

10 ¶ For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over.

11 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people.

performing the other things here mentioned. *The people hastened and passed over*—Some understood this of the twelve men that carried the stones; but it seems rather to be meant of the body of the people; for though mention was made of their passing over, ver. 1, it is here repeated for the sake of this circumstance to be added, that they passed *in haste*. This, it is probable, they did, either because Joshua, by the officers, ordered them to make haste, that they might complete their passage before the night came on, or because the sight of the waters suspended on their right, struck them with terror, through the weakness of their faith. For, in so great a multitude of men, women, and children, it is not credible that all hearts were animated with the same confidence. Perhaps, also, some made haste that they might not either tempt God, by desiring a continuance of the miracle longer than was necessary, or try the patience of the priests too much by any unnecessary delay. It is most likely, however, that fear had the principal influence in causing them to hasten their march. The priests, on the contrary, who bore the ark, continued dauntless at their post, till at last, there remaining no one on the eastern shore, nor in the bed of the river, there was no farther reason for their continuing in the midst of it, and therefore they were commanded by Joshua, who himself received an order from God to that purpose, ver. 16, 17, *to come up out of Jordan*. Then, and not before, they crossed quite over, in the presence of the people, that is in the sight of all Israel, who, no doubt, beheld with admiration, from the western bank of the river, both them and the ark which they carried over, and which had been the means of their safe passage. The place where the Israelites crossed has since been called Bethabara, which signifies the house of passage. It is mentioned John i. 28.

A. M. 9553.  
B. C. 1461.  
h Num. 32.  
26, 27, 28.

12 And <sup>h</sup> the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children [of Israel, as Moses spake unto them :

1 Or, ready armed.

13 About forty thousand || prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.

1 Ch. 3. 7.

14 ¶ On that day the LORD <sup>i</sup> magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

k Exod. 25.  
14, 24.

16 Command the priests that bare the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.

17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.

18 And it came to pass, when the

A. M. 9553.  
B. C. 1461.

priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were † lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and † flowed over all his banks, as they did before.

† Heb. plucked up.  
1 Ch. 3. 15.  
† Heb. went.

19 ¶ And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped <sup>m</sup> in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.

m Ch. 5. 9.

20 ¶ And <sup>n</sup> those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.

n Ver. 3.

21 And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, <sup>o</sup> When your children shall ask their fathers † in time to come, saying, What mean these stones ?

o Ver. 6.  
† Heb. to-morrow.

22 Then you shall let your children know, saying, <sup>p</sup> Israel came over this,

p Ch. 3. 17.

Ver. 12, 13. *The children of Reuben passed over armed*—As they had engaged to do, Num. xxxii. 20—27. and Ch. i. 13. *About 40,000 prepared for war*—It is likely that Joshua drew out this number only of chosen men; and left all the rest to take care of their families and flocks. *Passed over before the Lord*—Having passed over the river, they stood in battle array before the ark; at the distance, probably, of 2,000 cubits: or, in the presence of the Lord, as the expression, *Before the Lord*, may mean, who observed, whether they would keep their covenant with their brethren or not.

Ver. 14. *On that day the Lord magnified Joshua*—Both by the fellowship he admitted him to with himself, speaking to him on all occasions, and being ready to be consulted by him, and by the miracle which had just given happy success to that General's first enterprize, and which had acquired to him the same confidence and respect from the Israelites which Moses had before acquired from the miraculous passage of the Red Sea: Thus did the Lord, in a glorious manner, accomplish the promises made to Joshua in the foregoing Chapter, Ver. 7.

Ver. 18. *The waters of Jordan returned*—They had stood on an heap while the ark was in the river, but came tumbling down when it was removed, which shewed to a demonstration, that it was to God's presence with them, and to this only, that they owed this miraculous mercy. "Some have observed here, by way of allusion," says Henry, "that when the ark, and the priests that bear it," (the word and ordinance of God and his ministers) "are removed from any place, the flood-gates are drawn up, the defence is departed, and an inundation of judgments is to be expected.

Those that are unchurched will soon be undone: the glory is departed if the ark be taken."

Ver. 19. *On the tenth day of the first month*—Namely, of Nisan, which wanted but five days of forty years, from the time of their coming out of Egypt, which was on the fifteenth day of this month. So punctual is God in the performing of his word, whether promised or threatened. And this day was very seasonable for the taking up of the lambs which were to be used four days after, according to the law, Exod. xii. 3, 6. *Gilgal*—A place afterwards so called, Chap. v. 9.

Ver. 20. *In Gilgal*—Probably in order, like so many little pillars, to keep up the remembrance of this miraculous benefit. Gilgal was situate between Jordan and Jericho, and, according to Josephus, was ten furlongs from the city and fifty from the river. Joshua had his camp there, during all the time that the war lasted, and till the division of the country among the tribes. There the Israelites were circumcised; there they celebrated the passover, for the first time in the land of Canaan; and there the tabernacle was erected and fixed, till, Canaan being subdued, they placed it in Shilo. Gilgal, however, always continued to be a place of importance, as we learn from divers passages of Scripture, See Judg. ii. 1; 1 Sam. xi. 14, and xiii. 12.

Ver. 22. *Ye shall let your children know*—We may learn from the injunction given here, and on many other occasions, that it is our indispensable duty to make our children well acquainted with the historical as well as doctrinal truths of religion, from the earliest accounts we have of them in the Holy Scriptures; that, by this means, a foundation may be laid for their faith, and they may be trained up in the knowledge of God, and of what he has declared to men, and done

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1151. Jordan on dry land.

23 For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, <sup>q</sup> which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over:

<sup>q</sup> Exod. 14. 21.

24 That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is <sup>r</sup> mighty: that ye might <sup>t</sup> fear the LORD your God † for ever.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Kings 8. 42. Ps. 106. 5.

<sup>s</sup> Exod. 15. 16.

<sup>t</sup> Exod. 14. 31. Deut. 8. 2.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. all days.

CHAP. V.

The Canaanites terrified, ver. 1. Circumcision renewed, ver. 2—9. The passover kept, ver. 10.

for them; that from hence they may be led both to love and fear him, and to live to his glory.

Ver. 23. *Which he dried up from before us*—That is, not only before Joshua himself and Caleb, then alive and present, but before the whole nation of the Israelites. For this benefit done to their fathers is justly said to be done to themselves, both because they were then in their parents' loins, and because it was intended to redound to their advantage, and that of their posterity, to the latest generations. It greatly magnifies later mercies to compare them with former mercies; for hereby it appears that God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Ver. 24. *That all the people of the earth might know, &c.*—Although this may primarily mean the neighbouring nations, yet there is great reason to think that both this and Exod. ix. 16, *That my name may be declared throughout all the earth*, had a prophetic aspect, and looked to distant ages, even to the end of time, and to all the nations on the face of the earth; to whom these wonderful facts should bear witness of the true God, as well as to the surrounding nations. And when we consider how the Holy Scriptures, the records of these facts, have been already carried into almost every nation; what a forcible evidence they bear with them; how entire they still remain after so many thousands of years; and what probability there is, when the Jews are converted, that they will be made more known in every nation and language; we may see great reason to conclude, that these miracles were intended to make known the power of the true God to all nations, as well as to the Israelites; and in fact they do equally declare him to us, as they did to them.

CHAP. V. Ver. 1. *Amorites*—These and the Canaanites are mentioned for all the rest, as being the chief of them for number, and power, and courage—*On the side of Jordan, westward*—This is added, to distinguish them from the other Amorites, eastward from Jordan, whom Moses had subdued. *Which were by the sea*—The midland sea, all along the coast of it, which was the chief seat of that people, though divers colonies of them were come into, and settled in other places. *That the Lord had dried up Jordan*—Which was their bulwark on the east side, where the Israelites were;

The Israelites eat corn, and the manna ceases, A. M. 2553.  
ver. 11, 12. Christ appears to Joshua, ver. 13 B. C. 1151.  
—15.

AND it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, <sup>a</sup> which were by the sea, <sup>b</sup> heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, <sup>c</sup> neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.

<sup>a</sup> Num. 12. 29.

<sup>b</sup> Exod. 15. 16. Ps. 48. 6.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Kings 10. 5.

2 ¶ At that time the LORD said

for it is very probable they had taken away all bridges near those parts; and the Israelites having been so long in that neighbouring country, and yet not making any attempt upon them, they were grown secure; especially now, when Jordan swelled beyond its ordinary bounds; and therefore they did not endeavour to hinder their passage. *Their heart melted*—They lost all their courage, and durst attempt nothing upon the Israelites. This did not happen without God's special providence, that the Israelites might quietly participate of the two great sacraments of their Church, circumcision and the passover, and thereby be prepared for their high and hard work, and for the possession of the holy and promised land; which would have been defiled by an uncircumcised people.

Ver. 2. *At that time*—Viz. the morning after the passage, or the 11th day of the first month, as Archbishop Usher and others have very probably conjectured. On the 13th day they were sore of their wounds, on the 14th they recovered, and on the even of that day kept the passover. *Make thee sharp knives*—Or *knives of flints*, as the original, *חרבות צור*, *charboth tzurim*, more properly signifies, and is translated by Maimonides. These stones might be found in abundance on the adjacent mountains; and, it is likely, as Theodoret observes, that, after a pilgrimage of forty years in the wilderness of Arabia, the Israelites might not be provided with knives of iron or steel, such as are now in use. But whatever kind of knives may be here meant, those who had them already were not hereby commanded to make others, but only to make them sharp. *Again the second time*—This does not mean that those very persons who had before been circumcised should be circumcised again, but that the rite or custom of circumcising, which had been disused in the wilderness for some years, should be again practised. That this is the sense appears very evident from the following verses. If it be inquired, When the *former time*, here referred to, was? It may be answered, either in Egypt, when many of them, who, possibly through fear or favour of the Egyptians, had neglected this duty, were circumcised by the command of Moses; or at Sinai, when they received the passover, which no uncircumcised person might do.



A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.Or, knives  
of flints.  
d Exod. 4.  
26.

unto Joshua, Make thee <sup>d</sup>sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.

3 And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at <sup>||</sup> the hill of the foreskins.

Or, Gibe-  
ahhaara-  
loth.

4 And this *is* the cause why Joshua did circumcise: <sup>e</sup> All the people that came out of Egypt, *that were* males, *even* all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt.

e Num. 14.  
20.  
Deut. 2.  
16.

5 Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people *that were* born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, *them* they had not circumcised.

Ver. 3. *Joshua—circumcised the children of Israel*—That is, he caused them to be circumcised, viz. such of them as were uncircumcised. And because it was to be done speedily, the passover approaching, it was necessary to use many hands in the business. Nor was it difficult to find them, as it did not signify by what hand the operation was performed. Fathers, mothers, relations, friends, might any of them perform it as well as the Priests or Levites. Although it be not mentioned, it is more than probable that the Israelites beyond Jordan were circumcised at the same time, that they also might keep the passover.

Ver. 4. *All that came out of Egypt that were males died*—This is to be restrained to such as were then above twenty years old, and such as were guilty of the rebellion, mentioned Numb. xiv. as it is expressed, Ver. 6.

Ver. 5. *The people born in the wilderness—they had not circumcised*—What occasioned this omission is not said, nor is it easy to determine whether it arose from negligence, or from God's dispensing, for a time, with his own ordinance, on account of the unsettledness of their state, and their frequent removes while they were in the wilderness, it being necessary for children, after they were circumcised, and thereby made sore, to rest some time. This latter reason has generally been acquiesced in by commentators. But some have not judged it satisfactory, because sometimes the Israelites continued a year in a place, Numb. ix. 22, if not much longer; and in their removes, their little children, though sore, might have been kept so warm, and carried so easy as to receive no damage; and might certainly have been much better accommodated than the mothers in travel, or in lying-in. They have therefore thought that God's not expressly and particularly enjoining them (for it does not appear that he did so enjoin them) to circumcise their children while they were in the wilderness, was a continued token of his displeasure against them for their unbelief and murmuring, and a token that they should never have the benefit of that promise of Canaan, whereof circumcision

6 For the children of Israel walked <sup>f</sup> forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *that were* men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that <sup>g</sup> he would not shew them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, <sup>h</sup> a land that floweth with milk and honey.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
f Num. 14.  
34.  
Ps. 95. 10.g Num. 14.  
24.  
Hebr. J.  
11h Exod. 3.  
8.

7 And <sup>i</sup> their children, *whom* he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.

i Num. 14.  
31.

8 And it came to pass, <sup>†</sup> when they had done circumcising all the

† Heb.  
when the  
people  
had made  
an end  
to be cir-  
cumcised.

was the seal, Gen. xvii. 8. But whatsoever the reason was, it seems this great ordinance was intermitted in Israel for almost forty years together; a plain indication that it was not of absolute necessity to men's eternal salvation, nor to be of perpetual obligation, but should, in the fulness of time, be abolished, as now it was for a long time suspended.

Ver. 6. *Till all the people—were consumed*—All the six hundred thousand fighting men that came out of Egypt, except Joshua and Caleb. The Hebrew word <sup>וַיָּהָרְגוּ</sup>, *hagoi*, here rendered *people*, commonly signifies the Gentiles, and some have thought it is here used to signify that they were unworthy the name of Israelites. *That he would not shew them the land*—That is, would not give them so much as the sight of it, which he granted to Moses, much less the possession.

Ver. 7. *Their children—they Joshua circumcised*—This God now required to be done, 1, As a testimony of his reconciliation to the people, and that he would not further impute their parents' rebellion to them, but now permit them to enter into his rest, See Numb. xiv. 29—35. 2, Because one great impediment of circumcision was now removed, their continued travels, and frequent and uncertain removes. 3, To prepare them for the approaching passover. 4, To distinguish them from the Canaanites, into whose land they were now come. 5, To try their faith, by their submission to a command, the performance of which exposed them to be treated by their enemies as the Shechemites had been formerly by Simeon and Levi in a similar circumstance. 6, To ratify the covenant between God and them, whereof circumcision was a sign and seal, to assure them that he would now make good his covenant, in giving them this land; and to oblige them to perform all the duties to which that covenant bound them, as soon as they came into Canaan, Exod. xii. 25; Lev. xxiii. 10; Numb. xv. 2.

Ver. 8. *Till they were whole*—Free from that pain and soreness which circumcision caused. It was certainly an act of great faith to expose themselves to so much pain and

A. M. 2559.  
B. C. 1451. people, that they abode in their  
h Gen. 24.  
26. places in the camp, \* till they were  
whole.

1 Gen. 24.  
14.  
1 Sam. 14.  
6. Lev.  
18. 2. 9 And the LORD said unto Joshua,  
This day have I rolled away <sup>1</sup>the  
reproach of Egypt from off you.  
That is,  
rolling.  
m Ch. 4. 19. Wherefore the name of the place is  
called || <sup>m</sup>Gilgal unto this day.

n Exod. 12.  
6. 10 ¶ And the children of Israel  
encamped in Gilgal, and kept the  
passover <sup>u</sup>on the fourteenth day of  
the month at even in the plains of  
Jericho.

11. And they did eat of the old  
corn of the land on the morrow after  
the passover, unleavened cakes, and  
parched *corn* in the selfsame day.

danger too, in this place where they were hemmed in by Jordan and their enemies.

Ver. 9. *The reproach of Egypt*—That is, uncircumcision, which was both in truth, and in the opinion of the Jews, a matter of great reproach. And although this was a reproach common to most nations of the world, yet it is particularly called *the reproach of Egypt*, either, 1, Because the other neighbouring nations, being the children of Abraham by the concubines, are supposed to have been circumcised, which the Egyptians at this time were not, as may be gathered from Exod. ii. 6, where they knew the child to be an Hebrew by this mark. Or, 2, Because they came out of Egypt, and were esteemed to be a sort of Egyptians, Numb. xxii. 5, which they justly thought a great reproach; but by their circumcision they were now distinguished from them, and manifested to be another people. Or, 3, Because many of them lay under this reproach in Egypt, having wickedly neglected this duty there for worldly reasons; and others of them continued in the same shameful condition for many years in the wilderness. *The name of the place is called Gilgal*—That is, rolling.

Ver. 10. *The children of Israel kept the passover*—Which was their third passover: the first was in Egypt, Exod. xii.; the second at Mount Sinai, Numb. ix.; the third here; for in their wilderness travels, these and several other sacrifices were neglected, Amos v. 25. While they were in the wilderness, they were denied the comfort of this ordinance, as a further token of God's displeasure. But now God comforted them again, after the time that he had afflicted them.

Ver. 11. *They eat of the old corn*—The corn of the last year, which the inhabitants of those parts had left in their barns, being fled into their strong cities, or other remoter parts. *On the morrow*—That is, on the sixteenth day; for the passover was killed between the two evenings of the fourteenth day, and was eaten in that evening or night, which, according to the Jewish computation, whereby they begin their days at the evening, was a part of the fifteenth day, all which was the feast of the passover; and so the

A. M. 2559.  
B. C. 1451.  
o Exod. 16.  
29. 12 ¶ And <sup>v</sup>the manna ceased ON  
the morrow after they had eaten of  
the old corn of the land; neither  
had the children of Israel manna any  
more; but they did eat of the fruit  
of the land of Canaan that year.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when  
Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted  
up his eyes and looked, and, behold,  
there stood <sup>p</sup>a man over against him p Gen. 19.  
2.  
Exod. 23.  
23.  
q Num. 22.  
23.  
<sup>q</sup>with his sword drawn in his hand:  
and Joshua went unto him, and said  
unto him, *Art thou for us, or for  
our adversaries?*

14 And he said, Nay, but *as* || cap- 10r,  
princer,  
Exod. 23.  
20. Dan.  
10. 13.  
r Gen. 17.  
11. tain of the host of the LORD am I  
now come. And Joshua <sup>r</sup>fell on his

sixteenth day was the morrow of the passover, when they were obliged to offer unto God the first sheaf, and then were allowed to eat of the rest. *Parched corn*—Of that year's corn, which was most proper for that use. *Self-same day*—Having an eager desire to enjoy the fruits of the land. And this corn came very seasonably; for after the passover, they were to keep the feast of unleavened bread, which they could not do when they had nothing but manna to live upon.

Ver. 12. *The manna ceased*—Which God now withheld, to shew that manna was not an ordinary production of nature, but an extraordinary and special gift of God to supply their necessity. And because God would not be prodigal of his favours, by working miracles where ordinary means were sufficient. *The morrow*—That is, on the seventeenth day. It cannot be too much taken notice of, as it is a great mark of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, that the miracles related therein are not a heap of wonderful stories, which have nothing to recommend them but the strangeness of them, like most of those contained in the Koran, but that they are acts of consummate wisdom, as well as of wonder. Here we see, that as soon as the Israelites came into a country where they could obtain a sufficient supply of food in the ordinary way, that miraculous provision which had been made for them in the desert wilderness, where it was absolutely necessary for their subsistence, ceased. So that it is evident the falling of the manna from heaven was not merely or chiefly a strange thing to be wondered at, but an act of great wisdom and goodness, which the circumstances of things absolutely required.

Ver. 13. *When Joshua was by Jericho*—Heb. *In Jericho*; that is, in the territory adjoining to it; whither he went to view those parts, and discern the fittest places for his attempt upon Jericho. *A man*—One in the appearance of a man. *With his sword drawn*—In readiness to fight, not, as Joshua thought, against him, but for him and his people.

Ver. 14. *As captain of the Lord's host*—Captain of this people, and I will conduct and assist thee and them in this great undertaking. Now this person was evidently not a

A.M. 2853.  
B.C. 1451. face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

Exod. 3. 5.  
Aol. 7. 33. 15 And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, 'Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

## CHAP. VI.

Directions given to Joshua concerning Jericho, ver. 1—5. The people compass the city seven days, ver. 6—14. The taking it, with the charge to destroy it utterly, ver. 15—21. The preservation of Rahab and her relations, ver. 22—25. A curse pronounced on any that should rebuild it, ver. 26, 27.

† Heb. did shut up, and was shut up.

NOW Jericho † was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

Ch. 9. 9.  
24. & 8. 1.  
Deut. 7. 24. 2 ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, 'I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the <sup>b</sup> king

A.M. 2853.  
B.C. 1451. thereof, and the mighty men of valour.

3 And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven <sup>c</sup>trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and <sup>d</sup>the priest's shall blow with the trumpets. c Judg. 7. 16, 22. d Num. 10. 8.

5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down † flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. † Heb. under it.

6 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto

created angel, but the Son of God who went along with the Israelites in this expedition, as their chief and captain. And this appears, 1, By his acceptance of adoration here, which a created angel would not have dared to admit of, Rev. xxii. 8, 9. 2, Because the place was made holy by his presence, Ver. 15, which to do was God's prerogative, Exod. iii. 5. 3, Because he is called the Lord, Heb. Jehovah, Chap. vi. 2. My Lord—I acknowledge thee for my Lord and captain, and therefore wait for thy commands, which I am ready to obey.

Ver. 15. From off thy foot—In token of reverence and subjection. Holy—Consecrated by my presence. The very same order which God gave to Moses at the bush, when he was sending him to bring Israel out of Egypt, he here gives to Joshua for the confirming his faith, that as he had been with Moses, so he would be with him.

CHAP. VI. Ver. 1, 2. Jericho was straitly shut up—They had shut up all their gates, and kept a very strict guard at them for fear of the children of Israel. And the Lord said unto Joshua—There is great reason to believe, and indeed most commentators agree, that this was spoken by the divine person who is said in the preceding Chapter to have appeared to Joshua in the form of a man, but who styled himself Captain of the host of the Lord, and is here called Jehovah, which shews that he was not of the angelic order. It is probable that the king and people of Jericho had refused the offers of peace which God ordered to be first sent to every city before they besieged it, Deut. xx. 10, and, trusting to their forces, had taken up a desperate resolution not to yield on any terms.

Ver. 3. Round about the city once—At a convenient distance, out of the reach of their arrows. Six days—Every day once. This and the following course might seem ridiculous and absurd, and is therefore prescribed by God, that they might learn to take new measures of things, and to expect success, not from their own valour, or skill, but merely from God's appointment and blessing; and in general, not to judge of any of God's institutions by mere carnal reason, to which divers of their ceremonies would seem no less foolish than this action.

Ver. 5. The wall—Not all of it; which was unnecessary, and might have given the people better opportunity of escaping; but only a considerable part of it, where the Israelites might fitly enter: for Rahab's house was not overthrown, Ver. 22. Flat—Heb. under it. It was not battered down with engines, which would have made part of it fall out of its place, but it fell of its own accord, and therefore in the place it did formerly stand in. God chose this way to try the faith and obedience of the people: whether they would observe a precept, which, to human policy, seemed foolish, and believe a promise, which seemed impossible to be performed; whether they could patiently bear the reproaches of their enemies, and patiently wait for the salvation of God. Thus, by faith, not by force, the walls of Jericho fell down.

Ver. 6. Of rams' horns—Of the basest matter, and the dullest sound, that the excellency of the power might be of God. The original words, however, here and Ver. 4, שופרות יובלים, shoperoth jobelim, may be properly rendered, trumpets of jubilee; that is, such trumpets as were to be blown in the year of jubilee. And many prefer this translation, alleging that, as the horns of rams are not hollow,

A. M. 2563.  
B. C. 1451.

them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD.

7 And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.

8 ¶ And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the † rereward came after the ark, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10 And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor † make any noise with your voice, neither shall *any* word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11 ¶ So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about *it* once :

Num. 10.  
† Heb.  
gathering  
lust.

† Heb.  
make  
your voice  
to be  
heard.

trumpets cannot be made of them, even when bored, capable of giving any thing of a strong sound. They would, therefore, understand the words here as signifying trumpets made in the shape of rams' horns. But others have urged that there is no difficulty in making such an instrument of a ram's horn as may give a pretty strong sound: "it being certain that the inside of these horns is no ways hard, and may easily be taken out, excepting a space at the point of about four or five inches, part of which is sawed off, in order to proportionate the aperture to the mouth; after which, the rest is easily pierced. And we can assure our readers," say the authors of the Universal History, "that we have seen some of these trumpets, thus made, used by the shepherds in the southern parts of Germany."

Ver. 7—10. *Let him that is armed pass on*—God would have them armed both for the defence of themselves and the ark, in case the enemies should make a sally upon them, and for the execution of the Lord's vengeance upon that city. *The rereward*—Which being opposed to the armed men, may seem to denote the unarmed people, who were desirous to be spectators of this wonderful work. *Ye shall not shout*—Because shouting before the time appointed would be inef-

and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

13 And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.

17 ¶ And the city shall be || ac-

A. M. 2563.  
B. C. 1451.Deut. 31.  
25.Or, de-  
voted,  
Lev. 31.  
25.

fectual, and so might give them some discouragement, and their enemies matter of insulting.

Ver. 16. *At the seventh time Joshua said, Shout*—To testify your faith in God's promise, and thankfulness for this glorious mercy; to encourage yourselves and brethren, and to strike a terror into your enemies. *The Lord hath given you the city*—It is given to you, to be devoted to God, as the first (and perhaps the worst) of all the cities of Canaan.

Ver. 17. *The city shall be accursed—to the Lord*—That is, devoted to destruction, by the right which God has to punish such as offend against him. This he speaks by direction from God, (see 1 Kings xvi. 34,) whose will it was that every thing in Jericho should be utterly destroyed, as well inanimate things by burning them, &c. as men and cattle, by the edge of the sword; excepting only the things that were found in the house of Rahab, and the vessels of silver and gold, brass and iron, which were to be consecrated to the Lord, and put into the treasury of the tabernacle. God seems to have caused the first spoils made in the land of Canaan to be dedicated to his use, 1, Because the first fruits were appropriated to him as his due; 2, To signify that he was their leader, and that these victories were owing

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. cursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because Ch. 7. 4. she hid the messengers that we sent.

Deut. 7. 26. & 13. 17. 18 And ye, <sup>h</sup> in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, <sup>i</sup> and trouble it.

Ch. 7. 25.  
1 Kings 10. 17, 15. 19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are <sup>†</sup> consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

Ver. 8.  
Hebr. 11. 30.  
† Hebr. unde-  
der it. 20 ¶ So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that <sup>k</sup> the wall fell down <sup>†</sup> flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
Deut. 7. 2. 21 And they <sup>l</sup> utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

22 ¶ But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, <sup>m</sup> as ye swore unto her. Ch. 9. 14.  
Hebr. 11. 31.

23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, <sup>n</sup> and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her <sup>†</sup> kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. Ch. 9. 15.  
† Hebr. fam-  
iliter.

24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; <sup>o</sup> only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. Ver. 18.

25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's house-

to him; 3, Lest the soldiers, being gluttoned with the spoil of this rich city, should grow sluggish in their work; and, 4, That on entering the land of Canaan they might be made thoroughly to understand that they had no right to the riches of that country but what he gave them; and that he would always keep to himself the power of restraining that right as he should see proper. In the mean time the severity enjoined to be exercised towards the persons of the people of the city in putting them to the sword, was undoubtedly worthy of his infinite wisdom; as well as suitable to his holiness and justice: While it struck a terror into the rest of their enemies, it might determine them to prevent, by accepting of peace, or by flight, a punishment which their enormous and wilful crimes had otherwise rendered unavoidable.

Ver. 18. *Keep yourselves from the accursed thing*—It should rather be rendered *the devoted thing*—Meaning the spoils devoted to the Lord. These they were not to touch on pain of being themselves devoted to death. *Lest ye make yourselves accursed*—Lest you draw down upon yourselves the immediate curse of God, and so bring yourselves under the same sentence of destruction, as the inhabitants and things of Jericho are under. *And make the camp of Israel a curse*—By provoking God to punish them for your sin, in which they may be one way or other involved; for the whole

camp having sins of their own, God might take what occasion he saw fit to inflict this punishment.

Ver. 19. *Vessels of brass and iron*—Except that of which images were made, which were utterly to be destroyed. *Unto the Lord*—Being first made to pass through the fire, Numb. xxxi. 22, 23. *Treasury of the Lord*—To be employed wholly for the uses of the tabernacle, and not to be applied to the use of any private person or priest.

Ver. 21. *Young and old*—Being commanded to do so by the sovereign Lord of every man's life; and being informed by God before that the Canaanites were abominably wicked, and deserved the severest punishment. As for the infants, they were at the disposal of their Creator; and it was a great favour to them to take them away in their infancy, rather than reserve them to those dreadful calamities to which those who survived them were exposed.

Ver. 22—25. *The harlot's house*—Which together with the wall upon which it leaned, was left standing, by a special favour of God to her. *Lest them without the camp of Israel*—Till they were cleansed from the impurities of their Gentile state, and instructed in the Jewish religion, and solemnly admitted into that Church, for which Rahab's good counsel and example had doubtless prepared them. *Joshua saved Rahab alive*—For that general command to root out the Canaanites seems to have had some exceptions, in case

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**hold, and all that she had ; and**  
**she dwelleth in Israel even unto this**  
**day ; because she hid the messengers,**  
**which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.**

See Mat. 1. 3.

**26 ¶ And Joshua adjured them**  
**at that time, saying, <sup>9</sup> Cursed be the**  
**man before the LORD, that riseth up**  
**and buildeth this city Jericho : he**  
**shall lay the foundation thereof in**  
**his firstborn, and in his youngest son**  
**shall he set up the gates of it.**

1 Kings 16. 34.

**27 <sup>r</sup> So the LORD was with Joshua ;**  
**and <sup>9</sup> his fame was noised throughout**  
**all the country.**

Ch. 1. 5.

Ch. 9. 1, 2.

any of them had sincerely and seasonably cast off their idolatry and wickedness, submitted to the Israelites, and become members of the Church of God. *She dwelleth in Israel unto this day*—This shews that the Book of Joshua was written while Rahab was alive.

Ver. 26. *Joshua adjured them at that time*—Heb. *יָשָׁע*, *jashbang*, he made them to swear. As soon as the city was destroyed, it seems, he convened the heads of the tribes to signify to them that it was the will of God this idolatrous city should never be rebuilt, and then engaged them to take an oath that they would leave it in ruins. And they doubtless bound the people in like manner, not to rebuild it, on pain of the divine malediction. *Cursed be the man before the Lord*—That is, from God's presence, and by his sentence, as Joshua is said, Chap. xviii. 8, 10, to cast lots *before the Lord*, expecting the decision from God. He intimates, that he does not utter this of himself, or in consequence of any particular dislike of that place ; but from Jehovah, and by divine inspiration. God would have the ruins of this city remain as a standing monument of his justice against this wicked and idolatrous people, and of his almighty power in destroying so great and strong a city by such contemptible means. Thus Maimonides, the Jewish Rabbi, "Joshua pronounced a curse against those who should build up Jericho, that the remembrance of the miracle which God had wrought by destroying it might never be effaced ; for all who looked on these ruins, thus sunk into the earth," (he thought the walls were swallowed up rather than overthrown) "clearly saw them to be the ruins of a city destroyed by a miracle, and not by the hand of men." *Cursed be the man that buildeth this city*—That is, that shall attempt to build it. So this curse was restrained to the builder, but no way belonged to those who should inhabit it after it was built, as is evident from 2 Kings ii. 18 ; Luke xix. 5. *In his youngest son*—That is, he shall lose all his children in the work, the first at the beginning, others in the progress of it, and the youngest in the close, when the gates were wont to be set up. This was exactly fulfilled, as we read, 1 Kings xvi. 34, *Hiel the Bethelite, built Jericho : he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, who died in the beginning of the work, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, who died when it was finished, and the gates were setting up.*

CHAP. VII.

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.

*We have here the sin of Achan in taking the accursed thing, ver. 1. The defeat of Israel before Ai, ver. 2—5. Joshua's humiliation and prayer, ver. 6—9. God's directions to him, ver. 10—15. The discovery, conviction, and execution of the criminal, ver. 16—26.*

**B**UT the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing : for <sup>a</sup> ¶ Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of ¶ Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing : and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

Ch. 22. 20.  
1 Chron. 2. 7.  
Acher.  
Or, Zimri.  
1 Chron. 2. 6.

**2 And Joshua sent men from Je-**

Ver. 27. *So the Lord was with Joshua*—The Chaldee interprets it, *The Word of the Lord* was with him, even Christ the eternal Word, the same that was with Moses. Nothing makes a man more truly great than to have evidences that God is with him.

CHAP. VII. Ver. 1. *But the children of Israel*—That is, one of them. It is an usual form of speech in the Holy Scriptures, to ascribe that to many indefinitely, which properly belonged only to one or two, of the same body, or society. Thus, Matt. xxvi. 8, we find that to be ascribed to all the disciples which was done by Judas alone. See John xii. 4. *Committed a trespass in the accursed thing*—Offended God by taking some of the spoils which were devoted to destruction, or appropriated to God's treasury, with a curse upon him who took them. *Achan the son of Carmi*—He is called *Achar*, 1 Chron. ii. 7, a word that signifies, *He troubled*. It is probable that as he had troubled Israel, Ver. 25, they changed his name thus in after times, *Zabdi*, called also *Zimri*, 1 Chron. ii. 6. *Zerah*, or *Zarah*, who was Judah's immediate son, Gen. xxxviii. 30, who went with his father into Egypt when he was very young. And thus for making up the 256 years that are supposed to come between that and this time, we must allow Achan to be now an old man, and his three ancestors to have begotten each his son at about sixty years of age ; which at that time was not incredible nor unusual. *Against the children of Israel*—Why did God punish the whole society for this one man's sin ? All of them were punished for their own sins, whereof each had a sufficient proportion ; but God took this occasion to inflict the punishment upon the society. 1, Because divers of them might be guilty of this sin, either by coveting to do what he actually did, or by concealing his fault, which it is probable could not be unknown to others ; or by not sorrowing for it, and endeavouring to purge themselves from it : 2, To make sin the more hateful, as being the cause of such dreadful judgments : and 3, To oblige all the members of every society to be more circumspect in ordering their own actions, and more diligent to prevent the miscarriage of their brethren.

Ver. 2, 3. *Go up and view the country*—They were not to go into the city of Ai, but into the country belonging to

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1461.

richo to Ai, which *is* beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.

† Heb.  
about  
3000 men,  
or about  
3600 men.

3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let † about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; *and* make not all the people to labour thither; for they *are but* few.

b Lev. 26.  
17.

4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: <sup>b</sup>and they fled before the men of Ai.

† Or, in Hebrew.

5 ¶ And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them *from* before the gate *even* unto Shebarim, and smote them || in the going down: where-

fore <sup>c</sup> the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

6 ¶ And Joshua <sup>d</sup> rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and <sup>e</sup> put dust upon their heads.

7 And Joshua said, Alas, O LORD God, <sup>f</sup>wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!

8 O LORD, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their † backs before <sup>†</sup> their enemies!

9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
c Ch. 2. 9.  
11. Lev.  
26. 36.  
d Gen. 37.  
29. 34.e 1 Sam. 4.  
12. Job  
9. 12.f Exod. 5.  
9.† Heb.  
neck.

it, that they might understand the state of the place and people. *Let two or three thousand go up and smite Ai*—There was no little self-confidence and presumption in this counsel: Ai, it appears, was strong by its situation, and guarded by 12,000 men; so that there was no probability of taking it with two or three thousand. God, however, wisely permitted this advice to be followed, that Achan's sin might be brought to light, and punished, and the people in general, who were evidently lifted up through their late success, might be awakened, humbled, and reformed, and that with as little mischief and reproach as might be. For if the defeat of these few caused such consternation in Joshua and the elders, and probably in all the host, it is easy to guess what dread it would have caused, if the whole army had been defeated.

Ver. 4. *They fled before the men of Ai*—Not having courage, it seems, to strike a stroke, a plain evidence that God had forsaken them, and an instructive event, to shew them what they were when God left them; that they did not gain their victories by their own valour, but that it was God that gave the Canaanites into their hands. And may we not hence conclude, however little it may be thought of, that victory or superiority in war between different nations, depends more upon the will of God than upon any other circumstance; and that a nation that goes to battle, loaded with its crimes, has but little reason to hope for final victory or lasting success!

Ver. 5. *The men of Ai smote thirty-six men*—A dear-bought victory to them, whereby Israel was awakened and reformed, and they hardened to their own ruin. *They smote them in the going down*—That is, till they came to the plains of Jericho, Ai standing upon a hill. *The hearts of the people melted, and became as water*—Soft and weak, and full of fluctuation and trembling. They were undoubtedly struck with this panick from God; for otherwise there was no sufficient reason for it.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua rent his clothes*—In testimony of great sorrow for the loss felt, the consequent mischief feared, and the sin which he suspected. The outward marks of sorrow exhibited on this occasion by Joshua and the elders, are well known to have been usually shewn in those ages when people were afflicted with grief on account of any great calamity, or the commission of any extraordinary crime. *Fell to the earth upon his face*—In deep humiliation and fervent supplication. *Before the ark of the Lord*—Not in the sanctuary, but with his face towards it.—*Until the even-tide*—Continuing the whole day in fasting and prayer. *And put dust upon their heads*—Which was still a higher expression of great grief, and of a deep sense of their unworthiness to be relieved.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore hast thou brought this people over Jordan?*—In this, and the two following verses, Joshua shews the infirmity of human nature, and how apt, even pious men are to forego their trust in God, and to think of him and his actions according to their own weakness. Because three thousand men had fled before Ai, Joshua seems ready to conclude, that all God's promises were about to be rendered of none effect; not considering the wisdom, power, and truth of the Almighty. *To deliver us into the hand of the Amorites*—Here his expressions fall far short of that reverence, modesty, and submission which he owed to God, and they are recorded as instances, that the holy men of God of old were subject to like passions and infirmities with other men.

Ver. 8, 9. *What shall I say*—In answer to the reproaches of our insulting enemies? *When Israel*—God's people, which he hath singled out of all nations for his own. *Turneth their backs*—Unable to make any resistance. *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?*—Which will upon this occasion be blasphemed and charged with inconstancy, and with inability to resist them, or to do thy people that good which thou didst



<sup>A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.</sup> <sup>f Pa. 83. 4.</sup> *of it*, and shall environ us round, and <sup>g</sup> cut off our name from the earth: and <sup>h</sup> what wilt thou do unto thy great name?

<sup>h Exod. 23. 19.</sup> ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore <sup>† Heb. fall-  
ed.</sup> <sup>i Ver. 1.</sup> *† liest thou thus upon thy face?*

<sup>k Ch. 6. 17. 16.</sup> <sup>l Acts 5. 1. 2.</sup> ¶ <sup>i</sup> Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: <sup>k</sup> for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and <sup>l</sup> dissembled also, and they have put *it* even among their own stuff.

<sup>m See  
Num. 14. 46.</sup> ¶ <sup>n</sup> Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because <sup>n</sup> they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

intend them. The name of God is a great name, above every name. And whatever happens, we ought to pray that this may not be polluted. This should be our concern more than any thing else: on this we should fix our eye: and we cannot urge a better plea than this, "Lord, what wilt thou do for thy great name?" Let God in all be glorified, and then welcome his whole will!

Ver. 10—12. *Wherefore liest thou upon thy face?*—This business is not to be done by inactive supplication, but by vigorous endeavours for reformation. *Israel hath sinned*—Some or one of them. *They have transgressed my covenant*—That is, broken the conditions of my covenant, which they promised to perform, whereof this was one, not to meddle with the accursed thing. *And have also stolen*—Taken what I had reserved for myself, Chap. vi. 19. *And dissembled also*—Covered the fact with deep dissimulation. Probably Joshua, after the destruction of Jericho, had made inquiry whether the silver and gold, &c. were brought into the treasury, and whether they had destroyed all the other things, as God commanded; and they all answered in the affirmative. Possibly too, Achan might be suspected of purloining something, and, being accused, had denied it. *Among their own stuff*—Converted it to their own use, and added obstinacy to their crime. *Because they were accursed*—By having a man among them who is fallen under my curse. Thus they have put themselves out of my protection, and therefore are liable to the same destruction which belongs to the Canaanites. *Except ye destroy the accursed*—Now they knew that such a crime had been committed among them, they would have been as guilty as Achan, if they had not punished it.

Ver. 13. *Sanctify yourselves*—Not only wash your clothes,

<sup>A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.</sup> <sup>o Exod. 19. 10. 11.</sup> <sup>p Ch. 3. 5.</sup> ¶ <sup>13</sup> Up, <sup>o</sup> sanctify the people, and say, <sup>p</sup> Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *There is* an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.

<sup>q Prov. 16. 33.</sup> ¶ <sup>14</sup> In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, *that* the tribe which <sup>q</sup> the LORD taketh shall come according to the families *thereof*: and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man.

<sup>r 1 Sam 14. 28, 29.</sup> ¶ <sup>15</sup> And it shall be, *that* he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he <sup>s</sup> hath <sup>s</sup> trans- <sup>Ver. 11.</sup>

and give yourselves up to religious exercises, meditation, and prayer, as you were required to do formerly, when called to meet the Lord at Sinai, (See Exod. xix. 10,) and lately when you were about to be led over Jordan, Chap. iii. 5. But purify yourselves from that defilement which you have all in some sort contracted by this accursed fact, and prepare yourselves to appear before the Lord, expecting his sentence for the discovery and punishment of the sin. This was enjoined that the guilty person might be awakened, and brought to a free confession of his fault. And it is a marvellous thing that he did not on this occasion acknowledge his crime. But this is to be imputed to the heart-hardening power of sin, which makes men grow worse and worse; to his pride, which made him loath to take to himself the shame of such a mischievous and infamous action; and to his vain conceit, whereby he might think others were guilty as well as he, and that some of them might be taken, and he escape.

Ver. 14, 15. *The tribe which the Lord taketh*—Which shall be declared guilty by the lot, which is disposed by the Lord, Prov. xvi. 33, and which was to be cast in the Lord's presence before the ark. Of such use of lots, see 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 52; Jon. i. 7; Acts i. 26. *Shall be burnt with fire*—As persons and things accursed were to be. *All that he hath*—His cattle and goods, as is noted, Ver. 24, according to the law, Deut. xiii. 16. *Wrought folly*—So sin is often called in Scripture, in opposition to the idle opinion of sinners, who commonly esteem it to be their wisdom. *In Israel*—That is, among the church and people of God, who had such excellent laws to direct them, and such an all-sufficient and gracious God to provide for them, without any such unworthy practices. It was sacrilege, it was invading God's rights, and converting to a private use that which was

A. M. 2563.  
B. C. 1451.

gressed the covenant of the LORD,  
and because he 'hath wrought || folly  
in Israel.

16 ¶ So Joshua rose up early in  
the morning, and brought Israel by  
their tribes; and the tribe of Judah  
was taken:

17 And he brought the family of  
Judah; and he took the family of the  
Zarhites: and he brought the family  
of the Zarhites man by man; and  
Zabdi was taken;

18 ¶ And he brought his house-  
hold man by man; and Achan the  
son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the  
son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah,  
was taken.

u 1 Sam. 14-  
49.

19 ¶ And Joshua said unto A-  
chan, My son, \*give, I pray thee,  
glory to the LORD God of Israel,

z 1 Sam. 6.  
5. John 9.  
24.

devoted to his glory, which was to be thus severely punished,  
for a warning to all people in all ages to take heed how they  
rob God.

Ver. 17. *The family*—Either, 1, The tribe or people, as  
the word family sometimes signifies; or, 2, The families, as  
Ver. 14, the singular number for the plural, the chief of each  
of their five families, Numb. xxvi. 20, 21. *Man by man*—  
Not every individual person, as is evident from Ver. 18,  
but every head of the several houses, or lesser families of  
that greater family of the Zarhites, of which see 1 Chron.  
ii. 6.

Ver. 18. *Achan was taken*—Here we learn that, however  
secretly we conceal our wickedness, yet God knoweth it, and  
sooner or later will bring it to light and due condemnation.  
*There is nothing secret which shall not be made manifest,*  
*neither any thing hid that shall not be known. God will bring*  
*to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the*  
*counsels of the heart.* Reader! remember this, reverse the  
all-seeing eye of God, stand in awe and sin not.

Ver. 19. *My son*—So he calls him, to shew that his severe  
inquisition and sentence did not proceed from any hatred  
to his person, which he loved as a father doth his son, and as  
a prince ought to do each of his subjects. *Give glory to the*  
*Lord God of Israel*—As thou hast highly dishonoured him,  
now take the blame to thyself, and ascribe unto God the  
glory of his omniscience in knowing thy sin, of his justice in  
punishing it in thee, and others for thy sake; of his om-  
nipotency, which was obstructed by thee; and of his kind-  
ness and faithfulness to his people, which was eclipsed by thy  
wickedness; all which will now be evident by thy sin con-  
fessed and punished.

Ver. 20. *Indeed I have sinned*—He seems to make a sin-  
cere and ingenuous confession, and loads his sin with all just  
aggravations. *Against the Lord*—Against his express com-

mand, and glorious attributes. *God of Israel*—The true  
God, who hath chosen me and all Israel to be the people of  
his peculiar love and care.

20 ¶ And Achan answered Joshua,  
and said, Indeed I have sinned against  
the LORD God of Israel, and thus  
and thus have I done:

21 When I saw among the spoils a  
goodly Babylonish garment, and two  
hundred shekels of silver, and a  
† wedge of gold of fifty shekels  
weight, then I coveted them, and  
took them; and, behold, they *are* hid  
in the earth in the midst of my tent,  
and the silver under it.

22 So Joshua sent messengers and  
they ran unto the tent; and, behold,  
*it was* hid in his tent, and the silver  
under it.

23 And they took them out of the

A. M. 2563.  
B. C. 1451.y Num. 5.  
6, 7. Ps.  
81. 3.  
Dan. 9.  
4.  
z 1 Sam. 14.  
44.† Heb.  
tongue.

mand, and glorious attributes. *God of Israel*—The true  
God, who hath chosen me and all Israel to be the people of  
his peculiar love and care.

Ver. 21. *When I saw*—a goodly Babylonish garment—  
Which were composed with great art, of divers colours, and  
of great price, as appears both from the Scriptures and from  
heathen authors. *Two hundred shekels*—Not in coin, but in  
weight; for as yet they received and paid money by weight.  
*When I saw*—He accurately describes the progress of his  
sin, which begun at his eye. This he permitted to gaze  
upon these things.—Hereby his desire for them was inflamed,  
and that desire induced him to take them, and having taken,  
to resolve to keep them, and to that end, hide them in his  
tent. *Then I coveted them*—See what comes of suffering the  
heart to go after the eyes, and what need we have to “make a  
covenant with our eyes!” He was drawn away, like Eve,  
of his own lust, and enticed; and lust having conceived, by  
getting the consent of his will, brought forth sin, and sin  
being committed, brought forth death. Thus we see, that  
they who would be kept from sinful actions, must check and  
mortify sinful desires, particularly the desire of wealth, which  
we more especially term *covetousness*. For of what a world  
of evil is the love of money the root! How does it draw men  
into, and drown men in destruction and perdition! 1 Tim.  
vi. 9. *They are hid in my tent, and the silver under it*—  
That is, under the Babylonish garment; covered with it, or  
wrapped up in it.

Ver. 22, 23. *Joshua sent messengers*—That the truth of  
his confession might be unquestionable, which some, perad-  
venture, might think was forced from him. *And they ran*—  
Partly longing to free themselves and all the people from all  
the curse under which they lay; and partly, that none of  
Achan's relations might get thither before them, and take  
away the things. *It was hid*—The parcel of things mentioned,

A. M. 2558.  
B. C. 1451.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

† Heb. poured.

midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and † laid them out before the LORD.

24 ¶ And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto<sup>a</sup> the valley of Achor.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 26.  
Ch. 15. 7.

25 And Joshua said, <sup>b</sup> Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. <sup>c</sup> And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 6. 19.  
1 Chron. 2. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. 17. 5.

26 And they <sup>d</sup> raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So <sup>e</sup> the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, <sup>f</sup> The valley of ¶ Achor, unto this day.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. 8. 29.  
2 Sam. 18. 17.

<sup>e</sup> Deut. 13. 17.

<sup>f</sup> Ver. 24.  
Isai. 65. 10.  
† That is, trouble.

CHAP. VIII.

*Here is God's encouragement to Joshua, ver. 1, 2. Joshua's orders to the men of war, ver. 3—8. The stratagem succeeds, ver. 9—22. Joshua takes and destroys the city, ver. 23—29. The solemn writing and reading of the law before all Israel, ver. 30—35.*

AND the LORD said unto Joshua, <sup>a</sup> Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, <sup>b</sup> I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land:

<sup>a</sup> Deut. 1. 21. & 7. 19.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 6. 2.

2 And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto <sup>c</sup> Jericho and her king: only <sup>d</sup> the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 6. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. 20. 14.

3 ¶ So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand

Ver. 21, and 24. *Before the Lord*—Where Joshua and the elders continued yet in their assembly, waiting for the issue.

Ver. 24. *And his sons and his daughters*—It is very probable, Achan being an old man, that his children were grown up, and the things which he had stolen being buried in the midst of his tent, it is likely they were conscious of the fact, as the Jewish doctors affirm they were, and if they were not accomplices in his crime, yet, at least, they concealed it. This is said, on the supposition that they were stoned and burned. But, according to the LXX. who say nothing of his children, only he was put to death. And it is not necessary to understand even the Hebrew text as affirming any thing further. It says, *all Israel stoned him with stones*, without mentioning his family. And, what it afterwards adds, *And burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones*, may be understood of the *oxen, and asses, and sheep*, which belonged to Achan, and which God willed to be destroyed, together with his tent, and other effects, to excite a greater horror of his crime. For the brute creatures, though not capable of sin, nor of punishment, properly so called; yet as they were made for man's use, so they may be justly destroyed for man's good. And as they are daily killed for our bodily food, it surely cannot seem strange that they should some time be killed for the instruction of our minds, that we may hereby learn the contagious nature of sin, which involves innocent creatures in its destructive effects.

Ver. 25, 26. *They burned them with fire after they had stoned them*—God would have their dead carcasses burned, to

shew his utmost detestation of such persons as break forth into sins of such public scandal and mischief. *A great heap of stones*—As a monument of the sin and judgment here mentioned, that others might be warned by the example; and as a brand of infamy, as Josh. viii. 29; 2 Sam. xviii. 17. *The valley of Achor*—Or, *the valley of trouble*, from the double trouble expressed, ver. 25.

CHAP. VIII. Ver. 1. *And the Lord said unto Joshua*—Who, it is probable, now consulted God about the progress of the war, which he had omitted to do before, thinking himself, it seems, sufficiently authorized to proceed according to his own judgment, by what God had often said to him, and his success against Jericho. *Take all the people of war with thee*—This order may seem strange, since the people themselves thought that two or three thousand men would be sufficient, if God were with and not against them. But God would have them all to share in the spoil of Ai, the first spoil in the country, that they might be encouraged to go on with the work, and that they, who had obeyed him in abstaining from taking any thing in Jericho, might now be rewarded by the prey of the city.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt do to Ai—as thou didst unto Jericho*—That is, overcome and destroy the city and people. This was enjoined to chastise their last insolence, and the triumphs and blasphemies which doubtless their success had produced, and to revive the dread and terror which had been impressed upon the Canaanites by Jericho's ruin, and had been much abated by the late success of Ai. *The spoil thereof*—shall

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night.

e Jdg. 20.  
29. 4 And he commanded them, saying, Behold, <sup>e</sup>ye shall lie in wait against the city, *even* behind the city; go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready:

e Jdg. 20.  
29. 5 And I and all the people that *are* with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that <sup>f</sup>we will flee before them,

† Heb.  
pulled. 6 (For they will come out after us) till we have <sup>†</sup>drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them.

7 Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.

8 And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, *that* ye shall set the

city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do.

g 2 Sam.  
13. 28. 9 See, I have commanded you.

9 ¶ Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to lie in ambush, and abode between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people.

10 And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

11 <sup>h</sup>And all the people, *even the people of war* that *were* with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now *there was* a valley between them and Ai.

12 And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side || of the city.

*ye take for a prey*—Neither the silver nor gold, nor any thing else, was separated to the use of the tabernacle, nor ordered to be destroyed, but the people were to enjoy it entirely themselves.

*Lay thee an ambush for the city, behind it*—Ai was not to be taken by miracle, as Jericho had been; now they must exercise their own wisdom. Having seen God work for them, whereby they might learn to depend on him, and give him the glory of all their success, they must now exert themselves, and be enured to self-denial and diligence, and to labour, toil, and hardship. And they must learn to *outwit* as well as to *overpower* their enemies. God himself commands them to take the town by stratagem; and therefore we may be sure that to do the like is lawful in other wars. But it must be well observed that no treaty was here violated, no oath or promise broken, no untruth told: to do any thing of this kind cannot be allowable, or excusable in any war, or case whatsoever. Nay, nothing was here concealed by the Israelites but their own counsels, which surely their enemies had no right to be intrusted with; nothing was dissembled, and nothing counterfeited but a retreat, which was no necessary indication at all of their inability to maintain their attack, or of a design not to renew it. Common prudence, had they been governed by it, would have directed the men of Ai to have been upon their guard, and either to have kept within their own walls, or at least not to have ventured forward rashly in pursuit of an army which they saw to be very superior to them in number.

Ver. 10. *Joshua—numbered the people*—Not all the people, which was needless, and would now have required more

time than could have been spared, but that part of the army which he designed to take with him. And this, it seems, he did, that it might be evident the conquest of Ai was effected without any loss of men, and that they might be encouraged hereby to trust in God, and proceed resolutely and boldly in the work of subduing the Canaanites. *The elders of Israel*—Their chief magistrates and rulers under Joshua. These, it is probable, went with Joshua and the army, to take care that the cattle and the spoil of the city, which was given by God to all Israel for a prey, might be justly and equally divided between those that went to battle, and the rest of the people.

Ver. 12. *He took about five thousand men and set them to lie in ambush*—Here commentators are divided. The learned Bishop Patrick, with many others, (See Le Clerc and Calmet) has given it as his opinion that, besides the 30,000 whom Joshua had sent off before to lie in ambush, Ver. 3, 4, he now detached 5000 more to guard the roads, and intercept such as might endeavour to save themselves by flight; or to strengthen those that were first sent, and that he appeared in arms against the city, with his whole force, according to God's express command, Ver. 1, to *take all the people of war with him*. And certainly the letter of the text favours this interpretation. Many, however, think, that *all the people* were taken only to encamp near the city, and that out of them Joshua chose 30,000 to be employed in the action, out of which he detached 5000 to lie in ambush, which were as many, they think, as could be supposed to march without being discovered, and then, that with the remaining 25,000 he made the open attack. Or else, that the attack was made

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.† Heb. their  
lying in  
wait.  
Ver. 4.

13 And when they had set the people, *even* all the host that *was* on the north of the city, and † their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

i Judg. 22.  
34.  
Eccles. 9.  
12.

14 ¶ And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that they hasted and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but he <sup>i</sup>wist not that *there were* liers in ambush against him behind the city.

k Judg. 20.  
36, &c.

15 And Joshua and all Israel <sup>k</sup>made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.

16 And all the people that *were* in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city.

17 And there was not a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that *is* in thy

hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that *he had* in his hand toward the city.

19 And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire.

20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no † power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.

† Heb.  
hand.

21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.

22 And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they <sup>l</sup>let none of them remain or escape.

l Deut. 7.  
2.

23 And the king of Ai they took

with the 30,000, and that the 5000 formed a separate detachment drawn from the rest of the people. The matter is not perfectly clear, or free from difficulty, either way; and the reader is left to form his own judgment of it from the statement now given.

Ver. 14. *He and all his people*—That is, the king of Ai and his men of war, for the rest were left in the city, Ver. 16. *At a time appointed*—At a certain hour agreed on between the king and people of Ai, and Bethel too, who were confederate with them in this enterprize. Possibly they might appoint the same hour of the day on which they had fought against Israel with success, looking upon it as a lucky hour. *Before the plain*—That is, towards, or in sight of that plain or valley in which the Israelites were, that so they might put themselves in battle array. *He knew not there were liers in ambush*—The former success having made him secure, as is usual in such cases, God also blinding his mind, and infatuating him, as he is wont to do with those who have filled up the measure of their iniquities, and whom, therefore, he purposes to destroy.

Ver. 15—17. *All Israel made us if they were beaten*—That is, they fled from them, as it were for fear of a second blow.

*The wilderness*—Which lay between Ai and Jericho, whither they now seemed to flee. *All the people that were in Ai*—Namely, all that were able to bear arms, for old men and children were unfit for the pursuit or fight; and that they were yet left, appears from Ver. 24, 25. *Not a man*—Namely, fit for war. *Bethel*—Which, being a neighbouring city, and encouraged by the former success, had sent some forces to assist them; and now, upon notice sent to them of the flight of their common enemies, or upon some other signal given, all their men of war joined with those of Ai in the pursuit.

Ver. 18. *Stretch out thy spear*—Probably a long spear, with a flag or streamer at the top of it, for a signal to the liers in wait, as well as for a sign to his host present to stop their flight, and make head against the pursuers, and as a token of God's presence and assistance with them, and of their victory. The Hebrew word כידון, *kidon*, however, here rendered spear, also signifies a shield, and is so interpreted in the Vulgate. This, if made of polished brass or steel, might be seen from a great distance, by reason of its brightness.

Ver. 19—23. *They entered and set the city on fire*—That

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.

alive, and brought him to Joshua.

24 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword.

25 And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai.

26 For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

m Num. 31.  
22, 26.

27 Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he com-

n Ver. 2.

manded Joshua.

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B.C. 1451.

28 And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it °an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day.

29 ¶ And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.

o Deut. 12.  
16.p Ch. 10. 26.  
Ps. 107.  
40.  
q Deut. 21.  
21.  
Ch. 10.  
27.r Ch. 7. 26.  
& 10. 27.

30 ¶ Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal,

s Deut. 27.  
4, 5.

31 As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, An altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they of-

t Exod. 20.  
25.u Exod. 20.  
24.

is, some part of it, sufficient to raise a smoke, and give notice to their brethren of their success. But certainly not all of it, because in that case they would have lost the prey which God had allowed them. Indeed it is evident from Ver. 28, that the main of the city was not burnt till after the battle, and they had taken out all the cattle and other spoils that were therein. *The people that fled turned back*—That is, the Israelites, who had counterfeited a flight, turned upon the men of Ai, who pursued them. *The other issued out of the city*—Namely, those who lay in ambush, and were now in possession of the city. *The king they took alive*—Reserved him to a more ignominious death.

Ver. 24, 25. *The Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it*—That is, the inhabitants of it, the men who, through age and infirmity, were unfit for war, and the women, Ver. 25. *Twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai*—Not strictly, but largely so called; all who were now in Ai, either as constant and settled inhabitants, or as sojourners, and such as came to them for their help.

Ver. 26. *Joshua drew not his hand back*—That is, he continued the battle, and ceased not to fight, spear in hand, till he had utterly routed them. Or, as some think, it means that he kept his hand and spear in the same posture, both stretched out, and lifted up as a sign to encourage and direct his army to go on with their work till the enemy were destroyed.

Ver. 29. *The king of Ai he hanged on a tree*—He dealt more severely with the kings of Canaan than with the people, because the abominable wickedness of that people was not restrained and punished (as it ought to have been) but

countenanced and encouraged by their evil examples; and because they were the principal authors of the destruction of their own people, by engaging them in an obstinate opposition against the Israelites. *Down from the tree*—According to God's command in that case, Deut. xxi. 22. *The gate of the city*—Which place he chose either as most commodious, now especially when all the city within the gate was already turned into an heap of stones and rubbish; or because this was the usual place of judgment, and therefore proper to bear the monument of God's just sentence against him, not without reflection upon that injustice which he had been guilty of in that place.

Ver. 30. *Then Joshua built an altar*—Namely, after the taking of Ai. For they were obliged to do this when they were brought over Jordan into the land of Canaan, Deut. xi. 29; xxvii. 2, 3. But this is not to be understood strictly, as if it were to be done the same day; for it is manifest they were first to be circumcised, and to eat the passover, which they did, and which was the work of some days. But as soon as they had opportunity to do it, which was now when these two great frontier cities were taken and destroyed, and thereby the coast cleared, and the bordering people were under great consternation, so that all the Israelites might securely march thither. *Built an altar*—Namely, for the offering of sacrifices, as appears from the following verse. *Mount Ebal*—God's altar was to be put in one place, Deut. xii. 13, 14, and this place was appointed to be Mount Ebal, Deut. xxvii. 4, 5; which also seems to have been most proper, that in that place whence the curses of the law were denounced against sinners, there might also be the tokens and

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451. fered thereon burnt-offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace-offerings.

x Deut. 37.  
2, 5. 32 ¶ And <sup>x</sup> he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

33 And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, <sup>y</sup> which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the <sup>z</sup> stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizzim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; <sup>a</sup> as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

y Deut. 31.  
9, 25. z Deut. 31.  
12. a Deut. 11.  
29. 34 ¶ And afterward <sup>b</sup> he read all the words of the law, <sup>c</sup> the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35 There was not a word of all

means of grace, and of peace, and reconciliation with God, for the removing of the curses, and the procuring of God's blessing to sinners.

Ver. 32. *Upon the stones*—Not upon the stones of the altar, which were to be rough and unpolished, Ver. 13, but upon other stones, smooth and plastered, as is manifest from Deut. xxvii. 2. *A copy of the law of Moses*—Not certainly the whole five Books of Moses, for what stones or time would have sufficed for this? but the most weighty parts of the law, and especially the law of the ten commandments.

Ver. 33. *All Israel stood, &c.*—That is, the whole congregation, old and young, male and female. *On this side the ark and on that side*—Some on one side of it, and some on the other. *Mount Gerizzim and Mount Ebal*—These two places were in the tribe of Ephraim, not far from Shechem, as appears from Scripture, and from other authors. *That they should bless*—Or curse, which is easily understood out of the following verse.

Ver. 34, 35. *Afterward*—After the altar was built, and the stones plastered and written upon. *He read*—That is, he commanded the priests or Levites to read, Deut. xxvii. 14. *Blessings and cursings*—Which words come in, not by way of explication, as if the words of the law were nothing else besides the blessings and curses; but by way of addition, to denote that these were read over and above the words of the law. *There was not a word which Joshua read not*—Therefore, he read not the blessings and curses only, as some think, but the whole law, as the manner was when all Israel, men and women, were assembled together. *The*

that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, <sup>d</sup> with the wo- d Deut. 31.  
12. men, and the little ones, and <sup>e</sup> the e Ver. 28. strangers that <sup>f</sup> were conversant f Heb.  
walked. among them.

CHAP. IX.

*The confederacy of the kings of Canaan against Israel, ver. 1, 2. The confederacy of the Gibeonites with Israel, ver. 3--18. Their employment, ver. 19--27.*

**A**ND it came to pass, when all the kings which *were* on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of <sup>a</sup> the a Num. 34.  
6. great sea over against Lebanon, <sup>b</sup> the b Exod. 6.  
17. Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard *thereof*;

2 That they <sup>c</sup> gathered themselves c Ps. 83. 2.  
6. together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one <sup>d</sup> accord.

*strangers that were among them*—Who were proselytes, for no others can be supposed to have been with them at this time. Thus, after Joshua had gained these victories, and had had such manifest proofs that God was with the Israelites, and was fighting for them, he laboured the more earnestly to set before them the whole of their duty, and to engage them to walk therein, that they might in that way testify their thankfulness to God, at the same time when he was fulfilling his promises to them. Reader! learn from his example thy duty to those whom God hath committed to thy care and government, and endeavour that thy own faith and confidence in the divine goodness, as well as their's, may thus work by love!

CHAP. IX. Ver. 1, 2. *In all the coasts of the Great Sea, &c.*—Some versions render this, *And those along all the coasts of the Great Sea, and those about Lebanon. Heard thereof*—That is, of the taking of Jericho and Ai, for what immediately precedes, viz. about writing the law on stones in Mount Ebal, did not concern these nations. *They gathered themselves together to fight, &c.*—They entered into a league to do this. Though they were many kings of different nations, and doubtless of different interests, often at variance with each other, yet they are all determined to unite against Israel. O that Israel would learn this of Canaanites, to sacrifice private interests to the public good, and to lay aside all animosities among themselves, that they may cordially unite against the common enemy!



A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.  
d Ch. 10. 2. d  
e Sam. 21.  
1. 2.  
e Ch. 6. 37.

3 ¶ And when the inhabitants of Gibeon <sup>e</sup>heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai,

4 They did work wilyly, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up ;

5 And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them ; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.

6 And they went to Joshua <sup>f</sup>unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country : now therefore make ye a league with us.

7 And the men of Israel said unto the <sup>g</sup>Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us ; and <sup>h</sup>how shall we make a league with you ?

8 And they said unto Joshua, <sup>i</sup>We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye ? and from whence come ye ?

9 And they said unto him, <sup>k</sup>From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the

Ch. 5. 10.

Exod. 23.  
Deut. 7. 2. & 20.  
16. Judg. 2. 2.

Deut. 20.  
11.  
Kings 10. 5.

Dent. 20.  
15.

Ver. 3, 4. *And when*—Rather, *But when the inhabitants of Gibeon*—A great and royal city of the Hivites. *They made as if they had been ambassadors*—Sent from a far country. *Wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up*—This seems scarce sense to us ; but will appear clear enough when we recollect that glass bottles were not then known, but that bottles made of leather or skins were then used ; and the Gibeonites, to make shew of being come from a far country, brought with them such as were torn and rent, and bound about with strings or cords to keep them together.

Ver. 6. *Unto the camp to Gilgal*—Joshua's head-quarters. *And said to the men of Israel*—To those that used to meet in council with Joshua, to whom it belonged to make leagues, viz. the princes of the congregation. *Now therefore make a league with us*—Because we are not of this people, whom, as we are informed, you are obliged utterly to destroy.

Ver. 7. *The men of Israel said to the Hivites*—That is, the Gibeonites, who were Hivites, Chap. xi. 19. *Peradventure you dwell among us*—That is, in this land, and so are of that people with whom we are forbidden to make any league or covenant. *They said*—*We are thy servants*—We desire a league with you upon your own terms ; we are ready to

LORD thy God : for we have <sup>l</sup>heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,

10 And <sup>m</sup>all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.

11 Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country, spake to us, saying, Take victuals <sup>n</sup>with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants ; therefore now make ye a league with us.

12 This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you ; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy :

13 And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new ; and, behold, they be rent : and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.

14 And ¶ the men took of their victuals, <sup>o</sup>and asked not counsel at

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1451.  
1 Exo. 15.  
14. Josh. 2. 10.

Num. 21.  
21, 35.

Heb. in your hand.

Or, they received the men by reason of their victuals.  
Num. 21.  
21. Isai. 30. 1. 22.  
Judg. 1. 1  
1 Sam. 22. 10. & 23. 10. 11. & 30. 8.  
2 Sam. 2. 1. & 5. 19.

accept of any conditions. *Joshua, said, From whence come ye*—For this free and general concession gave him cause to suspect that they were Canaanites.

Ver. 9. *Because of the Lord thy God*—Being moved thereunto by the report of his great and glorious nature and works. Thus they gave them hopes that they would embrace their religion. *In Egypt*—They cunningly mention those things only which were done some time ago, and say nothing of dividing Jordan, or the destruction of Jericho and Ai, as if they lived so far off that the fame of those things had not yet reached them.

Ver. 14. *The men*—That is, the princes. *Their victuals*—That they might examine the truth of what they said. *Asked not at the mouth of the Lord*—As they ought to have done upon all such weighty occasions. So they are accused of rashness and neglect of their duty. For though it is probable, if God had been consulted, he would have consented to the sparing of the Gibeonites ; yet it should have been done with more caution, and an obligation upon them to embrace the true religion. In every business of importance we should take God along with us, and by his word and prayer consult him. Many a time our affairs miscarry, because we ask

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.

Ch. 11. 19.  
2 Sam.  
21. 9.

the mouth of the LORD.

15 And Joshua <sup>o</sup> made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.

16 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbours, and *that* they dwelt among them.

17 And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities *were*

Ch. 18. 25.  
26, 26.  
Ezra 2. 25.

Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim.

18 And the children of Israel smote them not, <sup>a</sup> because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.

Eccles. 5. 4.  
2. Ps. 15.  
4.

19 But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them, by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.

20 This we will do to them; we

*not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.* Did we acknowledge him in all our ways, they would be more safe, easy, and successful.

Ver. 15. *Joshua—made a league with them to let them live*—Not merely, it seems, to spare their lives, which, supposing them to belong to a far country, they had no warrant to take away, but to let them continue in the enjoyment of their effects; the word *live* in Scripture being frequently of equal signification with prosperity. That this league was lawful and obliging, appears, 1, Because Joshua and all the princes, upon the review, concluded it so to be, and spared them accordingly. 2, Because God punished the violation of it long after, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 3, Because God is said to have hardened the hearts of all other cities, not to seek peace with Israel, that so he might utterly destroy them, Chap. xi. 19, 20, which seems to imply that their utter destruction did not necessarily come upon them by virtue of any preceptory command of God, but by their own obstinate hardness, whereby they refused to make peace with the Israelites.

Ver. 18. *All the congregation murmured against the princes*—Both from that proneness which is in people to censure the actions of their rulers, and from the desire of the spoil of these cities.

will even let them live, lest <sup>r</sup>wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them.

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.

2 Sam. 21.  
1, 2, 6.  
Ezek. 17.  
13, 15, 19.  
19. Zech.  
5. 3, 4.  
Mal. 3. 5.

21 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be <sup>s</sup>hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had <sup>t</sup>promised them.

Deut. 29.  
11.

Ver. 18.

22 ¶ And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, *“We are very far from you?”* when <sup>x</sup>ye dwell among us?

Ver. 6, 9.

Ver. 16.

23 ¶ Now therefore ye <sup>y</sup>are <sup>y</sup>cursed, and there shall <sup>†</sup>none of you be freed from being bondmen, and <sup>z</sup>hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.

Gen. 9. 25.

Heb. not  
be cut  
off from  
you.  
Ver. 21.  
27.

24 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God <sup>a</sup>commanded his servant to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore <sup>b</sup>we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.

Exod. 23.  
32. Deut.  
7. 1, 2.

Exod. 15.  
14.

25 And now, behold, we <sup>c</sup>are <sup>c</sup>in

Gen. 16. 6.

Ver. 21. *Unto all the congregation*—That is, let them be public servants, and employed in the meanest offices, (one kind being put for all the rest) for the use of the congregation; doing these things partly for the sacrifices and services of the house of God, which otherwise the Israelites themselves must have done; partly for the services of the camp or body of the people; and sometimes even for particular Israelites.

Ver. 22, 23. *Called for them*—Probably not only the messengers but the elders of Gibeon were now present. *Therefore ye are cursed*—You shall not escape the curse of God, which, by divine sentence, belongs to all the Canaanites; but only change the quality of it. You shall feel that curse of bondage which is proper to your race by virtue of that ancient decree, Gen. ix. 25. *Bond-men*—The slavery which is upon you shall be entailed on your posterity. *The house of my God*—This only service they mention here, because it was their durable servitude, being first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, whence they were called Nethinim, 1 Chron. ix. 2; Ezra ii. 43; whereas their servitude to the whole congregation, in a great measure, ceased when the Israelites were dispersed to their several habitations.

Ver. 25. *We are in thine hand, &c.*—In thy power, to use

A.M. 2552.  
B.C. 1451. thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.

26 And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.

† Heb. gov., or, delivered to be, 1 Chron. 9. 2. Ezra 8. 20. d Ver. 21. e Deut. 12. 5. 27 And Joshua † made them that day <sup>d</sup>hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, <sup>e</sup>in the place which he should choose.

CHAP. X.

*In this Chapter we have an account of the confederacy against Gibeon, and the request of the Gibeonites to Joshua, ver. 1---6. Of Joshua's marching and defeating the confederate kings, ver. 7---11. Of the sun's standing still, ver. 12---14. Of the execution of the kings, ver. 15---27. Of the taking their cities, and conquering all that country, ver. 28---42. Of the return of the army to Gilgal, ver. 43.*

a Ch. 6. 31. **N**OW it came to pass, when Adoni-zedec king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; <sup>a</sup>as he had done to Jericho and her king,

A.M. 2551.  
B.C. 1451. so he had done to <sup>b</sup>Ai and her king; and <sup>c</sup>how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;

2 That they <sup>d</sup>feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, as one of the † royal cities, and because it *was* greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.

3 Wherefore Adoni-zedec king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhiah king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,

4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: <sup>e</sup>for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

5 ¶ Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, <sup>f</sup>gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

us as thou wilt. We refer ourselves to thee and thy own piety, probity, and faithfulness, to fulfil thy word and oath; if thou wilt destroy thy humble supplicants, we submit. Let us, in like manner, submit to our Lord Jesus, and refer ourselves to him, saying, We are in thy hand, do unto us as it seemeth right unto thee. Only save our souls: give us our lives for a prey, and let us serve thee just as thou wilt!

Ver. 27. *And for the altar of the Lord*—By which it appears, that they were not only to do this service in God's house, but upon all other occasions, as the congregation needed their help.

CHAP. X. Ver. 1. *Adoni-zedec, king of Jerusalem*—Who seems to have been the most powerful prince in Canaan, and carried in his name, which signifies, *The Lord of righteousness*, an honourable title, such as had been anciently given to the kings of this place, who had been famous for doing justice. So Melchizedek undoubtedly was, of whom we have such honourable mention, Gen. xiv. 18. *King of Jerusalem*—It is thought by many, that this city retained the name of Salem, which they suppose it had in Abraham's time, till the Israelites came into the land of Canaan, and took possession of it, when they called it *Jerusalem*, from שׁלום,

*Jarash*, and שׁלום, *Shalum*, to possess peace: or from *Jerus*, the same as *Jebus*, with the change of one letter only, and *Shalem*, the place having belonged to the Jebusites. *How the inhabitants of Gibeon*—were among them—Among the Israelites; that is, were conversant with them, had submitted to their laws, and mingled interests with them.

Ver. 2, 3. *They feared greatly*—Viz. Adoni-zedec and his people, he being spoken of, Ver. 1, as a public person, representing all his people. *Gibeon was*—as one of the royal cities—Either, really a royal city and having a king, or equal to one of the royal cities, though it had not a king. It seems indeed to have been governed by elders, Chap. ix. 11. *Adoni-zedec sent*—Either because he was superior to them, or because he was nearest the danger, and most forward in the work.

Ver. 5. *The five kings of the Amorites*—This name is here taken generally for any of the Canaanites. But, strictly speaking, the citizens of Hebron were Hittites, those of Jerusalem Jebusites, and the Gibeonites made a part of the Hivites. It is reasonably supposed, that the Amorites, being numerous and victorious beyond Jordan, had poured forth colonies into the land of Canaan, subdued divers places, and so communicated their name to all the rest.

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.f Ch. 5. 10.  
& 9. 6.

6 ¶ And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua <sup>g</sup> to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.

h Ch. 5. 1. 7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and <sup>h</sup> all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.

i Ch. 11. 6.  
Judg. 4. 14. k Ch. 1. 5. 8 ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, <sup>i</sup> Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; <sup>k</sup> there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.

Ver. 6, 7. *Slack not thy hand from thy servants*—Do not neglect or delay to help us. Whom thou art obliged to protect, both in duty, as thou art our master, and for thy own interest, we being part of thy possessions; and because we have given ourselves to thee, and put ourselves under thy protection. *In the mountains*—In the mountainous country. *So Joshua ascended*—Having no doubt asked counsel of God first, which is implied in the answer God gives him, Ver. 8. *All the mighty men*—That is, an army of the most valiant men, picked out from the rest: for it is not probable, either that he would take the whole army with him, consisting of so many hundreds of thousands, who would only have embarrassed and hindered one another, or that he would leave the camp without an army to defend it.

Ver. 9. *Joshua came unto them suddenly*—Though assured by God of the victory, yet he uses all prudent means. *And went up from Gilgal—all night*—It is not said, that he went from Gilgal to Gibeon in a night's space; but only that he travelled all night; unto which you may add part, either of the foregoing, or of the following day. It is true, God has promised, that he would, without fail, deliver the enemies into his hand. But God's promises are intended, not to slacken, but to quicken our endeavours. He that believeth, doth not make haste to anticipate providence; but doth make haste to attend it, with a diligent, not a distrustful speed.

Ver. 10. *At Gibeon*—That is, near Gibeon; for it is plain they were not in the city; and so ought we to take the participle *at*, in many other places of Scripture, as signifying no more than nigh unto. *Along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon*—That is, to the place which was afterwards called by that name; for there was no such place at the time of this battle, it being built after they were settled in Canaan, as we read, 1 Chron. vii. 24. And it probably was so called

10 And the LORD <sup>l</sup> discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up <sup>m</sup> to Beth-horon, and smote <sup>n</sup> them to <sup>n</sup> Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, <sup>o</sup> that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: *they were more* which died with hailstones than *they* whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

12 ¶ Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the

from the miraculous destruction which overtook the enemies of Israel here; for *Beth-horon* signifies *the place of anger or fury*. It stood upon a hill, as appears by the expression here used, of *going up to Beth-horon*.

Ver. 11. *The Lord cast down great stones*—That is, hailstones of an extraordinary greatness, cast down with that certainty, as to hit the Canaanites, and not their pursuers the Israelites. Josephus affirms, that thunder and lightning were mixed with the hail, which may seem probable from Hab. iii. 11. They had robbed the true God of his honour, by worshipping the host of heaven, and now the host of heaven fights against them, and triumphs in their ruin. *Beth-horon* lay north of Gibeon, Azekah and Makkedah south, so that they fled each way. But which way soever they fled, the hailstones pursued them. There is no fleeing out of the hands of God.

Ver. 12. *Then spake Joshua*—Being moved so to do out of zeal to destroy God's enemies, and directed by the motion of God's Spirit, and being filled with a holy confidence, that what he said would be accomplished. And he spake it *in the sight*—that is, in the presence and audience of all Israel, that they might be witnesses of the fact. *Sun, stand thou still*—Joshua does not speak according to the terms of modern astronomy, which it would have been highly improper for him to have done, as he would not have been understood by the people that heard him, but according to the appearance of things. The sun appeared to the Israelites over Gibeon, the moon was over the valley of Ajalon, which we may suppose to be situated in a different direction; and there, in the name of God, he commanded them to continue to appear, which they did for a *whole day*; that is, either for the space of twelve hours, or for the time of one whole diurnal revolution. "Nothing," we may observe in the words of Dr. Dodd, "is more common in Scripture than to express things, not ac-

A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.i Judg. 4.  
15. 1 Sam.  
7. 10, 12.  
Ps. 18. 14.  
Isai. 29.  
21.m Ch. 16. 8.  
n Ch. 15. 35.o Ps. 19. 13.  
14. & 77.  
17. Isai.  
30. 30.  
Ecclesi.  
46. 6.  
Rev. 16.  
21.

A. M. 2353.  
B. C. 1551.  
P. Isai. 7.  
21. Hab.  
8. 11.  
Ecclus.  
46. 1.  
† Heb. be  
silent.  
q. Judg. 18.  
12.  
r. Sam. 1.  
18.  
† Or, the  
upright.

sight of Israel, <sup>P</sup>Sun, †stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of <sup>4</sup>Ajalon.

13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. <sup>r</sup>Is not this written in the book of **||**Jasher? So the sun stood

A. M. 2353.  
B. C. 1551.  
Isai. 33. 8.  
Deut. 1. 20.  
Ver. 47.  
& Ch. 23.  
3.

still in the midst of heaven, and hastened not to go down about a whole day.

14 And there was <sup>s</sup>no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for <sup>t</sup>the LORD fought for Israel.

According to the strict rules of philosophy, but according to their appearance, and the vulgar apprehension concerning them. For instance, Moses calls the sun and moon *two great lights*; but however this appellation may agree with the sun, it cannot in the same sense signify the moon, which is now well known to be but a small body, and the least of all the planets, and to have no light at all but what it borrows by a reflection of the rays of the sun; appearing to us larger than the other planets, merely because it is placed nearer to us.—From this appearance it is that the Holy Scriptures give it the title of a *great light*. In like manner, because the sun seems to us to move, and the earth to be at rest, the Scriptures represent the latter as placed on *pillars, bases, and foundations*; compare the former to a *bridegroom issuing from his chamber,* and *rejoicing as a giant to run his course,* and speak of *his arising and going down, and hastening to the place from whence he arose, &c.* when it is certain, that if the sun were made to revolve round the earth, the general laws of nature would thereby be violated, the harmony and proportion of the heavenly bodies destroyed, and the economy of the universe thrown into confusion and disorder. The general design of God, when he inspired the sacred writers, having been to form mankind to holiness and virtue, not to make them philosophers; it no way derogates from the respect due to the Holy Spirit, or from the consideration which the writings of those holy men merit, whose pens he directed, to suppose that, in order to accommodate themselves to the capacity, the notions, and language of the vulgar, they have purposely spoken of the phenomena of nature in terms most conformable to the testimony of the senses." Add to this, those who are best informed in, and most assured of the system of modern astronomy, and therefore well know that the succession of day and night is not caused by any motion of the sun and moon, but by the rotation of the earth upon its own axis; yet continually speak of the *rising and setting, ascending and declining* of the sun and moon, according as they appear to our senses to do. Indeed, if we spoke otherwise, they would not be understood by people in general.

Ver. 13. *And the sun stood still*—God heard Joshua's request, and gave him the thing he asked for, a prolongation of the day to near twice the length of any other day. This is the fact here attested, and this we are bound to believe on the divine testimony. But as to the *manner* in which this wonderful miracle was accomplished, God has not informed us, and to make inquiries concerning it would be a mere waste of time, being beyond our discovery and comprehension. *Until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies*—That is, till they had utterly destroyed them. *Is not this written in the book of Jasher?*—This book was written and made public before Joshua wrote his history,

and therefore is properly alluded to here. It was probably a collection of records, or of poems, concerning the principal events of these wars, and no doubt gave a farther account of this miracle. But this, and some other books of these ages, have long been lost, not being canonical, and therefore not preserved by the Jews with the same care wherewith they guarded their inspired writings. If it seem strange to any one that so wonderful an event as is here recorded should not be mentioned by any heathen writers, it may be answered, 1, That many learned men have shewn that there is a great appearance of its being alluded to in many of the fables of the heathen poets, and mythologists of Greece and Rome, and in the histories of the Chinese. But whether or not, it must be observed, 2, That it is confessed by the generality of writers, heathen and others, that there is no certain history, or monument in heathen authors, of any thing done before the Trojan war, which happened a thousand years after Joshua's time, and that all the ages preceding that war, are termed by the most learned heathens, the *uncertain, unknown, or obscure time*.

Ver. 14. *There was no day like that*—Namely in those parts of the world in which he here speaks. Vain, therefore, is that objection, that the days are longer near the northern and southern poles, where they are constantly longer at certain seasons, and that by the order of nature; whereas the length of this day was certainly contingent, and granted by God in answer to Joshua's prayer. *The Lord hearkened to a man*—Namely, in such a manner as to alter the course of nature, that a man might have more time to pursue and destroy his enemies. *The Lord fought*—This is added as the reason why God was so ready to answer Joshua's petition, because he was resolved to fight for Israel, and that in a more than ordinary manner. We may observe here how remarkably pertinent both the miracle of the hailstones, and this of the sun's being arrested in his course, were to the circumstances of the persons concerned in them. All nations had at this time their several tutelar deities, to whose protection they committed themselves and their country, and to whose power they imputed their successes in war. Now, the three principal deities, whom the inhabitants of Canaan adored, were the sun, moon, and heavens, or air. To convince them, therefore, that the gods in whom they trusted were subject to the God of Israel, and to punish them, at the same time, for the false worship they paid them; "the Lord showered down great hailstones from the heavens, or air, which slew vast numbers of their powerful army; and then stopped the two great luminaries in their course," which gave the Israelites time and opportunity to complete their victory over the remainder. It may be thought, perhaps, that the whole motive which induced Joshua to put up his prayer for the prolongation of the

A. M. 2555.  
B. C. 1451.  
u Var. 43.

15 <sup>u</sup> And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp at Gilgal.

16 ¶ But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah.

18 ¶ And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them:

19 And stay ye not, *but* pursue after your enemies, and † smite the hindmost of them: suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand.

20 And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest *which* remained of them entered into fenced cities.

day, was only his zeal and eagerness for gaining an entire conquest over his enemies; but we cannot imagine that Joshua should, without a special intimation from heaven, have addressed unto God the prayer concerning the sun and moon, which he is recorded to have done in the sight of Israel, for of what an extravagance would he have appeared guilty, if an effect had not been given to what he asked for? Or how could he be so wild as to think of an accomplishment of so strange an expectation as this would have been, had it been only a thought of his own heart to wish for it? But unquestionably the same Lord who spake unto him before the battle, who bade him not fear the armies of the Canaanites, who assured him that they should not be able to stand before him, directed him to ask for this wonderful miracle, and in granting what he asked for, gave a full testimony, both to the Israelites and their enemies, that *the gods of the heathen were but idols, and that it is the Lord that made (and that ruleth in) the heavens.*

Ver. 15. *And Joshua returned*—Not immediately, but after he had performed what is related in the following part of this chapter, as appears by Ver. 43, where the very same words are repeated.

Ver. 16. *These five kings—hid themselves in a cave*—A place of the greatest secrecy; but there is no escaping the eye or hand of God, who here brought them into a net of their own making. *At—Heb. in Makkedah*—Not in the

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

21 And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: <sup>x</sup> none moved his tongue <sup>x</sup> against any of the children of Israel. <sup>Exod. 11. 7.</sup>

22 ¶ Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

23 ¶ And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon.

24 ¶ And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, <sup>y</sup> put <sup>y</sup> your feet upon the necks of these kings. <sup>Ps. 107. 40. & 110. 5. & 149. 5, 9. Isai. 66. 5, 6. Mal. 4. 2.</sup> And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

25 And Joshua said unto them, <sup>z</sup> Fear not, nor be dismayed, be <sup>z</sup> <sup>Deut. 21. 6, 8. Ch. 1. 9.</sup>

city, for that was not yet taken; but in the territory of it.

Ver. 19. *Suffer them not to enter their cities*—Whereby they would have recovered their strength, and renewed the war. *God hath delivered them*—Your work will be easy; God hath already done the work to your hands.

Ver. 20, 21. *Joshua and the children of Israel*—Rather, the children of Israel, by the command of Joshua; for Joshua himself went not with them, but abode at the siege before Makkedah. *And all the people returned to the camp*—To the body of the army, who were encamped there with Joshua, to besiege that place. *In peace*—That is, in safety; all that detachment sent to pursue the enemies came back safe to the camp; not a man of them was lost, or so much as wounded. *None moved his tongue*—Not only their men of war could not find their hands, but they were so confounded that they could not move their tongues to reproach any of the children of Israel, as doubtless they did when the Israelites were first repulsed and smitten at Ai: but now they were silenced as well as conquered.

Ver. 24. *Put your feet on the necks, &c.*—This he commanded, not in insolence and pride, but in token that these kings and their countries were brought into an absolute subjection to the Israelites, that God had fulfilled his promise in part, Deut. xxxiii. 29; and to assure his captains that he would completely fulfil it, and subdue the proudest of their enemies under their feet.

<sup>A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.</sup> strong and of good courage: for  
<sup>a Deut. 3.  
21. & 7.19.</sup> <sup>a</sup> thus shall the LORD do to all your  
enemies against whom ye fight.

<sup>b Ch. 8. 29.</sup> 26 ¶ And afterward Joshua smote  
them, and slew them, and hanged  
them on five trees: and they <sup>b</sup> were  
hanged upon the trees until the even-  
ing.

27 And it came to pass at the time  
of the going down of the sun, *that*  
<sup>c Deut. 21.  
23.  
Ch. 8. 29.</sup> Joshua commanded, and they <sup>c</sup> took  
them down off the trees, and cast  
them into the cave wherein they had  
been hid, and laid great stones in  
the cave's mouth, *which remain* until  
this very day.

28 ¶ And that day Joshua took  
Makkedah, and smote it with the  
edge of the sword, and the king  
thereof they utterly destroyed, them,  
and all the souls that *were* therein;  
he let none remain: and he did to  
<sup>d Ch. 6. 21.</sup> the king of Makkedah <sup>d</sup> as he did  
unto the king of Jericho.

29 ¶ Then Joshua passed from  
Makkedah, and all Israel with him,  
unto Libnah, and fought against  
Libnah:

30 And the LORD delivered it also,  
and the king thereof into the hand  
of Israel; and he smote it with the  
edge of the sword, and all the souls  
that *were* therein; he let none re-  
main in it; but did unto the king  
thereof as he did unto the king of  
Jericho.

<sup>A.M. 2553.  
B.C. 1451.</sup> 31 ¶ And Joshua passed from  
Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto  
Lachish, and encamped against it,  
and fought against it;

32 And the LORD delivered Lach-  
ish into the hand of Israel, which  
took it on the second day, and smote  
it with the edge of the sword, and  
all the souls that *were* therein, ac-  
cording to all that he had done to  
Libnah.

33 ¶ Then Horam king of Gezer  
came up to help Lachish; and Joshua  
smote him and his people, until he  
had left them none remaining.

34 ¶ And from Lachish Joshua  
passed unto Eglon, and all Israel  
with him; and they encamped against  
it, and fought against it:

35 And they took it on that day,  
and smote it with the edge of the  
sword, and all the souls that *were*  
therein he utterly destroyed that day,  
according to all that he had done to  
Lachish.

36 ¶ And Joshua went up from  
Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto  
<sup>e Ch. 14.  
13. & 15.  
13.  
Judg. 1.  
10.</sup> Hebron; and they fought against it:

37 And they took it, and smote it  
with the edge of the sword, and the  
king thereof, and all the cities there-  
of, and all the souls that *were* therein;  
he left none remaining, according  
to all that he had done to Eglon;  
but destroyed it utterly, and all the  
souls that *were* therein.

Ver. 27—29 *They took them down*—That neither wild  
beasts might come to devour them, nor any of their people  
to give them honourable burial. Thus, that which they  
thought would have been their shelter, was made their prison  
first, and then their grave. So shall we surely be disap-  
pointed, in whatever we flee to from God. *And that day*—  
On which the sun stood still. Nor is it strange that so much  
work was done, and places so far distant were taken in one  
day, when the day was so long, and the Canaanites struck  
with such a terror. *He let none remain*—From the severity  
wherewith this and the following cities were treated, and the  
command given, Deut. xx. 10, it has been inferred, with much  
probability, that offers of peace had been made by Joshua

before he fought against them, and that they had rejected  
these offers. *All Israel with him unto Libnah*—Namely, all  
who were with him in this expedition.

Ver. 35—37. *They took it on that day*—On which they  
first attempted it. *Unto Hebron*—The conquest of Hebron  
here generally related, is afterwards repeated, and more par-  
ticularly described, Chap. xv. 13, 14. *And the king thereof*  
—Their former king was one of the five whom Joshua had  
lately killed and hanged, but it seems they had now set up  
a new sovereign, their city being of great note, since it had  
other cities depending on it, and subject to its jurisdiction, as  
appears from the next words.



A.M. 2554,  
B.C. 1451.  
f Ch. 15, 15.  
Judg. 1. 11.

38 ¶ And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to <sup>f</sup>Debir; and fought against it:

39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that *were* therein: he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40 ¶ So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel <sup>g</sup>commanded.

g Deut. 90.  
16, 17.

41 And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea, even unto <sup>h</sup>Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon.

h Gen. 10.  
19.

i Ch. 11, 16.

42 And all these kings and their

<sup>f</sup>Ver. 38. *Joshua returned—to Debir*—Joshua had not been there before, but having advanced as far south and west as he thought expedient, even as far as Gaza, which was in the western coast, Ver. 41, he now returned towards the camp at Gilgal, which was north-east from him, and in his march thither took Debir, which afterwards was a city of Judah, Chap. xv. 49, and one of the cities of the priests, Chap. xxi. 15.

Ver. 40. *All that breathed*—That is, all mankind; they reserved the cattle for their own uses. *As God had commanded*—This is added for the vindication of the Israelites, whom God would not have to suffer in their reputation for executing his commands; and therefore he acquits them of that cruelty which they might be thought guilty of, and ascribes it to his own just indignation. And hereby was typified the final destruction of all the impenitent enemies of the Lord Jesus, who, having slighted the riches of his grace, must for ever feel the weight of his wrath.

Ver. 41. *From Kadesh Barnea*—Which lay in the south of Canaan, Numb. xxxiv. 4; Deut. i. 19; and belonged to the tribe of Judah, Ch. xv. 3. Gaza was a city of the Philistines, in the south-west part. So he here signifies that Joshua did, in this expedition, subdue all those parts which lay south and west from Gilgal. *All the country of Goshen*—There was a city in the tribe of Judah of this name, which, like Hebron, was situated in the mountains, in the southern part of the country, Chap. xv. 51, from which city the adjacent region was called the country of Goshen. This tract was

A.M. 2554.  
B.C. 1451.  
k Ver. 14.

land did Joshua take at one time, <sup>k</sup>because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

43 ¶ And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

CHAP. XI.

*The confederacy of many kings against Israel, ver. 1—5. God's encouragement to Joshua, and his conquest of them and their cities, ver. 6—20. The destruction of the Anakims, ver. 21—23.*

**A**ND it came to pass, when Jabin <sup>1450.</sup> king of Hazor had heard *those things*, that he <sup>a</sup>sent to Jobab king <sup>a Ch. 10. 3.</sup> of Madon, and to the king <sup>b</sup>of <sup>b Ch. 19. 15.</sup> Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph,

2 And to the kings that *were* on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of <sup>c</sup>Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders <sup>d</sup>of <sup>c Num. 24.  
11.  
d Ch. 17. 11.  
Judg. 1.  
27.  
1 Kings  
4. 11.</sup> Dor on the west,

enriched with excellent pasture-lands, and plenteous streams, like that country in Egypt of the same denomination, and thence was called Goshen, as Pellicanus conjectures; because the Hebrew word *Geshem* signifies copious showers, which impart fertility to the earth. *Even unto Gibeon*—Which was in the more northerly part of the country. And therefore, as the former account specified, the conquests of Joshua from the south to the west; so here his conquests from the south to the north are related.

CHAP. XI. Ver. 1. *King of Hazor*—This was the principal city of the northern part of Canaan, Ver. 10; and fell to the share of the tribe of Naphtali in the division of the land, Chap. xix. 36. Jaban was the name of the king of the Canaanites in this part of the country, in future times, as well as now. *Had heard*—This was a remarkable instance of the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, which so governed the minds of the Canaanites, that they were not all united under one king, but divided amongst many petty kings; and next, that these did not all unanimously join their counsels and forces together to oppose the Israelites at their first entrance, but quietly suffered the destruction of their brethren, thereby preparing the way for their own.

Ver. 2. *On the north of the mountains*—Rather, according to the Hebrew, *On the north in the mountain*—That is, either Mount Lebanon, called the *mountain* by way of eminency, or in the mountainous country. This seems to be the general designation of all the particular places following:

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

A.M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

e Judg. 3.3.

f Ch. 13. 11.  
g Gen. 31.  
49.

b Gen. 29.  
17. & 32.  
12.

h Heb. as-  
sembled  
by ap-  
point-  
ment.

i Ch. 10. 5.

k 2 Sam. 9.  
4.

3 And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh.

4 And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

5 ¶ And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

6 ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them: for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.

7 So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against

them by the waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them.

8 ¶ And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining.

9 And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.

10 ¶ And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms.

11 And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire.

12 And all the cities of those

Or, Zi-  
donrubah.  
Ch. 17. 6.  
Or Salt pits.  
Heb.  
burnings.

Ver. 6.

Heb. any  
breath.

they were in the northern parts of Canaan, as those mentioned, Chap. 10, were in the southern parts. *And of the plain, &c.*—Hebrew, *in the plain*, southward from Chinneroth, or the lake of Gennesareth. *Dor*—A place upon the coast of the midland sea.

*Ver. 3. The Canaanites on the east and on the west*—The Canaanites, properly so called, lived part of them on the east, near Jordan, and part on the west near the sea, and both are here united. *And to the Amorite, &c.*—There were other Amorites scattered up and down the country, beside those who were subject to the five kings mentioned in the preceding Chapter, Ver. 5, who were all now assembled by Jabin, together with the rest of the Hittites and Perizzites, who were in several parts of the country, that they might form as powerful an army as could be raised. *The Jebusite in the mountains*—About Jerusalem, where they kept a strong hold, till the time of David. *The Hivite under Hermon*—On the north of Canaan, whereby they were distinguished from those Hivites who lived in Gibeon. *In the land of Mizpeh*—That Mizpeh which was in the northern part of Gilead. But there were other cities called by that name; for as it signifies a *watch-tower*, or watching place, it is no wonder that several places of good prospect should be so named.

*Ver. 5. These kings—pitched at the waters of Merom*—A lake made by the river Jordan in the northern part of it, which was in the territory of the king of Shimron, near Hazor, Jabin's royal city, and almost in the middle of these confederate kings.

*Ver. 6. I will deliver them up all slain*—The Seventy translate this *τιςπονμενους*, *put to flight*: and it is certain they were not all slain, but many of them fled. The meaning therefore can only be, that they should be so broken and scattered by that time, as to have no more power to resist than dead men. *Thou shalt hough their horses*—Disable them for war, by cutting the sinews of the ham. They might, however, be still fit for other uses. God forbade them to keep many horses, now especially, that they might not trust to their horses, nor ascribe the conquest of the land to their own strength, but wholly to God, by whose power alone a company of raw and unexperienced footmen were able to subdue so potent a people, who besides their great numbers, and giants, and walled cities, had the advantage of many thousands of horses and chariots.

*Ver. 7. Joshua came—against them*—When they least expected him, intending there to refresh, and prepare, and order themselves for the offensive war which they designed.

*Ver. 8. Great Zidon*—A great city in the north west part of Canaan, upon the sea. *Misrephoth-maim*—A place not far from Zidon, supposed to be so called from the salt or glass which they made there. *Valley of Mizpeh*—under mount Hermon, as appears by comparing this with Ver. 3, and 17, where it seems to be called the valley of Lebanon. This lay on the east, as Zidon did on the west; and so it seems they fled several ways, and the Israelites also divided themselves into two bodies, one pursuing east, and the other west.

*Ver. 10. The king*—In his royal city, to which he fled out

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.N. Num. 33.  
52.† Heb. on  
their Acap.o Exod. 34.  
11, 12.p Deut. 7.  
2.

q Ch. 1. 7.

† Heb. Ac  
removed  
nothing.

kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, *and* he utterly destroyed them, <sup>a</sup> as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded.

13 But *as for* the cities that stood still † in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; *that* did Joshua burn.

14 And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe.

15 <sup>o</sup> As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so <sup>p</sup> did Moses command Joshua, and <sup>q</sup> so did Joshua; † he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

of the battle. *Head of those kingdoms*—Not of all Canaan, but of all those who were confederate with him in this expedition.

Ver. 13. *In their strength*—Heb. *with their fence*, walls, or bulwarks, that is, which were not ruined with their walls in taking them. *Save Hazor*—Because this city began the war, and being the chief and royal city, might renew the war, if the Canaanites should ever seize upon it: which in fact they did, and settled there, under a king of the same name, Judges iv. 2.

Ver. 15. *As the Lord commanded Moses, &c.*—See Exod. xxxiv. 11, 12; Deut. xxxi. 7. *So did Joshua, he left nothing undone*—This is a demonstration that Moses left in writing what the LORD commanded, as we read in the foregoing books, and that they were not written, as some have pretended, in later times. For it would have been impossible for Joshua to have executed every thing which had been commanded by Moses, unless he had had the book of the law before him for his direction.

Ver. 16. *All that land*—Of Canaan, whose parts here follow. *The hill*—Or, *the mountain*, that is, the mountainous country, namely, of Judea. A considerable part of Judea was called the hilly or the mountainous country, Luke i. 39, 65. *The south country*—That is, not only the mountainous part, but all the country of Judea, which lay in the southern part of Canaan, and often comes under the name of the south. *The vale*—The low countries. *The plain*—The fields or campaign grounds. *The mountain of Israel*—It is very uncertain whether the mountainous country of Israel, in general, be meant by this expression, or whether a particular place be not rather intended. Many think it probable that Bethel is meant, where God appeared to Jacob as he went to Padan-Aram, and promised to give him this

16 ¶ So Joshua took all that land, <sup>r</sup> the hills, and all the south country, <sup>s</sup> and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same;

17 <sup>t</sup> Even from || the mount Hakkak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and <sup>u</sup> all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them.

18 || Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save <sup>x</sup> the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all *other* they took in battle.

20 For <sup>y</sup> it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he

land, Gen. xxviii. 11, and where he dwelt, by God's direction, after his return; where God appeared to him again, repeated the same promise, and changed his name from Jacob to Israel, Gen. xxxv. 1, 9, 10.

Ver. 17. *That goeth up to Seir*—That is, to the country of Seir or Edom, namely, to that part of it which was south from Judea. *Unto Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, &c.*—As the preceding words express the bounds of Joshua's conquest southward; so hither they extended northward. And this seems to be a description of the length of the country which he took from the king of Hazor, and all those who joined with him, as Archbishop Usher understands it.

Ver. 18. *Joshua made war a long time*—For divers years together, five or six at least, according to Josephus. And this is here expressed, lest it should be thought that as all these wars are here recorded in a short narration, so they were dispatched in a short time. God would have the land to be conquered gradually, for many weighty reasons; 1. Lest the sudden extirpation of those nations should have made a great part of the land desert, and thereby have increased the number of wild beasts, which is particularly noticed by Moses, Exod. xxiii. 29; Deut. vii. 22. 2. Lest being done suddenly and easily, it should soon be forgotten and despised.—3. That by long exercise the Israelites might grow skilful in the art of war. 4. For the trial and exercise of their patience and courage, and trust in God. 5. To keep them in awe, and chastise them by these Canaanites when they forsook God; and to oblige them to be more careful to please him, since they saw they still needed his help and protection against their enemies.

Ver. 19, 20. *All other they took in battle*—That is, all that were taken by Joshua were taken by the sword, and therefore it is no wonder that the war was long, when the

<sup>a. M. 2558.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1451.</sup> might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, <sup>2</sup> as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>a. Dent. 20. 16, 17.</sup> 21 ¶ And at that time came <sup>a. Num. 13. 22, 23.</sup> Joshua, and cut off <sup>a</sup> the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities.

enemy was so obstinate. *It was of the Lord to harden their hearts*—In the same sense in which he hardened the heart of Pharaoh. He did not soften their hearts through the influence of his almighty grace, but gave them up to their own animosity, pride, confidence, and stubbornness; and so ordered things, in the course of his wise and righteous providence, that they were emboldened to fight with the Israelites, notwithstanding they had heard of the wonders that were repeatedly wrought for them. And this he did in order that their abominable and incorrigible wickedness might be punished, and that the Israelites might not be mixed with them, but be intire among themselves in the possession of the land. *That he might destroy them utterly, and they might have no favour*—Which they might have obtained if they had not been so inconsiderate and self-confident, and rash as to imagine they could withstand those before whom the river Jordan fled back, and the walls of Jericho fell down flat, and so would not hearken to the terms that Joshua offered to them.

Ver. 21. *At that time*—That is, in the war before mentioned, and probably towards the conclusion of it; after he had left none to oppose him in other places, but only in those mountainous parts which were of difficult access. *Joshua cut off the Anakims*—“A wild, barbarous, and gigantic people, who were of a different original from that of the Canaanites, and inhabited certain mountains of the country. It would have been dangerous to let them remain, nor were they worthy of such an indulgence. Joshua, therefore, marched against them, and crowned his victories by their utter defeat.” Dodd. *From the mountains*—Heb. *the mountain*: but the singular number seems to be put for the plural. *From Hebron, &c.*—That is, from the territories belonging to these cities. For, as we have often seen in this history, cities are mentioned for the country subject to them. *From all the mountains of Judah*—All the mountainous country that fell afterwards by lot to the tribe of Judah. *And from all the mountains of Israel*—The mountainous country that was allotted to the rest of the tribes of Israel, to which mountains these people, it is likely, fled for safety. *Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities*—But how could Joshua be said to have utterly destroyed either the Anakims or their cities, when Caleb and Othniel destroyed some of them after Joshua's death? Chap. xiv. 12; Judges i. 10—12. This

22 There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in <sup>b</sup> Gath, <sup>b 1 Sam. 17. 6.</sup> and in Ashdod, there remained. <sup>c Ch. 15. 66.</sup>

23 ¶ So Joshua took the whole land, <sup>d</sup> according to all that the LORD <sup>d Num. 26. 2, &c.</sup> said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel <sup>e Num. 33. 53.</sup> according to their divisions by their tribes. <sup>f Ch. 14. 15. & 21. 44. 1445.</sup> And the land rested from <sup>Ver. 18.</sup> war.

might be either, 1, Because these places, though in part destroyed, yet being neglected by the Israelites, were repossessed by the giants, and by them kept until Caleb destroyed them: Or rather, 2, Because this work, though done by the particular valour of Caleb, is ascribed to Joshua as the general of the army, according to the manner of all historians; and therefore it is here attributed to Joshua; though afterwards, that Caleb might not lose his deserved honour, the history is more particularly described, and Caleb owned as the great instrument of it.

Ver. 22. *Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod*—These were three cities of the Philistines, into which either some of the Anakims escaped, and there took shelter, or they had been there from ancient time, and the Israelites could not yet expel them. For they did not possess themselves of the country of the Philistines till the time of David, when we find some of these giants still there.

Ver. 23. *So Joshua took the whole land*—Which either the Canaanites or the Anakims possessed; that is, subdued it, so that none rose up against him, though many places were not yet in the possession of the Israelites. *According to all that the Lord said unto Moses*—See Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. God had promised to drive out the nations before them: and now he had fulfilled his promise. Our successes and enjoyments are then doubly comfortable when we see them flowing to us from God's faithfulness to his promise: *This is according to what the Lord hath said*: Just as our obedience is the more acceptable when it has an eye to the precept. And if we make conscience of our duty, we need not question the performance of the promise. *And the land rested from war*—None of the lords of the Philistines, nor any others, presumed to give them any disturbance, so that they now became “peaceable possessors of that fine land of promise, and thought only how to divide it amongst them, as we shall see in Chap. xiii. Here begins the seventh year, reckoning from their first seed time, after the passage over Jordan; the first sabbatical year celebrated by them after Joshua had brought them into rest; that rest which is a type of the eternal rest, which the great Joshua of the new covenant prepares for his people in heaven, Heb. iv. 8, 9, &c. From this same epocha we are to reckon the jubilees.”—Dodd. See on Lev. xxv. 8, 9, 10.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.

CHAP. XII.

The conquests of Israel, under Moses, ver. 1---6.  
Under Joshua, ver. 7---24.

1452. **N**OW these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote; and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, <sup>a</sup> from the river Arnon <sup>b</sup> unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east :

2 <sup>c</sup> Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbock, which is the border of the children of Ammon ;

3 And <sup>d</sup> from the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, even the salt sea on the east, <sup>e</sup> the way to Beth-jeshimoth; and from <sup>||</sup> the south, under <sup>||</sup> <sup>f</sup> Ashdoth-pisgah :

4 And <sup>g</sup> the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of <sup>h</sup> the remnant of the giants, <sup>i</sup> that dwelt at Ash-taroth and at Edrei,

5 And reigned in <sup>k</sup> mount Hermon, <sup>l</sup> and in Salcah, and in all Bashan, <sup>m</sup> unto the border of the

<sup>a</sup> Num. 21. 24.  
<sup>b</sup> Deut. 3. 8, 9.  
<sup>c</sup> Num. 21. 24.  
<sup>d</sup> Deut. 2. 23, 24.  
<sup>e</sup> Ch. 3. 20.  
<sup>f</sup> Or, the springs of Pisgah, or, the hill.  
<sup>g</sup> Deut. 3. 17, & 4. 49.  
<sup>h</sup> Num. 21. 25.  
<sup>i</sup> Deut. 3. 11.  
<sup>j</sup> Ch. 12. 13.  
<sup>k</sup> Deut. 1. 4.  
<sup>l</sup> Deut. 3. 3.  
<sup>m</sup> Deut. 3. 10, Ch. 12. 11.  
<sup>n</sup> Deut. 3. 14.

CHAP. XII. Ver. 1, 2. *These are the kings of the land*—This summary account of Israel's conquests comes in here not only as a conclusion of the history of the wars of Canaan, that we might at one view see what they had gotten; but as a preface to the history of the dividing of Canaan, that all those territories might be placed together before the reader's view, which they were now to make the distribution of. *All the plain on the east*—That is, on the east of Jordan, called the plain, Deut. i. 1. *From the middle of the river*. Ar—Which was no part of Sihon's dominions, but belonged to the Moabites, Deut. ii. 9—18, appears to have been situated in the middle of the river Arnon, Deut. ii. 39, & iii. 16, and therefore the middle of the river is properly here mentioned as the bound of Sihon's dominion on that side. But it is not unusual even among us for a river to be divided between two lords, and for their territories or jurisdictions to meet in the middle of the river. Some, however, prefer

Geshurites, and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

6 <sup>n</sup> Then did Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel smite : and <sup>o</sup> Moses the servant of the LORD gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

7 ¶ And these are the kings of the country <sup>p</sup> which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to <sup>q</sup> Seir; which Joshua <sup>r</sup> gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions ;

8 <sup>s</sup> In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; <sup>t</sup> the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites :

9 <sup>u</sup> The king of Jericho, one; <sup>x</sup> the king of Ai, which is beside Beth-el, one;

10 <sup>y</sup> The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

11 The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one ;

rendering *תוך הנהל*, *Tock hannachal*, *Between the river*—Viz. That he reigned over some territory which was situated between different streams of that river. *Half Gilead*—Heb. *And the half Gilead*—That is, half the country of Gilead, over which Sihon's dominion, which began at Arnon, extended, ending at Jabbock, beyond which river was the other half of Gilead, which belonged to Og.

Ver. 6. *Then did Moses and the children of Israel smite*—Fresh mercies must not drown the remembrance of former mercies: nor must the glory of the present instruments of good to the Church, diminish the just honour of those that went before them. Joshua's services were confessedly great. But let not those under Moses be forgotten. Both together proclaim God to be the Alpha and Omega of his people's salvation.

Ver. 8. *In the wilderness and in the south country*—These are joined together because the wilderness was southerly, in

- A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
z Ch. 10. 33.  
a Ch. 10. 39.  
b Ch. 10. 29.  
c Ch. 10. 29.  
d Ch. 8. 17.  
Judg. 1.  
27.  
e 1 Kings 4.  
10.  
f Or, Sharon,  
1 Sam. 35. 7.  
Ch. 11. 10.  
14. 30.  
g Ch. 11. 1.  
h Ch. 19. 37.  
i Ch. 11. 2.
- 12 The king of Eglon, one; <sup>a</sup> the king of Gezer, one;  
13 <sup>a</sup> The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;  
14 The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;  
15 <sup>b</sup> The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;  
16 <sup>c</sup> The king of Makkedah, one; <sup>d</sup> the king of Beth-el, one;  
17 The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one;  
18 The king of Aphek, one; the king of || Lasharon, one;  
19 The king of Madon, one; <sup>f</sup> the king of Hazor, one;  
20 The king of <sup>g</sup> Shimron-merom, one; the king of Achshaph, one;  
21 The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;  
22 <sup>h</sup> The king of Kedish, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one;  
23 The king of Dor in the <sup>i</sup> coast

of Dor, one; the king of <sup>k</sup> the nations of Gilgal, one:

24 The king of Tizrah, one: all the kings, thirty and one.

A. M. 2553.  
B. C. 1451.  
k Gen. 14. 1.

## CHAP. XIII.

God informs Joshua what parts of the land were yet unconquered, and orders him to divide what was conquered, ver. 1—7. A repetition of the division made by Moses, first, in general, ver. 8—14, then in particular: the lot of Reuben, ver. 15—23; of Gad, ver. 24—28; of the half tribe of Manasseh, ver. 29—33.

1446.

**N**OW Joshua <sup>a</sup> was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land <sup>†</sup> to be possessed.

a Ch. 14. 10.  
& 23. 1.

2 ¶ <sup>b</sup> This is the land that yet remaineth: <sup>c</sup> all the borders of the Philistines, and all <sup>d</sup> Geshuri,

† Heb. to possess it.  
Deut. 31. 3.

3 <sup>e</sup> From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of

b Judg. 8. 1.  
c Joel 3. 4.

d Ver. 18.

e Jer. 2. 18.

in the hottest and driest part of the land: but we are not to suppose that the wilderness was a country without people, but only such as was thinly inhabited, in comparison with other parts of the land: for we read of houses and towns in the wilderness, 1 Kings xi. 34, and ix. 18.

Ver. 23, *The king of Gilgal*—This Gilgal is not the place where Joshua encamped when he came over Jordan; for there was no city there, nor any king of that country, but the king of Jericho. That place had also its name from the circumcision of the Israelites there, Chap. v. 9.

Ver. 24. *All the kings, thirty and one*—It may seem strange to us that in so small a country there were so many kings; but in those ages kings were only petty princes, or lords of cities, which had a few villages depending on them. This appears by Verse 9, where we read of the king of Bethel; which was so small a place, that he and the king of Ai, joined together, had but twelve thousand subjects, Chap. viii. 25. However, the conquering of so many cities and places, within so short a space of time, and with so little loss, shewed that the Israelites were marvellously protected and assisted, and was an evidence to them, as it is to us all, of the truth of all God's promises; and that they will certainly be accomplished, what obstacles soever there may be in the way of them. We here see the Israelites put in possession of that very country, and those very places, which God had promised ages before to their pious ancestors, to give to their posterity, when they had not so much as a foot of land in any of these countries, and wandered about from place to place, having no possessions any where. This pro-

mise is not only once, but many times repeated, in books which we are certain were written many years before the Israelites came into possession of any part of the land, and when there was little likelihood of their obtaining it. And, therefore, their coming into actual possession of it, and with so little loss, is a very corroborating proof of the truth of those books, which record the promises of God on this occasion; as the event so fully justified what they had recorded..

CHAP. XIII. Ver. 1. *Now Joshua was old*—To what age Joshua was advanced we cannot determine, because we do not know how old he was when the Israelites came out of Egypt. Some think he was three and forty at that time, and then he was fourscore and three when they came into Canaan. And now, it may be gathered from probable conjectures, that he wanted not much of a hundred. And, in this declining age, he could not hope to live to conquer what remained of the land unsubdued, and therefore he was to go about another business, viz. the dividing of it. *The Lord said unto him, thou art old*—Therefore delay not to do the work which I have commanded thee to do. It is good for those that are *stricken in years* to be reminded that they are so; that they may be quickened to do the work of life, and prepare for death which is coming on apace.

Ver. 2, 3. *This is the land that yet remaineth*—Unconquered by thee, and to be conquered by the Israelites, if they behave themselves aright. *All Geshuri*—A people in the north-east of Canaan, as the Philistines were on the south-west. *Which is counted to the Canaanite*—That is,

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1445. Ekron northward, *which* is counted  
f Judg. 3. 3-  
1 Sam. 6.  
4, 16. to the Canaanite: <sup>f</sup> five lords of the  
e Deut. 2.  
23. Philistines; the Gazathites, and the  
 Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the  
 Gittites and the Ekronites; also <sup>e</sup> the  
 Avites:

4 From the south, all the land of  
g Or, the  
cave. the Canaanites, and <sup>g</sup> Mearah that  
h Ch. 19. 30. is beside the Sidonians, <sup>h</sup> unto Aphek,  
i Judg. 1.  
31. to the borders of <sup>i</sup> the Amorites:

k 1 Kings 5.  
19. 5 And the land of <sup>k</sup> the Giblites,  
 and all Lebanon, toward the sun-  
l Ch. 12. 7. rising, <sup>l</sup> from Baal-gad under mount  
 Hermon unto the entering into Ha-  
 math.

6 All the inhabitants of the hill  
m Ch. 11. 8. country from Lebanon unto <sup>m</sup> Mis-  
 rephoth-maim, *and* all the Sidonians,  
n Ch. 23. 13. them <sup>n</sup> will I drive out from before  
o Ch. 14. 1. the children of Israel: only <sup>o</sup> divide  
 thou it by lot unto the Israelites for  
 an inheritance, as I have commanded  
 thee.

which, though now possessed by the Philistines, who drove out the Canaanites, the old inhabitants of it, Deut. ii. 23; Amos ix. 7; yet it is a part of the land of Canaan, and therefore belongs to the Israelites. *The Avites*—Or, the Avims, as they are called, Deut. ii. 23, who, though they were expelled out of their ancient seat, and most of them destroyed by the Caphtorims or Philistines, as is there said, yet many of them escaped, and planted themselves not very far from the former.

Ver. 4. *From the south*—That is, from those southern parts of the sea-coast, now possessed by the Philistines, all the more northern parts of the sea-coast being yet inhabited by the Canaanites, almost as far as Sidon. *The Amorites*—The Amorites were a very strong and numerous people, and we find them dispersed in several parts, some within Jordan, and some without it, some in the south, and others in the north, of whom he speaks here.

Ver. 6. *Them will I drive out*—Whatever becomes of us, however we may be laid aside as broken vessels, God will do his work in his own time. I will do it *by my word*; so the Chaldee here, as in many other places: by the eternal Word, the Captain of my host. But the promise of driving them out from before the children of Israel, supposes that the Israelites must use their own endeavours, must go up against them. If Israel, through sloth or cowardice, let them alone, they are not likely to be driven out. We must go forth in our Christian warfare, and then God will go before us.

Ver. 7. *Now, therefore, divide this land*—Both that which was conquered and that which remained unconquered was

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1451. 7 ¶ Now therefore divide this land  
 for an inheritance unto the nine  
 tribes, and the half tribe of Manas-  
 seh,

8 With whom the Reubenites and  
 the Gadites have received their in-  
 heritance, <sup>p</sup> which Moses gave them, p Num. 32.  
33. Ch.  
22. 4. beyond Jordan eastward, *even* as  
 Moses the servant of the LORD gave  
 them;

9 From Aroer, that is upon the  
 bank of the river, Arnon, and the  
 city that is in the midst of the river,  
<sup>q</sup> and all the plain of Medeba unto q Ver. 16.  
 Dibon;

10 And <sup>r</sup> all the cities of Sihon r Num. 21.  
24.  
 king of the Amorites, which reigned  
 in Heshbon, unto the border of the  
 children of Ammon;

11 <sup>s</sup> And Gilead, and the border s Ch. 12. 6.  
 of the Geshurites and Maachathites,  
 and all mount Hermon; and all Ba-  
 shan unto Salcah;

to be divided, that every tribe might know what belonged to them by God's gift, and be encouraged to attempt the conquest of it when they were able; might be preserved from entering into any covenant or society with those who kept their inheritance from them; and likewise with a view to hinder the unconquered people from joining their forces together to recover their country, the Israelites inhabiting the cities and fields that lay between them.

Ver. 8. *With whom*—That is, with the other half of the tribe before-mentioned. *Which Moses gave them*—By my command, and therefore do not thou disturb them in their possessions, but proceed to divide the other possessions to the rest. With this Verse end the words of God to Joshua, begun Ver. 1; and in the next Verse, the writer of this book begins to describe the country which God ordered to be given to the fore-named two tribes and an half, that there might be no future dispute about this division; but it might be held as good as that which was made by lot among the rest of the tribes.

Ver. 9—11. *The city that is in the midst of the river*—Some interpreters render this clause, *The city in the midst of the valley*; judging that, as Arnon was but a small brook, it could hardly have a city, or an island large enough for a city to be built on in the midst of it. But certainly a city might be built on ground lying between two streams of the same river, See on Chap. xii. 2. *Medeba unto Dibon*—Two cities anciently belonging to the Moabites, and taken from them by the Amorites, Numb. xxi. 30, and from them by the Israelites; and after the Israelites were gone into captivity, recovered by the first possessors, the Moabites. *And*



A. M. 2549.  
B. C. 1448.

12 All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: for these did Moses smite, and cast them out.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 3.  
<sup>31.</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Num. 21.  
<sup>34.</sup>

13 Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Num. 18.  
<sup>20, 23.</sup>

14 ¶ Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them.

<sup>5</sup> Ver. 33.

15 ¶ And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families.

<sup>6</sup> Ch. 12. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Num. 21.  
<sup>25.</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Num. 21.  
<sup>30.</sup>

16 And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba;

<sup>9</sup> Or, the high places of Baal, and house of Baal-meon; Num. 32. 28.

17 Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,

*Maachathites*—Whose land God had given to the Israelites without Jordan, though they had not yet used the gift of God, nor taken possession of it, as is noted, Ver. 13.

Ver. 14. *To the tribe of Levi he* (viz. Moses) *gave none inheritance*—That is, none in the land beyond Jordan, where yet a considerable part of the Levites were to have their settled abode. This is mentioned as the reason both why Moses gave all that land to the Reubenites, and Gadites, and Manassites; and why Joshua should divide the land only into nine parts and an half, as was said, Ver. 7; because Levi was otherwise provided for. *Made by fire*—Which are here put for all the sacrifices and oblations, including first-fruits and tithes, that were assigned to the Levites, and this passage is repeated to prevent those calumnies and injuries which God foresaw the Levites were likely to meet with, from the malice, envy, and covetousness of their brethren.

Ver. 15. *Moses gave, &c.*—Having informed us in general what Moses gave to the two tribes and an half, the sacred historian proceeds to set down in particular what share each of them had in this country. *According to their families*—Dividing the inheritance into as many parts as they had families. But this is only spoken of the greater families; for the lesser distributions to the several small families were made by inferior officers, according to the rules which Moses had given them.

18 And Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

A. M. 2559.  
B. C. 1445.

<sup>10</sup> Num. 21.  
<sup>23.</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Num. 29.  
<sup>37.</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Num. 32.  
<sup>38.</sup>

19 And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zarethshahar in the mount of the valley,

20 And Beth-peor, and Ashdoth-pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth,

<sup>13</sup> Deut. 3.  
<sup>17.</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Or, springs of Elugah, or, the hill.

<sup>15</sup> Deut. 3.  
<sup>10.</sup>

21 And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country.

<sup>16</sup> Num. 21.  
<sup>24.</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Num. 32.  
<sup>8.</sup>

22 ¶ Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.

<sup>18</sup> Num. 22.  
<sup>5.</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Or, divider.

23 And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof.

24 ¶ And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the

Ver. 19. *In the mount of the valley*—In the mount which overlooked the great plain before-mentioned, or which bordered upon the valley, a mount which, it seems, was then famous among the Israelites; whether that where Moses was buried, which was near to Beth-peor, or some other.

Ver. 21. *Cities of the plain*—Opposed to the cities of the mountain of the valley. *All the kingdom of Sihon*—A great part of it; in which sense we read of all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, Mat. iii. 5; and all Galilee, Mat. iv. 23. *Whom Moses smote*—Not in the same time or battle, as appears by comparing Num. xxi. 23, 24, with Num. xxxi. 8, but in the same manner. *Dukes of Sihon*—But how could they be so, when they were kings of Midian? Num. xxxi. 8. There were divers petty kings in those parts, who were subject to other kings, and such these were, but are here called dukes or princes of Sihon, because they were subject and tributaries to him, and therefore did one way or other assist Sihon in this war, though they were not killed at this time.

Ver. 22. *Were slain by them*—This was recorded before, Num. xxxi. 8, and is here repeated, because the defeating of Balaam's purpose to curse Israel, and the turning that curse into a blessing, was such an instance of the power and goodness of God, as was fit to be had in everlasting remembrance.

A. M. 2559.  
B. C. 1445. children of Gad according to their families.

m Num. 32. 25<sup>m</sup> And their coast was Jazer,  
35. and all the cities of Gilead, <sup>n</sup> and  
n Num. 21. half the land of the children of Am-  
26. mon, unto Aroer that is before  
o 2 Sam. 11. Rabbah ;  
1.

26 And from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir ;

p Num. 32. 27 And in the valley, <sup>p</sup> Beth-aram,  
30. and Bethnimrah, <sup>q</sup> and Succoth, and  
q Gen. 33. Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of  
17. Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and  
r Num. 34. his border, *even* unto the edge <sup>r</sup> of  
11. the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward.

28 This is the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages.

29 ¶ And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh : and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families.

30 And their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and <sup>s</sup> all the

Ver. 25. *All the cities of Gilead*—All the cities of eminency; all the cities properly so called, which lay in that part of Gilead; and thus what is here asserted may well agree with Ver. 34, where half the country of Gilead is said to be given to the Manassites, for there is no mention of any cities being there. *Half the land of the children of Ammon*—Not of that which was now theirs, for that the Israelites were forbidden to meddle with; but of that which was anciently theirs, till taken from them by the Amorites, from whom the Israelites took it. *Aroer*—The border between them and Moab. *Rabbah*—The chief city of the Ammonites.

Ver. 29. *Unto the half tribe of Manasseh*—Not that they desired it, as Reuben and Gad did, Numb. xxxii. 1; but partly as a recompence to Machir the Manassite, for his valiant acts against Og, and partly because the country was too large for the two tribes of Reuben and Gad.

Ver. 30. *All the towns of Jair*—Who, though of the tribe of Judah, by the father, 1 Chron. ii. 21, 22, yet is called the son of Manasseh, Numb. xxxij. 41, because he married a daughter of Manasseh, and wholly associated himself with

towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, <sup>A. M. 2559.</sup> threescore cities :  
<sup>B. C. 1445.</sup>

31 And half Gilead, and <sup>t</sup> Ash-taroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were pertaining* unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, *even* to the one half of the <sup>u</sup> children of Machir by their families.  
Ch. 12. 4. u Num. 32. 30.

32 These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward.

33 <sup>x</sup> But unto the tribe of Levi, Moses gave not *any* inheritance: the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, <sup>y</sup> as he said unto them.  
Ver. 14. Ch. 15. 7. y Num. 19. 20.

#### CHAP. XIV.

*The method of dividing the land, ver. 1—5. Caleb demands Hebron, ver. 6—12, which Joshua grants, ver. 13—15.*

AND these are the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, <sup>a</sup> which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the  
cir. 1444. a Num. 34. 17.

those valiant Manassites; and with their help took sixty cities or great towns, Deut. iii. 4, 14, which thence were called the towns of Jair.

Ver. 31. *Children of Machir*—Whom before he called the children of Manasseh, he now calls the children of Machir, because Machir was the most eminent, and, as it may seem, the only surviving son of Manasseh, Numb. xxvi. 29; 1 Chron. vii. 14—16.

CHAP. XIV. Ver. 1. *And these are the countries*—Namely, those mentioned in the 15th, 16th, and following Chapters, to the 20th; for this Chapter is but a kind of preface to the division of the land; which was now conquered by Joshua, as that of Sihon and Og had been by Moses; and was to be divided by lot according to the command given by God to Moses, Numb. xxxiv. 17, 18, where the names of the twelve heads of tribes, or princes, as they are there called, are set down. *Eleazar the priest and Joshua, &c.*—They best understood the laws of God by which this division was to be regulated.

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444. children of Israel, distributed for inheritance to them.

<sup>b</sup> Num. 35. 2 <sup>b</sup> By lot *was* their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and *for* the half tribe.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 13. 9.] 3 <sup>c</sup> For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half tribe on the other side Jordan: but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. 49. 5. 4 For <sup>d</sup> the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell *in*, with their suburbs for their cattle and for their substance.

<sup>e</sup> Num. 35. 2. 5 <sup>e</sup> As the LORD commanded Mo-

ses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

6 ¶ Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the <sup>f</sup> Kenazite said unto him, Thou knowest <sup>g</sup> the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee <sup>h</sup> in Kadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the LORD <sup>i</sup> sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart.

8 Nevertheless <sup>k</sup> my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly <sup>l</sup> followed the LORD my God.

Ver. 2. *By lot was their inheritance as the Lord commanded*—"Though God had sufficiently pointed out," says Dr. Dodd, "by the predictions of Jacob, when dying, and those of Moses, what portions he designed for each tribe; we readily discern an admirable proof of his wisdom, in the orders he gave to decide them by lot. By this means were prevented the false interpretations which might have been given to the words of Jacob and Moses; and by striking at the root of whatever might occasion jealousies and disputes amongst the tribes, he evidently secured the honesty of those who were to be appointed to distribute to them the conquered countries in the land of Canaan. Besides, the success of this method became a fresh proof of the divinity of the Israelites' religion, and the truth of its oracles. Each tribe, finding itself placed by lot exactly in the spot which Jacob and Moses had foretold, it was evident that providence had equally directed both those predictions and that lot. The event justified the truth of the promises. The more singular it was, the more clearly do we discern the finger of God in it. No one has set these reflections in a fairer light than Masius. 'The portion,' says he, 'fell to each tribe just as Jacob had declared 250 years before, in the last moments of his life, and Moses, immediately before his death; for to the tribe of Judah fell a country abounding in vineyards and pastures; to Zebulun and Issachar, sea-ports; in that of Asher was plenty of oil, wheat and metals; that of Benjamin, near the temple, was in a manner between the shoulders of the Deity; Ephraim and Manasseh were distinguished with a territory blessed in a peculiar manner by heaven. The land of Naphtali extended from the west to the south of the tribe of Judah. Since, therefore, the lot corresponded so well to these predictions, would it not be insolence and stupidity in the highest degree, not to acknowledge the inspiration of God in the

words of Jacob and Moses, the direction of his hand in the lot, and his providence in the event?"

Ver. 4, 5. *The children of Joseph were two tribes*—That is, had the portion of two tribes, and therefore, though Levi was excluded, there remained nine tribes and an half to be provided for in Canaan. *They divided, &c.*—That is, the persons named, Ver. 1, who acted in the name of the children of Israel. They were disposed to divide it; they began to take measures for doing it.

Ver. 6. *Then the children of Judah came*—When Joshua, Eleazar and the rest were consulting about the division of the land, and before they had begun to cast lots, some of the children of Judah interposed in behalf of Caleb, coming along with him to shew him respect, to testify their consent that he should be provided for by himself, and to be witnesses of the truth of what he alleged. *In Gilgal*—Where the division of the land was designed, and begun, though it was executed and finished in Shiloh. *The Kenazite*—Of the posterity of Kenaz. *Thou knowest the thing the Lord said*—In general, the promise he made us of possessing this land, and what he said concerning me in particular, Ver. 9.

Ver. 7, 8. *I brought him word—as it was in my heart*—I spake my opinion sincerely, without flattery and fear, when the other spies were biassed by their own fears, and the dread of the people, to speak otherwise than in their consciences they believed. *I wholly followed the Lord my God*—The Hebrew, מלאתי אורתי יהוה, *millecti acharei Jehovah*, is literally *I filled after the Lord my God*, which words, as Dr. Dodd justly observes, "give the idea of a traveller, who, attentive to the following of his guide, so treads in his steps, as to leave hardly any void space betwixt his guide and him, and continually fills up the traces of his feet." This testimony, God himself had borne to Caleb, and his repeating it here

<sup>A. M. 2560.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1411.</sup>  
9 And Moses swore on that day, saying, <sup>m</sup> Surely the land <sup>n</sup> whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

<sup>c Num. 14. 30.</sup>  
<sup>1444.</sup>  
<sup>† Heb. walked.</sup>  
10 And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, <sup>o</sup> as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while *the children of Israel* † wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.

<sup>p Deut. 34. 7.</sup>  
11 <sup>p</sup> As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both <sup>q</sup> to go out, and to come in.

<sup>q Deut. 31. 2.</sup>  
12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in

<sup>A. M. 2560.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1444.</sup>  
<sup>r Num. 13. 26, 33.</sup>  
<sup>s Ps. 135. 32. & 100. 12.</sup>  
<sup>t Ch. 15. 14.</sup>  
that day how <sup>r</sup> the Anakims were there, and *that* the cities were great and fenced: <sup>s</sup> if so be the LORD will be with me, then <sup>t</sup> I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

<sup>u Ch. 92. 6.</sup>  
<sup>x Ch. 10. 37.</sup>  
<sup>1 Chron. 6. 55.</sup>  
13 And Joshua <sup>u</sup> blessed him, <sup>x</sup> and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.

<sup>y Ch. 21. 12.</sup>  
14 <sup>y</sup> Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he <sup>z</sup> wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. <sup>z Ver. 8. 9.</sup>

<sup>a Gen. 22. 2.</sup>  
15 And <sup>a</sup> the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba; *which Arba* was a great man among the Anakims.

<sup>b Ch. 11. 23.</sup>  
<sup>b</sup> And the land had rest from war.

## CHAP. XV.

*The bounds of the inheritance of Judah, ver. 1---12. The assignment of Hebron to Caleb and his family, ver. 13---19. The cities of Judah, ver. 20---63.*

is perfectly consistent with modesty, and was even necessary, as being the ground of his petition and claim.

Ver. 9. *Moses swore on that day*—See Deut. i. 35, 36. What is here mentioned was first pronounced by God himself, and that with an oath, Numb. xiv. 21, 24. It was also, however, repeated by Moses, so that the expression of the sacred writer is just.

Ver. 10. *The Lord hath kept me alive these forty and five years*—Whereof thirty-eight were spent in the wilderness, and seven since they came into Canaan. The longer we live the more sensible we should be of God's goodness to us in keeping us alive! Of his care in prolonging our frail lives, his patience in prolonging our forfeited lives! And shall not the life thus kept by his providence, be devoted to his praise? *I am as strong this day, &c.*—Though eighty-five years of age, he was as lively and strong as when he was forty. *As my strength was then so it is now*—This was the fruit of the promise, and was beyond what God had expressed; for God not only gives what he promises, but more. If he promises life, he will add health and strength, and all that which will make the life promised a blessing and comfort. This Caleb mentions here to the glory of God, and as a reason for his asking a portion which he must rescue out of the hands of the giants. *For war*—Not only for counsel, but for action; for marching and fighting. And therefore this gift will not be cast away upon an unprofitable and an unserviceable person. *To go out, and to come in*—To perform all the duties belonging to my place. Moses had said, that at eighty years old, even our strength was labour and sorrow. But Caleb was an exception to this rule: at

eighty-five years old, his strength was still ease and joy. This he got by following the Lord fully.

Ver. 12. *Now, therefore, give me this mountain*—The mountainous country where Hebron lay, Chap. xi. 21, which was the place promised to him. He names the country rather than the city, because that was given to the Levites, Chap. xxi. 11, 13. *Thou heardest in that day*—Didst understand; both by the reports of others and by thy own observation. Hearing, the sense by which we get knowledge, is often put for knowing or understanding. *If so be the Lord will be with me*—These are not the words of diffidence; but an humble and pious acknowledgement that nothing could be successfully enterprized without God's gracious assistance; of which Caleb was undoubtedly deeply sensible. By this expression he both signifies the absolute necessity of God's help, and his godly fear, lest, for his sins, God should deny his assistance to him; for although he was well assured, in general, that God would crown his people with success in this war, yet he might doubt of his particular success in this or that enterprise. *Then I shall be able to drive them out*—Out of their fastnesses where they yet remained. Caleb desires this difficult work as a testimony of his own faith, and as a motive to quicken his brethren to the like attempts.

Ver. 13. *Joshua blessed him*—Commended his bravery, applauded and granted his request, and prayed to God to bless and help him according to his own desire. Joshua was both a prince and a prophet, and on both accounts it was proper for him to give Caleb his blessing.

Ver. 15. *Arba was a great man, &c.*—In stature, and strength, and dignity, and authority, as being the pro-

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1443.

**THIS** then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; <sup>a</sup> *even* to the border of Edom the <sup>b</sup> wilderness of Zin southward *was* the uttermost part of the south coast.

a Num. 31.  
3.  
b Num. 33.  
26.

2 And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the † bay that looketh southward :

† Heb. tongue.

3 And it went out to the south side <sup>c</sup> to || Maaleh-acrabbim, and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa :

c Num. 34.  
6.  
† Or, the going up to Acrabbim.

4 *From thence* it passed <sup>d</sup> toward Azmon, and went out unto the river of Egypt : and the goings out of that coast were at the sea : this shall be your south coast.

d Num. 34.  
5.

5 And the east border *was* the salt sea, *even* unto the end of Jordan. And *their* border in the north quarter *was* from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan :

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1443.

6 And the border went up to <sup>e</sup> Beth-hogla, and passed along by <sup>e</sup> the north of Beth-arabah ; and the border went up <sup>f</sup> to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben :

e Ch. 15. 19.

f Ch. 16. 17.

7 And the border went up toward Debir from <sup>g</sup> the valley of Achor, and <sup>g</sup> so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that *is* before the going up to Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the river : and the border passed toward the waters of En-shemesh, and the goings out thereof were at <sup>h</sup> En-rogel :

g Ch. 7. 26.

h 2 Sam. 17. 17.

8 And the border went up <sup>i</sup> by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the

i Ch. 16. 16.

genitor of Anak, the father of those famous giants called Anakims.

CHAP. XV. Ver. 1. *This then was the lot*—For the general understanding of this business of casting lots, it must be observed, 1, That it was transacted with great seriousness and solemnity, in God's presence, with prayer and appeal to him for the decision of the matter. 2, That although an exact survey of this land was not taken till afterwards, Chap. xviii. 4, 5 ; yet there was, and must needs be a general description of it, and a division thereof into nine parts and an half ; which, as far as they could guess, were equal either in quantity or quality. 3, That the lot did not at this time so unchangeably determine the portion of each tribe that it could neither be increased nor diminished, as is manifest ; because, after Judah's lot was fixed, Simon's lot was taken out of it, Chap. xix. 9, 4, That the lot determined only in general what part of the land belonged to each tribe, but left the particulars to be determined by Joshua and Eleazar. For the manner of this, it is probably conceived, that there were two urns, into one of which were put the names of all the tribes, each in a distinct paper, and into the other the names of each portion described ; then Eleazar, or some other person, drew out first the name of one of the tribes out of one urn, and then the name of one portion out of the other, and that portion was appropriated to that tribe. And with respect to these urns, in the bottom of which the papers lay, these lots are often said to come up, or come forth. *Of Judah*—Whose lot came out first by God's disposition, as a note of his pre-eminency above his brethren. *To the border of Edom*—Which lay south-east from Judah's portion. Judah and Joseph were the two sons of Jacob, on whom Reuben's forfeited birth-right devolved. Judah had the dominion entailed

upon him, and Joseph the double portion. Therefore these two tribes are first appointed ; and on them the other seven attended. *By their families*—The lot, it appears, determined only the right of each tribe to such or such a portion of the general division of the country. Joshua, Eleazar, and the rest of the commissioners, when they had thus given each tribe its province, by lot, did afterwards (and it is probable by lot likewise) subdivide those larger portions, and assign to each family its inheritance, and then to each household ; which would be better done by this supreme authority, and in a way less apt to give disgust, than if it had been left to the inferior magistrates of each tribe to make that distribution.

Ver. 2. *The bay that looketh southward*—Heb. *the tongue* ; either a creek or arm of that sea, or a promontory, which by learned authors is sometimes called a tongue. Every sea is salt, but this had an extraordinary saltness, the effect of that fire and brimstone which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

Ver. 5, 6. *The end of Jordan*—The place where Jordan runs into the salt-sea. *The stone of Bohan*—A place so called, not from Bohan's dwelling there ; (for the Reubenites had no portion on this side Jordan) but from some notable exploit which he did there, though it is not recorded in Scripture.

Ver. 7, 8. *Northward looking towards Gilgal*—Having Gilgal to the north of it. Which is to be understood, not of that Gilgal near Jericho, but of that place called Gelliloth, Chap. xviii. 17, which was distant from thence, as appears by what follows. *And the border went up*—Properly ; for the line went from Jordan and the Salt Sea, to the higher grounds nigh Jerusalem ; and, therefore, the line is said to go down, Chap. xviii. 16, because there it takes a contrary course ; and

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1441. south side of the <sup>k</sup>Jebusite; the same k Ch. 18. 28.  
Judg. 1. 21. is Jerusalem: and the border went

up to the top of the mountain that *lieth* before the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end <sup>l</sup>of the valley of the giants northward;

9 And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto <sup>m</sup>the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn <sup>n</sup>to Baalah, which is <sup>o</sup>Kirjath-jearim:

10 And the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, on the north side, and went down to Beth-shemesh, and passed on to <sup>p</sup>Timnah:

11 And the border went out unto the side of <sup>q</sup>Ekron northward: and the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to mount Baalah, and

went out unto Jabneel, and the go- A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1441. ings out of the border were at the sea.

12 And the west border was <sup>r</sup>to the great sea, and the coast *thereof*. This is the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families. r Ver. 47.  
Num. 34. 6, 7.

13 ¶ <sup>s</sup>And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, even <sup>t</sup>|| the city of Arba the father of Anak, which *city is* Hebron. s Ch. 14. 13.  
t Ch. 14. 16.  
Or, Kirjatharba.

14 And Caleb drove thence <sup>u</sup>the three sons of Anak, <sup>x</sup>Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. u Judg. 1. 10, 20.  
x Num. 13. 22.

15 And <sup>y</sup>he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before was Kirjath-sepher. y Ch. 10. 39.

16 ¶ <sup>z</sup>And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. z Judg. 1. 12.

goes downward to Jordan and the sea. *By the valley of the son of Hinnom*—A famous place on the east side of Jerusalem; and so delightfully shady, that it invited the Israelites to idolatrous worship in it, whereby it became infamous, 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 32. Hinnom, in all probability, was some eminent person in ancient times, who was the owner of this valley; for it is sometimes called *the valley of the children of Hinnom*; which shews his posterity were planted here. After it was polluted by idolatry, it became a place where they threw all their filth and dead carcasses; and where there was a continual fire, the Jews say, to burn bones, and such sordid things as were thrown there; from whence they think it became the name for hell fire. *The south side of the Jebusites*—Namely, the city of the Jebusites. *The same is Jerusalem*—Which is called Jebusi in the last Verse of the 18th Chapter, and Jehus, Judges xix. 10, especially that part of it fortified by the Jebusites, which was called Mount Sion, and lay on the south of Jerusalem. *And the border went up to the top of the mountain*—Which is thought to be Mount Moriah. *The end of the valley of the giants northward*—Which mountain had on the north part of it, the valley of *Rephaim*, (as the word is in the Hebrew) which was in the tribe of Judah, extending itself from mount Moriah as far as Bethlehem, as Josephus informs us.

Ver. 12. *This is the coast of the children of Judah, round about according to their families*—That is, thus the lot was bounded on all sides in the first draught of it. Which being

afterward found too large, it was contracted into a narrower compass, that more room might be made for the tribe of Simeon, who had part of this lot consigned to them; as some other places were added out of it to the tribes of Benjamin and Dan, as will afterward appear.

Ver. 14. *Caleb drove thence*—That is, from the said territory, from their caves and forts in it; these giants having either recovered their cities, or defended themselves in the mountains. Caleb did not drive them out by his own power alone, but by the confederate army of the tribes of Judah and Simeon, (Judges i. 3—9,) in which it is probable, he had a principal command; and led on that party which assaulted this city. *The three sons of Anak*—Either the same whom he had seen forty-five years before, and was not at all affrighted at them, Numb. xiii. 22; Judg. i. 10; and so they were long-lived men, as many were in those times and places: or their sons called by their fathers' names, which was very usual.

Ver. 16. *Caleb said*—Made proclamation throughout the army which he led against Debir. *Achsah my daughter to wife*—Which is to be understood with some conditions, as, if he were one who could marry her according to God's law; and if she were willing; for though parents had a great power over their children, they could not force them to marry any person against their own wills. He might otherwise be an unfit and unworthy person; but this was a divine impulse, that Othniel's valour might be more manifest, and so the way prepared for his future government of the people, Judg. iii. 9.

A.M. 2560.  
B.C. 1444. 17 And <sup>a</sup>Othniel the <sup>b</sup>son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

a Judg. 1.  
13.  
b Num. 33.  
11. 18 ¶ <sup>c</sup>And it came to pass, as she came *unto him*, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and <sup>d</sup>she lighted off *her ass*; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou?

c Judg. 1.  
14.  
d Gen. 24.  
64. 1 Sam.  
25. 25. 19 Who answered, Give me a <sup>e</sup>blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.

20 This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families.

21 ¶ And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coast of Edom southward were Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur,

22 And Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah,

23 And Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan,

24 Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth,

25 And Hazor, Hadattah, and Kerioth, and Heczon, which *is* Hazor,

26 Aman, and Shema, and Moladah,

27 And Hazar-gaddah, and Heshmon, and Bethpalet,

28 And Hazar-shua, and Beer-sheba and Biz-jothjah,

29 Baalah, and Iim, and Azem,

A.M. 2560.  
B.C. 1444. 30 And Eltolad, and Chesil, and Hormah,

31 And <sup>f</sup>Ziklag, and Madman-f 1 Sam. 27.  
6. nah, and Sansannah,

32 And Lebaoth, and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities *are* twenty and nine, with their villages:

33 *And* in the valley, <sup>g</sup>Eshtaol, g Num. 13.  
25. and Zorcal, and Ashnah,

34 And Zanoah, and En-gannim, Tappuah, and Enam,

35 Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh, and Azekah,

36 And Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, <sup>h</sup>and Gederothaim; h Or. or. fourteen cities with their villages:

37 Zenan, and Hadashah, and Migdalgad,

38 And Dilean, and Mizpeh, <sup>i</sup>and i 4 Kings  
14. 7. Joktheel,

39 Lachish, and Bozkath, and Eglon,

40 And Cabbon, and Lahman, and Kithlish,

41 And Gederoth, Beth-dagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages:

42 Libnah, and Ether, and Ashan,

43 And Jiphtah, and Ashnah, and Nezib,

44 And Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages:

45 Ekron, with her towns and her villages:

46 From Ekron even unto the sea,

Ver. 18. *As she came*—Or, *as she went*; namely, from her father's house to her husband's, as the manner was. *She moved him*—She persuaded her husband, either, 1, That he would ask: or rather, 2, That he would suffer her to ask, as she did. *She lighted*—That she might address herself to her father in a humble posture, and as a supplicant, which he understood by her gesture.

Ver. 19. *A blessing*—That is, a gift, as that word signifies, Gen. xxxiii. 11. *A south land*—That is, a dry land, which was much exposed to the south wind, which, in those parts, was very hot and drying, as coming from the deserts

of Arabia. *Springs of water*—That is, a field wherein are springs of water, which in that country were of great price. *Upper and nether springs*—Or two fields, one above and the other below that south and dry ground which she complained of, that by this means it might be watered on both sides.

Ver. 32. *Twenty-nine*—Here are thirty-seven or thirty-eight cities named before; how then are they only reckoned twenty-nine? There were only twenty-nine of them which either, 1, Properly belonged to Judah; the rest falling to Simeon's lot. Or, 2, Were cities properly so called; that is, walled cities, or such as had villages under them, as it here



A. M. 2580  
B. C. 1444. all that *lay* † near Ashdod, with their villages :

† Heb. by the place  
of. 47 Ashdod with her towns and her villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto <sup>i</sup> the river of Egypt, and <sup>k</sup> the great sea, and the border *thereof* :

48 And in the mountains, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh,

49 And Dannah, and Kirjath-sannah, which *is* Debir,

50 And Anab, and Eshtemoh, and Anim,

1 Chr. 10. 41. 51 <sup>l</sup> And Goshen, and Holon, and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages :

52 Arab, and Dumah, and Eshean,

1 Or, Janus. 53 And || Janum, and Beth-tapuah, and Aphckah,

m Ch. 14.  
15. 54 And Humtah, and <sup>n</sup> Kirjath-arba, which *is* Hebron, and Zior; nine cities with their villages :

55 Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah,

56 And Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah,

57 Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah; ten cities with their villages :

58 Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor,

A. M. 2580.  
B. C. 1444. 59 And Maarath, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their villages :

60 <sup>n</sup> Kirjath-baal, which *is* Kirjath-jearim, and Rabbah; two cities with their villages :

61 In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah,

62 And Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and Engedi; six cities with their villages.

63 ¶ As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, <sup>o</sup> the children of Judah could not drive them out; <sup>p</sup> but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day. o Judg. 1. 8, 21.  
p Judg. 1. 21.

## CHAP. XVI.

*The lot of Ephraim and Manasseh, ver. 1—4. Of Ephraim in particular, ver. 5—10.*

**A**ND the lot of the children of Joseph † fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout mount Beth-el,

2 And goeth out from Beth-el to

follows; the rest being great, but unwalled towns, or such as had no villages under them.

Ver. 48. *The mountains*—That is, in the higher grounds, called mountains or hills, in comparison of the sea-coast.

Ver. 62. *City of salt*—So called, either from the salt sea, which was near it, or from the salt which was made in, or about it.

Ver. 63. *The Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem*—Jerusalem was in part taken by Joshua before this; but the upper and stronger part of it, called Zion, was still held by the Jebusites, even till David's time. And, it is probable, they descended from thence to the lower town, called Jerusalem, and took it; so that the Israelites were obliged to win it a second, yea, and a third time also. For afterwards it was possessed by the Jebusites, Judg. xix. 11; 2 Sam. v. 6, 7. *The children of Judah could not*, &c.—A part of Jerusalem was in the tribe of Judah, viz. the tower of Zion, Mount Moriah, with some of the south parts adjacent; the rest of it was in the tribe of Benjamin, viz. the greatest part of the city itself. So that it was inhabited promiscuously by them both. They could not drive them out because of their unbelief; as Christ could do no mighty work because of the peo-

ple's unbelief, Mark vi. 5, 6; and because of their sloth, cowardice, and wickedness, whereby they forfeited God's help. *The Jebusites dwell at Jerusalem unto this day*—When this book was written, whether in Joshua's life, which continued many years after the taking of Jerusalem, or after his death, when this clause was added, as others were elsewhere in this book, by some other man of God, which must have been done before David's time, because then the Jebusites were quite expelled and their fort taken.

CHAP. XVI. Ver. 1. *The lot of the children of Joseph*—That is, of Ephraim, and that half of the tribe of Manasseh which was not yet provided for, Ver. 4. One cannot but observe the providence of God in bringing up their lot next to Judah's. For as he had the prerogative of being made the chief of all Jacob's children, Gen. xlix. 10, so Joseph had that privilege of the first-born, a double portion, transferred to his family. And therefore they have their inheritance assigned them before any of the other tribes except Judah.

Ver. 2. *From Bethel to Luz*—Dupin translates this *Bethel-Luz*, and Dr. Waterland, *Bethel, which is Luz*; for we sometimes find them mentioned as one and the same place, as

<sup>a</sup> M. 2560. <sup>a</sup> Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth,

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 15. 13. <sup>b</sup> 3 And goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, <sup>b</sup> unto the coast of Beth-horon the nether, and to <sup>c</sup> Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at the sea.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. 17. 14. <sup>d</sup> 4 So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 18. 13. <sup>f</sup> 2 Chron. 7. 28. <sup>e</sup> ¶ And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was *thus*: even the border of their inheritance on the east side was <sup>e</sup> Ataroth-addar, <sup>f</sup> unto Beth-horon the upper;

<sup>g</sup> Ch. 17. 7. <sup>g</sup> 6 And the border went out toward the sea to <sup>g</sup> Michmethah on the north side; and the border went about eastward unto Taanath-shiloh, and passed by it on the east to Janohah;

<sup>h</sup> 1 Chron. 7. 28. <sup>h</sup> 7 And it went down from Janohah to Ataroth, <sup>h</sup> and to Naarath, and came to Jericho, and went out at Jordan.

<sup>i</sup> Ch. 17. 9. <sup>i</sup> 8 The border went out from Tappuah westward unto the <sup>i</sup> river Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families.

<sup>k</sup> Ch. 17. 9. <sup>k</sup> 9 And <sup>k</sup> the separate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

<sup>l</sup> Jud. 1. 29. <sup>l</sup> 10 ¶ <sup>l</sup> And they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.

## CHAP. XVII.

*The families of Manasseh, ver. 1—6. The country that fell to their lot, ver. 7—13. Their request for more land, ver. 14—18.*

**T**HERE was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh; for he was the <sup>a</sup> first-born of Joseph; *to wit,* <sup>a</sup> Gen. 41. 51.

which were within Ephraim's bounds, he had some other cities out of Manasseh's portion, because his tribe was all here, and was larger than Manasseh's.

CHAP. XVII. Ver. 1. *There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh*—That half of it which had no portion on the other side Jordan. *For he was the first-born of Joseph*—The sense of this, as it here stands, is very obscure. But if the particle *כי*, *ki*, here rendered *for*, be translated *though*, as it often is, and as Bishop Patrick thinks it ought to be here, the meaning is plain, that the second lot was for Manasseh, because, though he was the first-born of Joseph, yet Jacob had preferred Ephraim before him, Gen. xlviii. 19, 20. Or the sense may be, *Though Ephraim was to be more potent and numerous than Manasseh, according to the prophecy of Jacob, yet this should be no prejudice to Manasseh, nor deprive him of any privilege to which he might lay claim as the elder.* “Both being sons of Joseph drew but one lot; and their estates and cities were in some degree mixed together; but after having described the portion of the lot which fell to Ephraim, it was proper in like manner, to describe the portion of his brother, as being the first-born.”—Dodd. *For Machir*—The only son of Manasseh, who, therefore, is here put for the whole tribe. *The first-born*—So even only sons are sometimes called, as Matt. i. 25. *Because he was a man of war*—That is, had given great proof of his

Chap. xviii. 13; Judg. i. 23; and it is probable that in a length of time they were united, and the inhabitants of the former went to the latter. *The borders of Archi to Ataroth*—Or rather, the borders of Archi-Ataroth, as both the Seventy and the Vulgate render it, and as the words are in the Hebrew, this being the same city which is afterwards called Ataroth, Ver. 7.

Ver. 4. *Manasseh*—That is, half Manasseh. *Their inheritance*—Their several portions, which here follow. It is said, they took their inheritance, which also Judah had done before them, because the tribes of Judah and Joseph took possession of their inheritances before the rest; and it was fit they should do so, for the security of the main camp, and the body of the people, which were at Gilgal, Chap. xviii. 5.

Ver. 5. *East side*—That is, the north-east side. It is no wonder, if some of these descriptions are dark to us at this distance of time; there having been so many alterations made in places, and so many circumstances being now altogether undiscoverable. But this is certain, that all the descriptions here mentioned were then evident to the Israelites, because these were the foundation of all the possessions which then they took, and peaceably possessed in succeeding ages.

Ver. 6, 7. *Toward the sea*—The midland sea, towards the west. *To Jericho*—Not to the city of Jericho, which belonged to Benjamin's lot, Chap. xviii. 21, but to its territory.

Ver. 9. *The separate cities*—That is, besides those cities

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.  
b Gen. 50.  
26.  
c Deut. 3.  
15.  
d Num. 26.  
29, -32.  
e 1 Chron.  
7, 15.  
f Num. 26.  
30, Jerer.  
f Num. 26.  
31.  
g Num. 26.  
32.

for <sup>b</sup> Machir the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had <sup>c</sup> Gilead and Bashan.

2 There was also *a lot* for <sup>d</sup> the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families; <sup>e</sup> for the children of <sup>||</sup> Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, <sup>f</sup> and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, <sup>g</sup> and for the children of Hephher, and for the children of Shemida: these *were* the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.

h Num. 26.  
33.

3 But <sup>h</sup> Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these *are* the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

i Ch. 14. 1.  
k Num. 27.  
6.

4 And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, <sup>k</sup> The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father.

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.

5 And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which *were* on the other side Jordan;

6 Because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

7 ¶ And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to <sup>1</sup> Michmethah, <sup>1 Ch. 16. 6.</sup> that *lieth* before Shechem; and the border went along on the right hand unto the inhabitants of En-tappuah.

8 Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah: but <sup>m</sup> Tappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim; <sup>m Ch. 16. 6.</sup>

9 And the coast descended <sup>n</sup> unto the <sup>||</sup> river Kanah, southward of the river: <sup>o</sup> these cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh: the coast of Manasseh also *was* on the north side of the river, and the outgoings of it were at the sea: <sup>n Ch. 16. 8.</sup> <sup>o Or, brook of recede. Ch. 16. 9.</sup>

10 Southward *it was* Ephraim's, and northward *it was* Manasseh's, and the sea is his border; and they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east.

11 <sup>p</sup> And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher, &c.—<sup>p 1 Chron. 7. 29.</sup>

valour (though the particular history be not mentioned) and his posterity were no degenerate sons, but had his valiant blood still running in their veins. *Gilead and Bashan*—Part of those countries; for part of them was given to the Reubenites, and part to the Gadites. This may be added as a reason, either, 1, Why he got those places from the Amorites. Or, 2, Why they were allotted to him or his posterity, because this was a frontier country, and the out-works to the land of Canaan, and therefore required valiant persons to defend it.

Ver. 2. *A lot*—A distinct inheritance. *The rest*—Namely, those of them which had not received their possessions beyond Jordan. *Male children*—This expression is used to bring in what follows, concerning his female children.

Ver. 4—6. *He gave them*—That is, Eleazar or Joshua, with the consent of the princes appointed for that work. For after the lot had determined what land every tribe should have, these commissioners considered how many families were in the tribe, and how large they were, and accordingly divided it among them. This is implied, Numb. xxvi. 54—56. *Ten*

portions—Five for the sons, and five for the daughters; for as for Hephher, both he and his son Zelophehad were dead, and that without sons, and therefore had no portion; but his daughters had several portions allotted to them. *The daughters*—Not less than the sons, so the sex was no bar to their inheritance.

Ver. 9. *The coast of Manasseh was on the north side*—By the coast of Manasseh is meant the cities inhabited by the Manassites; which were all on the north side of this river; as all those on the south side of it, though in the territory allotted to the Manassites, were inhabited by the children of Ephraim.

Ver. 10. *The sea is his border*—Manasseh's, whose portion is here described, and whose name was last mentioned. *In Asher*—That is, upon the tribe of Asher; for though Zebulun came between Asher and them for the greatest part of their land; yet it seems there were some necks of land, both of Ephraim's and of Manasseh's, which jutted out farther than the rest, and touched the borders of Asher.

Ver. 11. *Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher, &c.*—In

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1511.  
q 1 Sam. 31.  
10.  
1 Kings 4.  
12.

char and in Asher <sup>q</sup> Beth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, *even* three countries.

r Judg. 1.  
21.

12 ¶ Yet <sup>r</sup> the children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants* of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

Ch. 16. 10.

13 Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to <sup>s</sup> tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

Ch. 16. 4.  
u Gen. 48.  
22.

14 ¶ <sup>t</sup> And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me *but* <sup>u</sup> one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I *am*

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1511.  
x Gen. 48.  
12.

<sup>x</sup> a great people, forasmuch as the Lord hath blessed me hitherto?

15 And Joshua answered them, If thou *be* a great people, *then* get thee up to the wood *country*, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the <sup>||</sup> giants, if <sup>Or R-phaim.</sup> mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee. <sup>Gen. 18. 5.</sup>

16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have <sup>y</sup> chariots of iron, *both they who are* of Beth-shean and her towns, and *they who are* <sup>y Judg. 1. 19.</sup> of the valley of Jezreel. <sup>z Ch. 19. 18.</sup>

17 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, *even* to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou *art* a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot *only*:

like manner as Ephraim had some cities in the tribe of Manasseh; and, as it was not unusual, when the place allotted to any tribe was too narrow for it, and the next too large, to give away part from the larger to the less portion. *Inhabitants of Dor*—Not the places only, but the people; whom they spared and used for servants. *Three countries*—The words may be rendered, *the third part of that country*; and so the meaning may be, that the cities and towns here mentioned were a third part of that country; that is, of that part of Issachar's and Asher's portion, in which those places lay.

Ver. 14. *Children of Joseph*—That is, of Ephraim and Manasseh. *Spake unto Joshua*—That is, expostulated with him, when they went and saw that portion which was allotted them, and found it much short of their expectation. *One portion*—Either, 1, Because they had but one lot, which was afterwards divided by the arbitrators between them. Or, 2, Because the land severally allotted to them was but little enough for one of them.

Ver. 15. *If thou be a great people*—Though Joshua was of their tribe he would not humour them, or abuse his authority to gratify their inclinations; but retorts their own argument: Seeing thou art a great and numerous people, turn thy complaints into action, and enlarge thy borders by thy own hand, for which thou mayest confidently expect God's assistance. *The wood country*—To the mountain, as it is called, Ver. 17, where among some towns there is much wood-land, which thou mayest without much difficulty possess, and so get the more room. *And cut down*—The wood, for thy own advantage, in building more cities and towns, and preparing the land for pasture and tillage. *The Perizzites*—Supposed to be a savage and brutish kind of people, that lived in woods and mountains. *Giants*—Who lived in caves

and mountains, now especially when they were driven out of their cities. *If Mount Ephraim*—Or, *Seeing Mount Ephraim is too narrow for thee*, as thou complainest; take to thyself the rest of that hilly and wood country. Mount Ephraim was a particular portion of the land, belonging to the tribe of Ephraim. And this seems to be here mentioned, for all the portion allotted to Ephraim and Manasseh, as appears from their complaint, which was not, that this part, but that their whole portion was too strait for them.

Ver. 16. *The hill is not enough for us*—That is, if we could get possession of the woody mountain, cut down all its trees, and destroy all its inhabitants, it would not be sufficient for us. But the Hebrew is, *The hill will not be found*; that is, obtained by us. Those fierce and strong people the Perizzites and the giants will easily defend themselves, and frustrate our attempts, having the advantage of the woods and mountains. *The Canaanites that dwell, &c.*—They seem to mean that there was another impediment in their way, that before they could come at the mountain to attack it, they would have to encounter those who lived in the valley below it, who were too strong for them. Or that, if Joshua should command them, in case the hill either could not be conquered, or would not be sufficient for them, to go down and take more land out of the pleasant and fruitful valleys, that they would meet with no less difficulty there than in the mountains. *Have chariots of iron*—Not all made of iron, but armed with iron, and that not only for defence, but for offence also; having a kind of scythes, of two cubits long, fastened to long axle-trees on both wheels, which being driven swiftly through a body of men, made great slaughter, mowing them down like grass or corn.

Ver. 17. *Thou art a great people, and hast great power*—Joshua was not moved from his resolution by their objec-

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.

18 But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, <sup>a</sup>though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.

a Deut. 20.  
1.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*The setting up of the tabernacle at Shiloh, ver. 1. Joshua's stirring up the seven remaining tribes to look after their lot, ver. 2—7. The division of the land into several lots assigned to those several tribes, ver. 8—10. The lot of Benjamin, ver. 11—28.*

**A**ND the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled

tions, but told them, that by their own confession they were very numerous, and consequently of great power, and therefore need not be straitened in their habitations. *Thou shalt not have one lot only*—Thou needest and deservest more than one lot, of which thou art actually possessed, and thou hast power to get more; which, if thou endeavourest to do, God will bless and give thee more. *The mountain shall be thine*—Added to the present portion. This was probably Mount Gilboa, which stood north of Manasseh, and reached from the country about Kishon, as far as Bethshean,—See Calmet. *The outgoings shall be thine*—The valleys or fields belonging to it. *For thou shalt drive out the Canaanites*—That is, with the divine aid, which God had taught them confidently to expect, commanding them to trust in him, and not be afraid of their enemies, *though they had chariots of iron, and though they were strong*, Deut. xx. 1. “Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.”

CHAP. XVIII. Ver. 1. *The whole congregation of the children of Israel*—Not only their elders, and heads of their tribes, who represented the people of Israel, and are sometimes meant by *the whole congregation*; but, as the expression may here very well signify, the whole body of the people, who, it is probable, accompanied the ark, in order to fix it in a new situation. *Assembled together at Shiloh*—A place in the tribe of Ephraim, about fifteen miles from Jerusalem, situate upon a hill in the heart of the country. *And set up the tabernacle there*—Which had now remained seven years with the camp at Gilgal. No doubt it was by God's order that it was removed hither, for he was to choose the place of its residence, Deut. xii. 5, 11, 14. And, it is probable, he made known his will in this respect by the oracle of *Urim and Thummim*, and by giving some extraordinary token of his accepting their sacrifices there. For when he made choice of Mount Zion, an angel ordered the prophet Gad to direct David to set up an altar in the threshing floor of Ornan,

together <sup>a</sup>at Shiloh, and <sup>b</sup>set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.

A. M. 2753.  
B. C. 1451.  
a Ch. 19. 51.  
& 21. 2.  
b Judg. 18.  
31.

2 And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, <sup>c</sup>How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

c Judg. 18.  
9.

4 Give out from among you three men for *each* tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come *again* to me.

and there God answered by fire, 1 Chron. xxi. 18, 26. It would have been too far, after the division of the land, for all the tribes to go up to Gilgal to transact all that the law required to be done at the tabernacle, and now indispensably necessary to be performed there, although, while they sojourned in the wilderness, they did not observe these rules. This place was very convenient for all the tribes to resort to, being in the centre of them, and likewise very safe, being guarded by the two powerful tribes of Judah and Ephraim. And being in the lot of the latter tribe, to which Joshua belonged, and in which he probably fixed his stated abode, it was both for his honour and conveniency that it was placed here; that he might have the opportunity of consulting God by Urim as often as he needed, and might more easily finish what remained to be done in the division of the land. Here, it is thought, the tabernacle remained for the space of 350 years, even till the days of Samuel, 1 Sam. i. 3. Archbishop Usher, however, only reckons the time to be 328 years. *Shiloh* was the name given to the Messiah in dying Jacob's prophecy. So the pitching the tabernacle in Shiloh, says Henry, intimated to the Jews, that “in that Shiloh whom Jacob spoke of all the ordinances of this worldly sanctuary should have their accomplishment in a greater and more perfect tabernacle.”

Ver. 2. *Seven tribes who had not received their inheritance*—For whom no lot had been drawn at Gilgal. The reason of which, perhaps, was that the last mentioned tribes of the house of Joseph were not satisfied with the division which was begun to be made there; and therefore Joshua discontinued his proceedings till he had made a new survey of the whole country, which, being now in the middle of it, he might make with greater facility, than he could when at Gilgal.

Ver. 3, 4. *How long are ye slack?*—It is probable, that being weary of war, and now having sufficient plenty of all things, they were unwilling to run into new hazards. *Give out—three men—Three, not one*, for the more exact ob-

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.

5 And they shall divide it into seven parts: <sup>d</sup> Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and <sup>e</sup> the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.

6 Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts, and bring the <sup>f</sup> description hither to me, <sup>g</sup> that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.

7 <sup>h</sup> But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance: <sup>i</sup> and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.

8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh.

servation both of the measure and quality of the several portions, and for greater assurance of their care and faithfulness in giving in their account. *Of each tribe*—For each one of the tribes which were yet unprovided for. *They shall describe it*—Set down, not only the dimensions of it, but its condition and quality, whether barren or fruitful, mountainous or plain. *According to the inheritance of them*—Distributing the geographical description into as many parts as there remain tribes unprovided with an inheritance.

Ver. 5. *Into seven parts*—Their business was to divide the country into seven portions of equal extent or worth, and leave God to appoint which portion should fall to each tribe; who could have no reason to complain when the division was made by themselves. Indeed no tribe was so great but one of these parts in its full extent would abundantly suffice them; and there was no reason why the portions should be greater or less according as the tribes at present were more or fewer in number, because of the various changes which happened therein successively; it being usual for one tribe to be more numerous than another in one age, which was fewer in the next. And if the several tribes had increased more, and not diminished their numbers by their sins, they might have sent forth colonies, and taken any part of the land, even as far as Euphrates, all which the Lord of the whole earth had given them a right to, and when they pleased they might take possession of it. *Judah shall abide on the south*—They shall not be disturbed in their possession, but

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9 ¶ And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh.

10 ¶ And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD; and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.

11 ¶ And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

12 <sup>i</sup> And their border on the north <sup>j</sup> side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven.

13 And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of

shall keep it, except some part of it shall be adjudged to another tribe. *Joseph on the north*—In respect of Judah, not of the whole land; for divers other tribes were more northern than they.

Ver. 6. *That I may cast lots for you here before the Lord*—That is, before the ark or tabernacle, that God may be witness and judge, and be acknowledged to be the author of the division, and each tribe may be contented with its lot, as being appointed by divine authority, and that your several possessions may be secured to you as things sacred.

Ver. 9, 10. *The men went and passed through the land*—Josephus tells us: they were occupied seven months in taking this survey, and making the description here mentioned. *And described it by cities*—Or, according to the cities to which the several provisions or territories belonged. *Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh*—That is, according to the divisions made by the surveyors, which were so just and equal that all consented the lot should determine what part should belong to them.

Ver. 11. *The lot of—Benjamin came up*—No doubt it was by peculiar direction of Providence that the children of Benjamin should have the first lot of these seven, next to the children of Joseph, they two being the only sons of Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob. For thus it happened that their coast, or the portion assigned them, lay between the children of Judah, who were on the south of them, and the children of Joseph, the Ephraimites in particular, who lay on the north

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B. C. 1444.  
k Gen. 25. 19.  
1 Ch. 16. 3. Luz, <sup>k</sup> which is Beth-el, southward; and the border descended to Ataroth-adar, near the hill that *lieth* on the south side <sup>l</sup> of the nether Beth-horon.

14 And the border was drawn *thence*, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that *lieth* before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at  
in Ch. 15. 9. <sup>m</sup> Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, a city of the children of Judah; this *was* the west quarter.

15 And the south quarter *was* from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the west, and  
11 Ch. 15. 9. went out to <sup>n</sup> the well of waters of Nephtoah:

16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lieth*  
o Ch. 15. 8. before <sup>o</sup> the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley of the giants on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and de-  
1 Ch. 15. 7. scended to <sup>p</sup> En-rogel,

17 And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to <sup>q</sup> the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben,

18 And passed along toward the

of them; the only place in which the prophecy contained in Deut. xxxiii. 12, could have been accomplished. And it is observable, that, in that blessing of Moses, Benjamin is placed between Judah and Joseph, Levi having no inheritance among them. But Providence placed Benjamin here, not only that he might be next to Joseph, his own and only brother, on the one hand; but that being next to Judah, on the other, this tribe might hereafter unite with Judah, in an adherence to the throne of David, and the temple of Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. *The corner of the sea southward*—No account can be given of this border, according to our translation. For it is certain it did not compass any corner of the Mediterranean Sea (and no other sea can be here meant), nor come near unto it. Therefore, by פנה-ים, *peuth-jam*, which we translate *corner of the sea*, must be meant the side of the sea; or rather the west side. So the Vulgate hath it, and the Seventy to the same purpose. And the word *southward* is joined by the Vulgate, not to the sea, or west, but to the

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r Ch. 15. 6.  
Or, the plain.  
side over against <sup>r</sup> Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah:

19 And the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah northward: and the outgoings of the border were at the north <sup>†</sup> bay of the salt sea at the south end of Jordan: this *was* the south coast.

20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

21 ¶ Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, and Beth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz,

22 And Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Beth-el,

23 And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah,

24 And Chephar-haammonai, and Ophni, and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages:

25 Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth,

26 And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah,

27 And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah,

28 And Zelah, Eleph, and <sup>s</sup> Je- 1 Ch. 15. 8.

next words; *southward from the hill*, &c. Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim—The Israelites changed the name, to blot out the remembrance of Baal.

Ver. 21. *The cities of the tribe*—Having given a description of the bounds of the country, the historian sets down the principal cities in it. The first of which, Jericho, was well known; the territory of which remained, though the city itself was destroyed. *And the valley of Keziz*—Rather, *Emir-keziz*, for a city is here meant, and not a valley. Or it may be interpreted, *Keziz in the valley*; that is in the plain of Jericho.

Ver. 28. *And Jebusi, which is Jerusalem*—See Chap. xv. 63, where it is reckoned to the tribe of Judah; for both that tribe and Benjamin had an interest in it, as we have there stated. *The inheritance of the children of Benjamin*—Which was one of the smallest, with respect to the quantity of ground which they possessed, but the soil was the richest of all the other tribes, as Josephus informs us.



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busi, which is Jerusalem, Gibeath, and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

## CHAP. XIX.

*The lot of Simeon, ver. 1—9. Of Zebulun, ver. 10—16. Of Issuchar, ver. 17—23. Of Asher, ver. 24—31. Of Naphtali, ver. 32—39. Of Dan, ver. 40—48. The inheritance assigned to Joshua and his family, ver. 49—51.*

**A**ND the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: <sup>a</sup>and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 9.

<sup>b</sup> And they had in their inheritance Beer-sheba, and Sheba, and Moladah,

<sup>b</sup> 1 Chron. 4. 29.

3 And Hazar-shual, and Balah, and Azem,

4 And Eltolad, and Bethul, and Hormah,

5 And Ziklag, and Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah,

6 And Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuh-en; thirteen cities and their villages:

7 Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan; four cities and their villages:

8 And all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south. This is

the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon, according to their families.

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9 Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them: <sup>c</sup>therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.

<sup>c</sup> Ver. 1.

10 ¶ And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their families; and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid:

11 <sup>d</sup> And their border went up toward the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbasheth, and reached to the river that is <sup>e</sup> before Jokneam;

<sup>d</sup> Gen. 49. 13.<sup>e</sup> Ch. 12. 29.

12 And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sun-rising unto the border of Chisloth-tabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia,

13 And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon—methoar to Neah;

<sup>f</sup> Or, which is drawn.

14 And the border compasseth it on the north side to Hannathon: and the outgoings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthah-el:

15 And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem; twelve cities with their villages.

16 This is the inheritance of the

CHAP. XIX. Ver. 1. *The second lot came forth to Simeon*—God disposed it so by an especial providence, Simeon being the eldest son of Jacob that was unprovided for.

*Their inheritance was within the inheritance of Judah*—This also was ordered by God's providence, partly to fulfil that threatening that he would divide and scatter this tribe in Israel, Gen. xlix. 7, which was hereby done in part, because they had no distinct lot, but were as inmates to Judah; partly because new, upon the more exact survey of the land, it appeared, that the part given to Judah did far exceed the proportion which they needed, or which the other tribes could ex-

pect. And this was the least of the tribes, Numb. xxvi. 14, and therefore fittest to be put within another tribe.

Ver. 11. *Toward the sea*—The lot of this tribe was washed by the midland sea on the west, and by the sea of Tiberias on the east, answering Jacob's prophecy, *Zebulun shall be an haven of ships*; trading ships on the great sea, and fishing ships on the sea of Galilee. *Before Jokneam*—Supposed to be Kishon.

Ver. 15. *Beth-lehem*—Not that where Christ was born, which was in Judah, but another. *Twelve cities*—They are more numerous here, but the rest either were not cities, pro-

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children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

17 ¶ And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families.

18 And their border was toward Jezreel, and Chesulloth, and Shunem,

19 And Haphraim, and Shihon, and Anaharath,

20 And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez,

21 And Remeth, and En-gannim, and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez ;

22 And the coast reacheth to Tabor, and Shahazimah, and Bethshemesh ; and the outgoings of their border were at Jordan ; sixteen cities with their villages.

23 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

24 ¶ And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families.

25 And their border was Helkath and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph,

26 And Alammelech, and Amad,

and Mishael ; and reacheth to Carmel westward, and to Shihorlibnath ;

27 And turneth toward the sun-rising to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley of Jiphthah-el toward the north side of Beth-emek, and Neiel, and goeth out to Cabul on the left hand,

28 And Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and Kanah, <sup>even unto</sup> great Zidon ; (Ch. 11. 9.)

29 And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city † Tyre ; and the coast turneth to Hosah ; and the outgoings thereof are at the sea from the coast to ‡ Achzib : † Heb. Tzor, ‡ Sam. 5. 11.

30 Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob ; twenty and two cities with their villages. § Gen. 35. 5.

31 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

32 ¶ The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families.

33 And their coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim, and

perly so called, or were not within this tribe, but only bordering upon it, and belonging to other tribes.

Ver. 18. *Jezreel*—The royal city, 1 Kings xxi. 1. This tribe, because it lay between Benjamin on the south, and Zebulun on the north, is not here described by its borders, which were the same with theirs ; but by some of its cities.

Ver. 26. *Carmel westward*—Or, *Carmel by the sea*, to distinguish it from Carmel in the tribe of Judah. This was a place of eminent fruitfulness, agreeable to the prophecy concerning Asher, Gen. xlix. 20.

Ver. 27. *Cabal*—A city so called. *Left hand*—That is, on the north, which, when men look towards the east, as is usual, is on their left hand.

Ver. 28. *Kanah*—Namely, Kanah the greater, in the Upper Galilee ; not Kanah the Less, which was in the Lower Galilee. *Zidon*—Called *great* for its antiquity, and riches, and glory. The city either was not given to the Israelites, or at least was never possessed by them ; not without a singular providence of God, that they might not by the opportunity of so good a port be engaged in much commerce with other

nations ; from which, together with wealth, that great corrupter of mankind, they might contract their errors and vices.

Ver. 29, 30. *To Ramah*—From the north southward. *To the strong city of Tyre*—This translation is questionable ; for we never read one word of the city of Tyre (unless it be here) until the days of David ; though we often read of Sidon in the books of Moses ; even in the prophecy of Jacob. It is highly probable some other place is meant by *Tzor*, as the word is in the Hebrew. *And the out-goings thereof, &c.*—That is, it ended at the country which belonged to Achzib ; for so *hebel*, which we here translate *coast*, signifies. *Twenty-two cities*—Here are more named, but some of them were not within this tribe, but only bordering-places.

Ver. 32, 33. *The sixth lot came out, &c.*—Here the younger son of Bilhah, the hand-maid of Rachel, is preferred before the elder, who was Dan, (Gen. xxx. 6, 8.) as Zebulun was before Issachar. Such was the method of divine providence in that nation, to convince them that they ought not to value themselves too highly, as they were apt to do, upon their external privileges. *Their coast*—Their northern border,

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Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum; and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan;

Deut. 33.  
24.

34 And then <sup>b</sup> the coast turneth westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sun-rising.

35 And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Chinnereth,

36 And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor,

37 And Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor,

38 And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages.

39 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.

40 ¶ And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families.

41 And the coast of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh,

42 And <sup>i</sup>Shaalabbin, and Ajalon, and Jethlah,

43 And Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron,

44 And Eltekeh, and Gibberthon, and Baalath,

45 And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon,

46 And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border || before || Japho.

47 And <sup>k</sup> the coast of the children of Dan went out *too little* for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, <sup>l</sup> Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

48 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

49 ¶ When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1446.Judg. 1.  
35.Or, over  
against.  
Or, Joppa.  
Acts 9. 36.  
Judg. 18.Judg. 18.  
29.

drawn from west to east, as appears; because, when the coast is described and brought to its end, it is said to *turn* from the east *westward*, Ver. 34. *The out-goings*—The end of that coast.

Ver. 34, 35. *And to Judah upon Jordan*—It was not near Judah, there being several tribes between them. Therefore the meaning is, this tribe had a communication with that of Judah, by means of the river Jordan. So the word *upon*, in our translation, ought to be interpreted: This river afforded them the convenience of carrying merchandises to Judah, or bringing them from thence. And thus, some think, the prophecy of Moses was accomplished, Deut. xxxiii. 23; *Possess thou the west and the south*. Which doth not signify that they had any land in the south; but that they trafficked with that country by the means of Jordan. *Chinnereth*—Whence the lake of *Cinnereth*, or *Genesareth*, received its name. *Geneser*, signifies *the gardens of princes*; and here were fine gardens, and a kind of paradise. The Jews say, the name *Cinnereth* was taken from its fruits, which were as sweet to the taste as the *cinnor*, or harp, to the ear.

Ver. 47. *The coast—of Dan went out too little*—The words *too little* are not in the Hebrew; where there is nothing that corresponds with them. The passage runs thus: *The coast*

*of the children of Dan went out from them*; That is, they were dispossessed of it in some parts, or kept out of them by the former inhabitants; and we find, by Judg. i. 34, that the Amorites forced them into the mountains, and would not suffer them to dwell in the valley. This reduced them to such straits, that they were constrained to enlarge their border some other way; which they did as follows. They *went up to fight against Leshem*—A city not far from Jordan, called *Laish* in the book of Judges, before it was taken by the Danites. *And called Leshem Dan, after the name of Dan their father*—It was customary for conquerors to change the names of those places they subdued. This was done with respect to Leshem, after the death of Joshua; and is related more largely in the book of Judges, Chap. xviii. where the whole expedition is recorded. From whence some have argued that this book was not written by Joshua; whereas no more can fairly be inferred, than that, in after-times, Ezra, or some other, thought good to insert this verse here, in order to complete the account of the Danites' possessions.

Ver. 49. *When they had made an end of dividing the land*—That is, after every tribe had had their respective portion assigned to them. *The children of Israel gave us*

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gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them :

50 According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked, *even* <sup>m</sup> Timnath-<sup>n</sup> serah, in mount Ephraim : and he built the city, and dwelt therein.

m Ch. 24.  
30.  
n 1 Chron.  
7. 21.

1444.  
o Num. 31.  
17.

51 <sup>o</sup> These *are* the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot <sup>p</sup> in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they made an end of dividing the country.

p Ch. 18. 1.  
10.

CHAP. XX.

*The laws concerning the cities of refuge, ver. 1—6.  
The appointment of those cities, ver. 7—9.*



*Inheritance to Joshua*—We cannot but admire the wonderful modesty of this great man, who received his portion last of all, and then, not by lot, but by their gift, who were already possessed of the whole land.

Ver. 50. *According to the word of the Lord, they gave him the city which he asked*—God indeed had ordered that he should have a portion, and that he himself should choose it; but he was content to stay for it till every one else was amply provided for. We do not expressly read of this command; but many particulars were said and done which are not recorded. And Joshua being as faithful and upright as Caleb, and chosen beside to be the captain of God's people, we cannot but think, that when God ordered what Caleb should have, he gave the same direction with respect to Joshua, See Chap. xvi. 6. *Even Timnath-Serah in Mount Ephraim*—Joshua did not choose the best place in all the country, but a convenient one in his own tribe; which was seated on the north side of a hill called Gaash, as we read in the latter end of this book. *And he built the city and dwelt therein*—Repaired it, we suppose (for in all probability there was a city in that situation before), and made a convenient habitation for his family and relations. But we read nothing of them afterwards; for as he did not affect to make himself king of Canaan, so he contented himself with a moderate allotment, and made no large provision for his posterity.

Ver. 51. *These are the inheritances, &c.*—Upon the whole of this division of the land, it deserves our remarking, that the lot fell to the several tribes just as Jacob and Moses had foretold. And this division served to keep up the distinction of tribes, which was to continue till the coming of the Messiah. And we may observe further, that God had expressly named, some years before, as we find by Numb. xxxiv. 17—29, the very persons who should divide the land unto the children of Israel, and expressly described the bounds

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THE LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, <sup>a</sup> Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses :

Exod. 21.  
15.

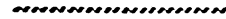
3 That the slayer that killeth *any* person unawares *and* unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of these cities shall stand at the entering of <sup>b</sup> the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

b Ruth 4. 1.

5 <sup>c</sup> And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not

c Num. 35.  
12.



how far every way the land reached which was to be divided by them.

CHAP. XX. Ver. 1, 2. *The Lord also spake unto Joshua*—Probably from the tabernacle, at the door of which he and Eleazar, and the princes had been making a division of the land, as the last verse of the preceding chapter informs us. *Appoint out for you*—The possessions being now divided among you, reserve some of them for the use which I have commanded. *Cities of refuge*—Designed to typify the relief which the gospel provides for poor penitent sinners, and their protection from the curse of the law and the wrath of God, in our Lord Jesus, to whom believers flee for refuge.

Ver. 3. *Unwittingly*—Heb. *Through ignorance, or error, or mistake, and without knowledge.* The same thing is twice repeated, to cut off all expectations that wilful murderers might have of protection here; God having declared, that such should be taken even from his altar, that they might be killed. It is strange that any Christians should make their sanctuaries give protection to such persons whom God hath so expressly excepted from it! *Avenger*—The nearest kinsman, who had right or power to demand, or take vengeance for the slaughter.

Ver. 4. *The gate*—Where the judges used to sit. *His cause*—Shall give them a true relation of the fact, and all its circumstances. *They shall take him*—If they are satisfied in the relation he makes, concerning the fact, otherwise it had been a vain thing to examine. *Give a place*—Which they might well allow him, because God gave them the city with a reservation for such persons.

Ver. 6. *Stand*—Which was the posture of the accused and accusers. *The congregation*—The council appointed to judge of these matters, not the council of the city of refuge, for they had examined him before, Ver. 4, but of the city to

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deliver the slayer up into his hand ; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not before-time.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, <sup>d Num. 25. 12, 26.</sup> until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days : then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

† Heb. sanctified.  
e Ch. 21. 32.

7 ¶ And they † appointed <sup>e</sup> Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, <sup>f Ch. 21. 21.</sup> and <sup>f</sup> Shechem in mount Ephraim, <sup>g Ch. 14. 15.</sup> and <sup>g</sup> Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, <sup>h Luke 1. 39.</sup> in <sup>h</sup> the mountain of Judah.

8 And on the other side Jordan by <sup>i Deut. 4. 42.</sup> Jericho eastward, they assigned <sup>i</sup> Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain <sup>k Ch. 21. 26.</sup> out of the tribe of Reuben, and <sup>k</sup> Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of <sup>l Ch. 21. 27.</sup> Gad, and <sup>l</sup> Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

9 <sup>m Num. 35. 15.</sup> These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for

the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, <sup>n Ver. 6.</sup> until he stood before the congregation.

## CHAP. XXI.

*The motion of the Levites, to have their cities appointed, which is done, ver. 1---8. A catalogue of those cities, ver. 9---42. A testimony, that God had fulfilled his word, ver. 43---45.*

**T**HEN came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto <sup>a Ch. 14. 1.</sup> Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel ;

2 And they spake unto them at <sup>b Ch. 13. 1.</sup> Shiloh in the land of Canaan; saying, <sup>c Num. 25. 2.</sup> The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle.

3 And the children of Israel gave

signed them. *The stranger*—Not only proselytes, but others also ; because this was a matter of common right, that a distinction should be made between casual man slayers, and wilful murderers.

CHAP. XXI. Ver. 1. *The heads of the fathers of the Levites*—The fathers of the Levites were Kozah, Gershon, and Merari ; and the heads of these were the chief persons now alive of these several families. Thus, the princes of the several tribes, who divided the land in conjunction with Joshua, are called, at the conclusion of this Verse and elsewhere, *the heads of the fathers of the tribes*. The whole land being distributed to the several tribes, but not yet actually possessed by them, and this being the proper season for their making such a claim, these principal Levites, now come to the princes of the tribes, and remind them of the command of God respecting the cities to be assigned them.

Ver. 2. *The Lord commanded*—Observe: the maintenance of ministers is not an arbitrary thing, left purely to the good will of the people. No: as the God of Israel commanded, that the Levites should be provided for, so hath the Lord Jesus ordained, (and a perpetual ordinance it is) “ that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”

Ver. 3. *The children of Israel gave*—Probably they gave the Levites promiscuously such cities as God commanded, and the lot appropriated them to their several houses or families.

which he belonged, or in or nigh which the fact was committed, as appears from Numb. xxxv. 25.

Ver. 7. *And they appointed*—Concerning these cities, note, 1, That they were all upon mountains, that they might be seen at a great distance, and so direct those who fled thither. 2, That they were seated at a convenient distance one from another, for the benefit of the several tribes ; for Kedesh was in the north, Hebron in the south, and Shechem between them. 3, That they all belonged to the Levites ; partly, that these causes might be more impartially examined, and justly determined by them who were presumed best able to understand the law of God, and most obliged to follow it, and not to be biassed by any affection or corrupt interest : and partly, that their reputation with the people, and their good counsels, might lay a restraint upon revengeful persons, who might be inclined to follow the manslayer thither, and endeavour to kill him there. It was likewise an advantage to the poor refugee, that when he might not go up to the house of the Lord, yet he had the servants of God's house with him, to instruct him, and pray for him, and help to make up the want of public ordinances.

Ver. 8, 9. *On the other side Jordan they assigned*—Or had assigned, or given ; for these cities were assigned by Moses before he died, Deut. iv. 41. They were not, however, properly speaking, invested with the privilege till now, when they were applied to the use for which Moses had de-

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444. unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs.

d Ver. 8,  
19. 4 And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and <sup>d</sup> the children of Aaron the priest, *which*  
e Ch. 24. 33. *were* of the Levites, <sup>e</sup> had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.

f Ver. 20,  
&c. 5 And <sup>f</sup> the rest of the children of Kohath *had* by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.

g Ver. 27,  
&c. 6 And <sup>g</sup> the children of Gershon *had* by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

h Ver. 34,  
&c. 7 <sup>h</sup> The children of Merari by their families *had* out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

i Ver. 3. 8 <sup>i</sup> And the children of Israel gave

by lot unto the Levites these cities A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444. with their suburbs, <sup>k</sup> as the LORD <sup>k</sup> Num. 35.  
2. commanded by the hand of Moses.

9 ¶ And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these cities which are *here* <sup>†</sup> mentioned by name, † Heb.  
called..

10 <sup>l</sup> Which the children of Aaron, l Ver. 4. *being* of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi, had: for their's was the first lot.

11 <sup>m</sup> And they gave them <sup>||</sup> the city of Arba the father of <sup>n</sup> Anak, m 1 Chron.  
6. 55.  
Or, Ktr-  
jatharba,  
Gen. 23.  
2.  
n Ch. 15. 13,  
14.  
o Ch. 20. 7. which city *is* Hebron, <sup>o</sup> in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.

12 But <sup>p</sup> the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for his possession. p Ch. 14. 11.

13 Thus <sup>q</sup> they gave to the children of Aaron the priest <sup>r</sup> Hebron with her suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; <sup>s</sup> and Libnah with her suburbs, q 1 Chron.  
6. 57, &c.  
r Ch. 15. 54.  
s Ch. 15. 42.

*Out of their inheritance*—That is, out of their several possessions; that the burden might be equally divided; and, that the Levites being dispersed among the several tribes, according to Jacob's prediction, Gen. xlix. 7, might more easily, and effectually *teach the Israelites God's law and judgments*, which they were engaged to do, Deut. xxxiii. 10; and that the people might upon all occasions resort to them, and *enquire the meaning of the law at their mouths*. *And suburbs*—Not only the use, but the absolute dominion of them, as is manifest both from Ver. 11, 12, where a distinction is made between the *city and suburbs of Hebron*, and the *fields and villages thereof*; (the former being given to the Levites, the latter to Caleb;) and from the return of these cities in the Jubilee, unto the Levites as to their proper owners, Lev. xxv. 33, 34.

Ver. 4. *Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin*—Which three tribes were nearest the temple, where their business lay. *Thirteen cities*—For though the priests were now few enough for one city, yet respect was to be had to their succeeding numbers; this division being made for all future generations. And seeing the Levites might sell their houses until the Jubilee, Lev. xxv. 33; much more might they let them; and therefore it is probable their cities were not long uninhabited, many being inclined to dwell with them, by virtue of relations con-

tracted with them; or out of respect to the service of God, and the good of their souls.

Ver. 5. *Children of Kohath*—Who were of Aaron's family. *Ephraim, Dan, and Manasseh*—Which tribes were nearest to the three former, and so the Kohathites are placed next to their brethren the Aaronites. *Ten cities*—Fewer than they gave out of the three former tribes, because their inheritance was less than the former.

Ver. 9, 10. *Judah and Simeon*—These are mentioned together, because the cities of Simeon lay within Judah's portion. *Families*—That is, of the family, the plural number being put for the singular, which is not unusual.

Ver. 12. *The fields and villages*—That is, all beyond the two thousand cubits expressed, Numb. xxxv. 5. This is here mentioned, not as his peculiar case, but as one eminent instance, to shew, that it was so in all the rest of the cities here named; that the fields and villages thereof still belonged to the several tribes from whom the cities and their suburbs were taken. It would make the rest of the Israelites more cheerfully resign part of their possessions to the Levites, considering, that even *Caleb did so*, though his possession had been long before promised, and now actually given to him by God's special command, as a mark of honour and compensation for his long and faithful service.

A. M. 2560.  
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t Ch. 15. 49.  
u Ch. 15. 50.

14 And <sup>t</sup> Jattir with her suburbs,  
and Eshtemoa with her suburbs,

x 1 Chron.  
6. 56, 57.  
y Ch. 15. 49.  
z 1 Chron. 6. 59,  
Ashan,  
Ch. 15. 49.

15 And <sup>x</sup> Holon with her suburbs,  
and <sup>y</sup> Debir with her suburbs,

16 And <sup>z</sup> Ain with her suburbs,  
and <sup>a</sup> Juttah with her suburbs, and  
<sup>b</sup> Beth-shemesh with her suburbs;  
nine cities out of those two tribes.

c Ch. 18. 25.  
d Ch. 19. 24,  
Gaba.

17 And out of the tribe of Benjamin,  
<sup>c</sup> Gibeon with her suburbs,  
<sup>d</sup> Geba with her suburbs,

e 1 Chron.  
6. 60.  
Aicmeth.

18 Anathoth with her suburbs,  
and <sup>e</sup> Almon with her suburbs; four  
cities.

19 All the cities of the children  
of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen  
cities with their suburbs.

f Ver. 5.

20 <sup>f</sup> And the families of the children  
of Kohath, the Levites which  
remained of the children of Kohath,  
even they had the cities of their lot  
out of the tribe of Ephraim.

g Ch. 20. 7.

21 For they gave them <sup>g</sup> Shechem  
with her suburbs in mount Ephraim,  
*to be* a city of refuge for the slayer;  
and Gezer with her suburbs,

22 And Kibzaim with her suburbs,  
and Beth-oron with her suburbs;  
four cities.

23 And out of the tribe of Dan,  
Eltekeh with her suburbs, Gibbethon  
with her suburbs,

24 Aijalon with her suburbs,  
Gath-rimmon with her suburbs; four  
cities.

25 And out of the half tribe of  
Manasseh, Taanach with her suburbs,  
and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs;  
two cities.

26 All the cities were ten with

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their suburbs for the families of the  
children of Kohath that remained.

h Ver. 6.

27 <sup>h</sup> And unto the children of  
Gershon, of the families of the Levites,  
out of the *other* half tribe of  
Manasseh they gave <sup>i</sup> Golan in Bashan  
with her suburbs, *to be* a city of  
refuge for the slayer: and Beesh-  
terah with her suburbs; two cities.

28 And out of the tribe of Issa-  
char, Kishon with her suburbs, Da-  
bareh with suburbs,

29 Jarmuth with her suburbs, En-  
gannim with her suburbs; four cities.

30 And out of the tribe of Asher,  
Mishal with her suburbs, Abdon with  
her suburbs,

31 Helkath with her suburbs, and  
Rehob with her suburbs; four cities.

k Ch. 20. 7.

32 And out of the tribe of Naph-  
tali, <sup>k</sup> Kedesh in Galilee with her  
suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for  
the slayer; and Hammoth-dor with  
her suburbs, and Kartan with her  
suburbs; three cities.

33 All the cities of the Gershonites  
according to their families were thir-  
teen cities with their suburbs.

l Ver. 7.

34 <sup>l</sup> And unto the families of the  
children of Merari, the rest of the  
Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun,  
Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kar-  
tah with her suburbs,

35 Dimnah with her suburbs,  
Nahalal with her suburbs; four  
cities.

m Ch. 20. 8.

36 And out of the tribe of Reuben,  
<sup>m</sup> Bezer with her suburbs, and Jaha-  
zah with her suburbs,

37 Kedemoth with her suburbs,

Ver. 16. *And Ain*—Ain and Gibeon, and some others here named, are not named, 1 Chron. vi. 59. Either they were destroyed in some of those invasions wherewith their land was grievously wasted before that time; or they appear there under other names.

Ver. 20. *Which remained*—Over and above those who were priests.

Ver. 25. *Half the tribe*—Namely, that half which dwelt in Canaan.



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and Mephaath with her suburbs ;  
four cities,

38 And out of the tribe of Gad,  
n Ch. 20. p. n Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs,  
to be a city of refuge for the slayer ;  
and Mahanaim with her suburbs,

39 Heshbon with her suburbs,  
Jazor with her suburbs ; four cities  
in all.

40 So all the cities for the children  
of Merari by their families, which  
were remaining of the families of the  
Levites, were by their lot twelve  
cities.

o Num. 35.  
7. 41 ° All the cities of the Levites  
within the possession of the children  
of Israel were forty and eight cities  
with their suburbs.

42 These cities were every one  
with their suburbs round about them :  
thus were all these cities.

43 ¶ And the LORD gave unto

Ver. 41. *Forty and eight cities*—So God ordered by Moses, Numb. xxxv. 7 ; and it is a demonstration that Moses was divinely inspired, to make such an appointment, before it could be known whether, without straitening the other tribes, they could part with so many cities to the Levites. For when Joshua and Caleb went up to search the land, they could have no opportunity to take any accurate dimensions of the country, whereby Moses might know there would be room enough to allow the Levites so large a portion as this ; but he was directed to it by a divine fore-knowledge. But why had this tribe, which was the least of all, more cities than any of them ? First, it doth not appear that they had more ; for though all the cities of the Levites be expressed, it is not so with the other tribes, but divers of their cities are omitted. Secondly, the Levites were confined to their cities and suburbs ; the rest had large territories belonging to their cities, which also they were in a capacity of improving, which the Levites were not ; so that one of their cities might be more considerable than divers of those of the Levites.

Ver. 42. *These cities were every one with their suburbs*—Namely, two thousand cubits on every side, round each city, as was ordered, Numb. xxxv. 5 ; and it certainly was a large proportion for this tribe. But God intended that an ample provision should be made for his ministers, to put honour on those whom he foresaw many would despise ; and that, being free from outward cares and distractions, they might more entirely and fervently devote themselves to the service of God.

Ver. 43. *The Lord gave unto Israel all the land*—He gave them a right to the whole country, and the actual possession of the greatest part of it. He likewise authorized them to subdue and possess the rest, as soon as it should be needful

Israel p all the land which he sware  
to give unto their fathers : and they  
possessed it, and dwelt therein.

44 a And the LORD gave them rest q Ch. 11. 23.  
round about, according to all that he  
sware unto their fathers : and r there  
stood not a man of all their enemies  
before them ; the LORD delivered all  
their enemies into their hand.

45 s There failed not ought of any s Ch. 23. 14.  
good thing which the LORD had  
spoken unto the house of Israel ; all  
came to pass.

CHAP. XXII.

*Joshua's dismissal of the two tribes and an half, and their return to their own country, ver. 1—9. The altar they built on that side of Jordan, which offended the other tribes, ver. 10—20. Their apology, with which the rest were satisfied, ver. 21—34.*

**T**HEN Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh,

for them, which was when their numbers were increased ; and to exercise absolute dominion over all the people remaining in it. All which was exactly conformable to his promise and oath ; for the Israelites not being numerous enough to people the whole land at their first coming into it, God never intended to expel all the old inhabitants at once, but by degrees, as we read expressly, Exod. xxiii. 29.

Ver. 44. *The Lord gave them rest round about*—Namely, all the remaining days of Joshua ; for afterwards it was otherwise with them. *The Lord delivered all their enemies into their hands*—This is not to be understood as if all the people of Canaan were absolutely in subjection to them, but that as long as Joshua lived, all those who attempted to oppose or rise up against them were delivered into their power and subdued.

Ver. 45 *There failed not ought*—Which they themselves, as Joshua afterwards tells them, Chap. xxiii. 14, knew very well, and could not but confess. But it must be understood according to the explication given Ver. 43. For the time of fulfilling some part of the divine promises was not yet come, and the entire completion of what was already begun was partly conditional, and depended on their obedience to God. *All came to pass*—Such an acknowledgment as this, here subscribed by Joshua, in the name of all Israel, we afterward find made by Solomon ; and all Israel did, in effect, say amen to it, 1 Kings viii. 56. The inviolable truth of God's promise, and the performance of it to the uttermost, is what all believers in Christ have been always ready to bear their testimony to. And if in any thing it has seemed to come short, they have been as ready to take all the blame to themselves.

CHAP. XXII. Ver. 1. *Joshua called the Reubenites and*

A. M. 2500.  
B. C. 2444.a Num. 32.  
20.

b Ch. 1. 16.

2 And said unto them, Ye have kept <sup>a</sup> all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, <sup>b</sup> and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you :

3 Ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God.

4 And now the LORD your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them : therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, *and* unto the land of your possession, <sup>c</sup> which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan.

c Num. 32.  
33.d Deut. 6.  
6, 17.

5 But <sup>d</sup> take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, <sup>e</sup> to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and

e Deut. 10.  
14.

to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.

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6 So Joshua <sup>f</sup> blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents. f Gen. 47.7.

7 Now to the *one* half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given *possession* in Bashan: <sup>g</sup> but unto the *other* half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them, g Ch. 17. 5.

8 And he spake unto them, saying, Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment : <sup>h</sup> divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren. h Num. 31. 27.

*the Gailites, &c.*—The war being ended, and ended gloriously, Joshua, as a prudent general, disbands his army, and sends them home to enjoy what they had conquered; and particularly the forces of those separate tribes, which had received their inheritance on the other side Jordan, from Moses, upon this condition, that their men of war should assist the other tribes in the conquest of Canaan; which they promised to do, Numb. xxxii. 32, and renewed the promise to Joshua at the opening of the campaign, Josh. i. 16. And now, as they had performed their agreement, Joshua publicly and solemnly, in Shiloh, gives them their discharge.

Ver. 2, 3. *Ye have kept all that Moses commanded, &c.*—Thus he dismisses them with a very honourable character. When Moses was gone, they remembered and observed the charge he had given them, and all the orders which Joshua, as general of the forces, had issued out, they had carefully obeyed. *Ye have not left your brethren these many days*—He does not say how many, nor can it be collected with certainty from any other place; but it was as long as the war lasted, and therefore must have been the space of seven or eight years, Chap. xi. 18, and xiv. 10. So long they had been absent from home, excepting such individuals as might have occasionally visited their families, the distance not being great, or have been exchanged for others of their brethren.

Ver. 4. *Return—ye to your tents*—That is, to your settled habitations. Though their affections to their families could not but make them very desirous to return, yet, like good soldiers, they would not move till they had orders from their general. So, though we desire to be at home with Christ ever so much, yet we must stay here till our warfare is accom-

plished, wait for a due discharge, and not anticipate the time of our removal.

Ver. 5. *Take diligent heed*—Watch over yourselves and all your actions. *Commandment and law*—Two words expressing the same thing, the law of commandments delivered by Moses. *All your heart and soul*—With the whole strength of your minds, and wills, and affections.

Ver. 7. *Then he blessed them*—Not only prayed for them as a friend, but blessed them as a father, in the name of the Lord, recommending them, their families, and affairs to the grace of God. It seems probable, from the manner in which this is stated, that this his blessing was peculiarly and separately given to the half tribe of Manasseh. He was somewhat more nearly related to them than to the other two, as being an Ephraimite, and perhaps they might be more reluctant to depart than the others, as they were leaving one half of their own tribe behind them, and therefore might have more need than the others of the comfort and encouragement of his blessing.

Ver. 8. *Divide the spoil with your brethren*—That is, with them who stayed beyond Jordan for the defence of their land, and wives, and children, who therefore were to have a share, though not an equal share with these. “Nothing could be more just,” says Dr. Dedd, “than this command; for, notwithstanding those who remained beyond Jordan, had not shared in the dangers of the war, like those who had gone through it; yet they had, during that period, watched over the families of the latter, and defended their possessions against the inroads of their surrounding enemies. This seems to have been constantly the custom amongst the Israelites;

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9 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

1 Num. 32.  
1. 26, 29.

10 ¶ And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

k Deut. 15.  
12, &c.

11 ¶ And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel.

those who were detached upon any military expedition, gave the rest of the army a share of the booty they had taken from the enemy; the Pagans acted in like manner; God himself enjoined this practice after the war against the Midianites. Those who fought, kept half the spoil of the enemy, and gave the other half to the rest of the people. Probably the same proportion was observed on this occasion. David, on his return from pursuing the Amalekites, changed this custom into a law, 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25."

Ver. 10. *When they came*—Or, *They came* (for the word *when* is not in the Hebrew) *to the borders of Jordan*—It is thought by many that גליל, *Geliloth*, here rendered *borders*, was the name of a place. *The children of Reuben built there an altar*. This seems, at first sight, to import, that they built this altar before they went over Jordan, in the land of Canaan; but the Hebrew particle שם, *sham*, relates to time as well as place, and may be translated *then* as well as *there*. Examples of which may be found in Prov. viii. 27, compared with Ver. 30; Eccles. iii. 17; and Isai. xlvi. 16. And thus it is here to be interpreted, that before they went any farther, while they were yet on the bank of Jordan, they erected this altar on the borders of their own country; for so the next verse teaches us to expound the passage, and will admit of no other sense, where it is said they had built this altar, not *in*, but *over against the land of Canaan*. Indeed it is not likely that they would have ventured to erect it in the territory of the other tribes. Nor would it have answered their intention to have built it there, which was to

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12 And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.

1 Judg. 20.  
1.

13 And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest,

m Deut. 19.  
4.n Exod. 6.  
25.

14 And with him ten princes, of each chief house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel; and each one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

† Heb.  
house of  
the father.

o Num. 1.4.

15 And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying,

16 Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass

shew, by this monument, that Jordan made no such separation between them and their brethren, but that they were one people with those in Canaan, where the altar of God was in Shiloh. See Ver. 28. Nor would there have been cause to suspect, as it appears there was from the following verses, that it was designed for sacrifice, if they had not built it among themselves. *A great altar to see to*—Which made a very conspicuous appearance, being very high, and consequently visible afar off.

Ver. 12. *The whole congregation of the children of Israel*—Not in their own persons, but by their elders, who were used to transact all affairs of this kind in the name of all the people. *Gathered themselves together against them*—As apostates from God, and the true religion, according to God's command in such a case. For they too hastily inferred, from the erection of this altar, that their brethren were either going to serve other gods, or to worship the God of Israel in a manner different from that which he had prescribed. For they were expressly commanded that, as there was but one God, so they should offer only upon one altar, and in that one place which the Lord should choose, Deut. xii. 5—18.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the whole congregation*—Who do, and are resolved to cleave unto that God from whom you have revolted. *What trespass is this that you have committed?*—How heinous a crime! *To turn away this day*—That is, so soon after God hath obliged you by such wonderful favours, and when he is now conducting you home to reap the fruits of all your pains and hazards. *In that you have builded you*

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444. *is* this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, <sup>p</sup> that ye might rebel this day against the LORD?

p Lev. 17. 9. 17 *Is* the iniquity <sup>q</sup> of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

18 But that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD? and it will be, *seeing* ye rebel to-day against the LORD, that to-morrow <sup>r</sup> he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.

19 Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession *be* unclean, *then* pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, <sup>s</sup> wherein the LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and

take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the LORD our God.

20 <sup>t</sup> Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

21 ¶ Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel,

22 The LORD <sup>u</sup> God of gods, the LORD God of gods, he <sup>x</sup> knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if *it be* in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day,)

*an altar*—For sacrifice, as they supposed. *That ye might rebel*—With a design to rebel against God, and against his express command enjoining you to worship him at one only altar.

Ver. 17. *Is the iniquity of Peor*—That is, of worshipping Baal-peor, too little for us?—Is it not enough that we provoked God to wrath then, but we must provoke him again now? Probably this is mentioned the rather, because Phinehas, the first commissioner in this treaty, had signalized himself in that matter; and because they were now at, or near the very place where that iniquity was committed. *From which we are not cleansed to this day*—For though God had pardoned it, as to the national punishment of it, Numb. xxv. 11, yet they were not yet thoroughly purged from it; partly because the shame and blot of that odious practice was not yet wiped off; and partly because some of that corrupt leaven still remained among them, and though smothered for a time, yet was ready to break forth upon all occasions, See Chap. xxiv. 33. And God also took notice of these idolatrous inclinations in particular persons, and found out ways to punish them.

Ver. 18. *But ye must turn away this day*—Commit more sins of that nature. For whether they intended to worship other gods, or to worship the God of Israel in a manner he did not allow, it was idolatry, in the judgment of Phinehas. *Ye rebel to-day—to-morrow he will be wroth*—That is, soon and suddenly, as the expression often signifies. *With the whole congregation*—With you for doing so, and with us for suffering or not punishing it.

Ver. 19. *If the land of your possession be unclean*—If you apprehend it to be so, and that it is not regarded by God for want of the tabernacle and altar there, but is like heathen

lands; if you now repent of your former choice in preferring the worldly commodities of that country before the advantage of God's presence, and more frequent opportunities of his service. *Pass ye over—and take possession among us*—We will readily resign part of our possessions to you for the prevention of this sin and mischief. Thus Phinehas manifests his piety, disinterestedness, and benevolent intentions: "he even," as Dr. Dodd observes, "himself seeks out some plausible pretence for the step against which he inveighs. He supposes that the Israelites beyond the river may have thought their land would be defiled, that it would not be an holy land, consecrated to God, and under his protection, unless they beheld there some token of his presence, some sacred edifice, which might publicly signify that the Lord was their God." *Rebel not against the Lord, nor—against us*—For as all the tribes were united in one body politic, and made one commonwealth, and one church; and each tribe was subject to the laws and commands of the whole society, and of the chief ruler or rulers thereof; so its disobedience to their just commands was properly rebellion against them. The tribes appear here to have been possessed of a wonderful zeal for God and the common good, inasmuch as they were willing and desirous rather to put themselves to straits, and give up some of their own land to their brethren, than see them deviate into schism, and revolt against God.

Ver. 20. *Achan the son of Zerah*—That is, one of Zerah's posterity. *That man perished not alone*—But brought destruction on his whole family and on part of our forces sent against Ai.

Ver. 22. *The Lord, God of gods*—In the Hebrew it is, *The God of gods, Jehovah; the God of gods, Jehovah*:—

q Num. 25.  
3.

r Num. 16.  
27.

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.

t Ch. 7. 1, 2.

u Deut. 16.  
17.

x 1 Kings 8.  
39. 2 Cor.  
11. 11, 31.

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.

23 That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt-offering or meat-offering, or if to offer peace-offerings thereon, let the LORD himself <sup>y</sup> require it ;

y Deut. 19.  
19.

24 And if we have not *rather* done it for fear of *this* thing, saying, † In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the LORD God of Israel ?

† Heb. to-morrow.

25 For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad ; ye have no part in the LORD : so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the LORD.

26 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice :

z Gen. 31.  
45.

27 But *that* it may be <sup>z</sup> a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might <sup>a</sup> do the service of the LORD before him

a Deut. 19.  
5, 6, 11.

with our burnt-offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace-offerings ; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD.

A. M. 2560.  
B. C. 1444.

28 Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should *so* say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say *again*, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offerings, nor for sacrifices ; but it *is* a witness between us and you.

29 God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, <sup>b</sup> to build an altar for burnt-offerings, <sup>b</sup> for meat-offerings, or for sacrifices, <sup>b</sup> beside the altar of the LORD our God that *is* before his tabernacle.

b Deut. 13.  
13.

30 And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben

Or, rather, there are three names of God, *El*, *Elohim*, and *Jehovah*, signifying that they owned no other God but him whom their forefathers worshipped, by what name soever he was called. q. d. That Jehovah, who is infinitely above all creatures, and the fountain of all other beings, whom we no less than you acknowledge as the *God of gods*. The multiplying of his titles, and the repetition of these words, shew their zeal and earnestness in this matter. *He knoweth*—To him we appeal who knoweth all things, and the truth of what we are now saying. Not only our present words, but our future and constant course shall satisfy all Israel of our perseverance in the true religion. *If it be in rebellion*—If this have been done by us with such design, or in such a manner. *Save us not*—Thou, O Lord, to whom we have appealed, and without whom we cannot be saved and preserved, save us not from any of our enemies, nor from the sword of our brethren. It is a sudden apostrophe to God, usual in such vehement speeches.

Ver. 23—25. *Let the Lord himself require it*—That is, call us to an account and punish us for it. *What have you to do with the Lord*—You have no relation to him, nor interest in him, or his worship. *The Lord hath made Jordan a border*—To shut you out of the land of promise, and consequently from the covenant made between God and our fathers. *Ye have no part in the Lord*—Nothing to do with him ; no right to serve him or expect favour from him. *Cease*

*from fearing the Lord*—For they that are cut off from public ordinances, usually by degrees lose all religion. It is true the form and profession of godliness may be kept without the life and power of it. But the life and power will not long be kept, without the form and profession of it.

Ver. 27. *But that it may be a witness*—It was an ancient way of preserving the remembrance of things to raise such structures. *That we might do the service of the Lord before him*—That we and ours may have and retain the privilege of serving and worshipping God, not upon this altar, but in the place of God's presence, in your tabernacle, and upon your altar.

Ver. 28. *Behold the pattern of the altar*—An exact representation and resemblance of it ; but which they could not have imitated, if they had not been acquainted with it, and worshipped God there with their brethren. *But it is a witness between us and you*—That we both serve one God, and approve and make use of the same altar.

Ver. 30, 31. *It pleased them*—They were fully satisfied with this answer. *We perceive that the Lord is among us*—By his gracious presence, and preventing goodness, in keeping you from so great an offence, and all of us from those calamities that would have followed it. *Out of the hand of the Lord*—That is, from the wrath and dreadful judgments of God. By avoiding that sin which would have involved both you and us in a most bloody war, you have delivered us from

A. M. 2580.  
B. C. 1444.

† Heb. it  
was good  
in their  
eyes.

and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake; † it pleased them.

c Lev. 26.  
11.

† Heb.  
then.

31 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: † now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.

32 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again.

d 1 Chron.  
29, 30.  
Neh. 8. 6.

33 And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

† That is, a  
witness;  
See Ch.  
24. 27.

34 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar || Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is God.

A. M. 2580.  
B. C. 1444.

CHAP. XXIII.

Joshua reminds the people, assembled for that purpose, of what God had done, and what he would do for them, ver. 1—5. Exhorts them resolutely to persevere in their duty to God, ver. 6—8. which he enforces by former benefits, and by promises, ver. 9—11. and by threatenings, ver. 12—16.

AND it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and † stricken in age.

cir. 1477.  
a Ch. 21. 24.  
& 22. 4.

b Ch. 13. 1.

† Heb.  
came into  
days.  
c D. ut. 31.  
28.

2 And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age:

3 ¶ And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you.

d Exod. 14.  
14.

4 Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea † westward.

e Ch. 13. 2.  
6.

5 ¶ And the LORD your God, he

† Heb. as  
the sun  
set.  
f Exod. 23.  
30. & 34.  
2.

the evils we feared. He that prevents an approaching disease or mischief, doth as truly deliver a man from it, as he that cures or removes it after it hath been inflicted.

Ver. 33. The children of Israel blessed God—As Phinehas had done, that their brethren had not offended the divine Majesty as they suspected. And did not intend to go up against them—Laid aside the intention which had been in their minds. To destroy the land—As, by the law of God they would have been obliged to do, if these two tribes and an half had been guilty of the crime of which they had been suspected, and had persisted in their sin; as afterwards they nearly destroyed the tribe of Benjamin for a similar reason.

Ver. 34. They called the altar Ed—That is, a witness; a witness of the relation they stood in to God and Israel, and of their concurrence with the other tribes in the common faith, that Jehovah he is God. It was a witness to posterity of their care to transmit their religion pure and entire; and it would be a witness against them, if ever they should turn from following the Lord.

CHAP. XXIII. Ver. 1, 2. A long time after the Lord had given rest unto Israel—That is, about fourteen years after the conquest of the country, and seven after the division of it among the tribes, See Chap. xi. 23, and xiv. 10. Joshua called—Either to his own city, or rather to Shiloh, the usual place of such assemblies, where his words being uttered before the Lord, were likely to have the more effect upon them. All Israel—Not all the people in their own persons, but in their representatives, by their elders, heads, judges, and officers. Probably he took the opportunity of one of the three great feasts. You will not have me long to preach to you; therefore observe what I say, and lay it up for the time to come.

Ver. 3, 4. And ye have seen—Or rather, Behold, ye have seen—For so the particle ve, which we translate and, sometimes signifies, as Gen. xxiv. 31. All that the Lord hath done—because of you—For your good, that you might gain by their losses. I have divided unto you—those nations that remain—That are not yet conquered. To be an inheritance

A. M. 2577.  
B. C. 1427. shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, <sup>5</sup> as the LORD your God hath promised unto you.

Num. 33. 53. Ch. 1. 7. 6 <sup>h</sup> Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, <sup>i</sup> that ye turn not aside therefrom *to the right hand or to the left*;

Exod. 23. 34. Deut. 7. 2, 3. Exod. 23. 14. Num. 32. 38. 7 That ye <sup>k</sup> come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither <sup>l</sup> make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them:

Or. For if ye will cleave, &c. m Deut. 10. 20. 8 || But <sup>m</sup> cleave unto the LORD

your God, as ye have done unto this day.

9 || <sup>n</sup> For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but *as for you*, <sup>o</sup> no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

10 <sup>p</sup> One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, *he it is that fighteth for you*, <sup>q</sup> as he hath promised you.

11 ¶ Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

12 Else if ye do in any wise <sup>s</sup> go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even these that remain*

—You shall certainly subdue them, and inherit their land, as you have done the rest, if you be not wanting to yourselves. *With all the nations*—That is, with the land of those nations, the *people* put for their *land*, as we have seen before; and as sometimes, on the contrary, the *laud* is put for the *people*. *The great sea*—Where the Philistines, your most formidable adversaries, yet survive; but them also and their land I have given to you, and you shall undoubtedly destroy them, if you will proceed vigorously in your work.

Ver. 6. *Be ye therefore very courageous*—For it would require great courage and resolution to execute all the commands of Moses, and particularly, that of expelling and destroying the residue of the Canaanites. *The right hand or the left*—That is, in one kind or other, by adding to the law, or diminishing from it. Which was the condition upon which God promised to continue them in the possession of the land. By this it is evident that the book of the law of Moses was extant in those days, and that the people read it.

Ver. 7. *That ye come not among those nations*—That ye avoid all familiar converse and contracts, but especially marriage, with them. *Neither mention the name of their gods*—To wit, unnecessarily and familiarly, lest the mention of them should lead to discourse about them, and so by degrees bring them to the approbation and worship of them. *Nor cause to swear by them*—Not to require or even admit a Gentile to swear by his god, as was usual, especially in leagues and contracts; for this would have been to suppose that these imaginary deities were conscious of men's thoughts, and had power to punish those who were guilty of perjury. And the forbidding this was also to secure them against making leagues and covenants with the Gentiles, which they would not have considered as binding without an oath. It is to be lamented that, among Christians, the names of the heathen gods are so commonly used, especially in poems. Let those names, which have been set up in rivalry with God, be for ever loathed and lost. *Nor bow*—Neither give them any inward reverence, nor outward adoration. Here is an ob-

servable gradation, whereby he shews the progress which sin usually makes, and what need there is to look to the beginnings of it; forasmuch as a civil and common conversation with their persons was likely to bring them, and indeed did actually bring them, by insensible steps, to the worship of their gods. It is no wonder, therefore, if some things, not simply and in themselves evil, be forbidden by God, as here the naming of false gods is, because they are occasions and introductions to evil.

Ver. 8. *But cleave to the Lord*—By constant obedience, entire affection, faithful service, and worship of him alone. *As ye have done to this day*—To wit, since you came into Canaan; since which time the body of the people (for of them he speaks, not of every particular person) had behaved themselves much better than they did in the wilderness, and had not been guilty of any gross and general apostasy from God, or rebellion against him.

Ver. 9, 10. *No man hath been able, &c*—To wit, whom you have attacked; otherwise some of those people did yet remain unconquered. *He fighteth*—Impute not this therefore to your own valour, as you will be apt to do, but to God's gracious and powerful assistance.

Ver. 11. *Take good heed*—Now it requires more watchfulness and diligence than it did in the wilderness, because your temptations are now stronger; from the examples and insinuations of your bad neighbours, the remainders of this wicked people; and from your own peace and prosperity; and the pride, security, forgetfulness of God, and luxury, which usually attend that condition.

Ver. 12, 13. *If ye in any wise go back*—From God, and from his worship and service. *They shall be snares and traps to you*—By your converse with them, you will be drawn by degrees into their errors, and impieties, and brutish lusts. *Thorns in your eyes*—When they have seduced, and thereby weakened you, then they will molest and vex you, no less than a severe scourge doth a man's sides which are lashed by it, or than a small thorn doth the eye when it is got



A. M. 2577.  
B. C. 1427. among you, and shall <sup>t</sup>make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

Deut. 7.3. Judg. 3.3. 13 Know for a certainty that <sup>a</sup>the LORD your God will no more drive out *any of* these nations from before you; <sup>x</sup>but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

1 Kings 2. 2. 14 And, behold, this day <sup>y</sup>I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that <sup>z</sup>not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

Deut. 28. 63. 15 <sup>a</sup>Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you <sup>b</sup>all evil

A. M. 2577.  
B. C. 1427. things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

16 When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

CHAP. XXIV.

*Joshua, assembling the people, recounts what great things God had done for them, ver. 1—13. Exhorts them to serve God, which they engage to do, ver. 14—28. His age, death, and burial, ver. 29—31. The burying of Joseph's bones, ver. 32. The death and burial of Eleazar, ver. 33.*

**A**ND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to <sup>a</sup>Shechem, a Gen. 35. 4. and <sup>b</sup>called for the elders of Israel, b Ch. 22. 2. and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and

within it. *Till ye perish*—They shall so persecute you, and fight against you with such success, that you shall be forced to quit your own land, and wander, you know not whither. Which must needs have been very terrible to them to think of, when they compared their present ease, and plenty, and safety, with the pains, and weariness, and hazards, and wants of their former wanderings.

Ver. 14. *I am going the way of all the earth*—That is, of all flesh, or of all men; the way which all men go; I am about to die, as all men must. To die is to go a journey, a journey to our long home. And Joshua himself, though he could so ill be spared, cannot be exempted from this common lot. He takes notice of it, that they might look on these as his dying words, and regard them accordingly. *Ye know*—That is, you know assuredly: your own experience puts it out of all question.

Ver. 15. *Bring upon you all evil things*—According to what Moses had predicted at large, Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. For God's faithfulness is no less visible in fulfilling his threatenings than his promises. Indeed the accomplishment of his promises is a pledge that he will also fulfil his threatenings, both of them standing on the same ground, the truth of God.

Ver. 16. *Ye shall perish quickly from off the good land*—It would aggravate their misery in their destruction, that the land from which they perished was a good land, and a land which God himself had given them: and which therefore he would have secured to them, if they had not thrown them-

selves out of it. "Thus the goodness of the heavenly Canaan," says Mr. Henry, "and the free and sure grant God has made of it, will aggravate the misery of those who shall for ever be shut out and perish from it. Nothing will make them see how wretched they are, so much as to see, how happy they might have been."

CHAP. XXIV. Ver. 1. *Joshua gathered*—It is likely that Joshua, living longer than he expected when he delivered the foregoing discourse to the Israelites, called the people together once more, that he might give them still further advice before he died; as Moses addressed them in several pathetic speeches before his departure from them. Or perhaps, it was Joshua's custom to assemble them frequently, in order that he might remind them of their duty and enforce it upon them. *All the tribes of Israel*—Namely, their representatives, or, as it follows, their elders, their heads, their judges, and officers. *To Shechem*—To the city of Shechem, a place convenient for the purpose, not only because it was a Levitical city, and a city of refuge, and a place near Joshua's city, but especially for the two main ends for which he summoned them thither. 1, For the solemn burial of the bones of Joseph, and probably of some others of the patriarchs, for which this place was designed. 2, For the solemn renewing of their covenant with God; which in this place was first made between God and Abraham, Gen. xii. 6, 7, and afterwards renewed by the Israelites at their first entrance

A. M. 2577. they presented themselves before  
B. C. 1477. God.  
1 Sam. 10. 19.

2 ¶ And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

4 And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

5 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out.

6 And I brought your fathers

out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea.

7 And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.

9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you:

10 But I would not hearken unto

into the land of Canaan, between the two mountains of Ebal and Gerizzim, Chap. viii. 30, &c. which were very near Shechem: and therefore this place was most proper, both to remind them of their former obligations to God, and to engage them to a farther ratification of them. *Before God*—As in God's presence, to hear what Joshua was to speak to them in God's name, and to receive God's commands from his mouth. He had taken a solemn farewell before: but as God renewed his strength, he desired to improve it for their good. We must never think our work for God done, till our life be done.

Ver. 2. *Joshua said unto all the people*—To the elders, by whom it was to be imparted to all the rest, and to as many of the people as came thither. He spake to them in God's name, and as from him, in the language of a prophet. *Thus saith the Lord*—Jehovah, the great God, and the God of Israel, whom you are peculiarly bound to hear. This is an argument that he uttered all that follows by the divine inspiration and impulse. Indeed he was no less the prophet than the political head of the nation. *Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood*—Or, the river, namely, Euphrates, so called by way of eminency. *They served other gods*—That is, both Abraham and Nahor were no less idolaters than the rest of mankind. This is said to prevent their vain boasting in their worthy ancestors, and to assure them that whatsoever good was in, or had been done by their progenitors, was wholly from God's free grace, and not for their own merit or righteousness.

Ver. 3. *I took*—I snatched him out of that idolatrous place

and took him into acquaintance and covenant with myself, which was the highest honour and happiness he was capable of. *And led*—That is, I brought him after his father's death into Canaan, Gen. xii. 1, and I conducted and preserved him in all his travels through the several parts of Canaan. *And multiplied*—That is, gave him a numerous posterity, not only by Hagar and Keturah, but even by Sarah and Isaac. *Gave him Isaac*—By my special power and grace to be heir of my covenant, and all my promises, and the seed in or by which all the nations were to be blessed.

Ver. 4. *I gave unto Esau Mount Seir*—That he might leave Canaan entire to his brother Jacob and his posterity, Gen. xxxvi. 7, 8. *But Jacob went down into Egypt*—Compelled by a grievous famine, and because the time was not come when God intended to plant him and his posterity in Canaan. In Egypt they suffered a long and grievous bondage, from which God having delivered us, I shall now pass it over.

Ver. 7. *Your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt*—He speaks this to the elders, Ver. 1, who were such not only in power and dignity, but many of them by age; and as there were not sixty years past since the plagues were inflicted on Egypt, it is probable that a considerable number of those present had been witnesses of them, and had seen, with their own eyes the Egyptians lie dead upon the sea-shore, Exod. xiv. 30. And, not being twenty years old at that time, they were exempted from the dreadful sentence denounced and executed upon all that were older.

Ver. 9, 10. *Balak warred against Israel*—Not indeed by

**A. M. 2577.**  
**B. C. 1457.**  
**b Num. 23,**  
**11, 20.**  
Balaam; <sup>b</sup> therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

**c Ch. 3. 14,**  
**17.**  
**d Ch. 6. 1,**  
**& 10. 1.**  
11 And <sup>c</sup> ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and <sup>d</sup> the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.

**e Exod. 23,**  
**25.**  
**f Ps. 44. 3,**  
**6.**  
12 And <sup>e</sup> I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites; *but* <sup>f</sup> not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

**g Deut. 6,**  
**10. Ch.**  
**11. 18.**  
13 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and <sup>g</sup> cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.

**h Deut. 10,**  
**13.**  
**i Gen. 17,**  
**1. & 20. 5.**  
14 ¶ <sup>h</sup> Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in <sup>i</sup> sincerity

and in truth: and <sup>k</sup> put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and <sup>l</sup> in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, <sup>m</sup> choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether <sup>n</sup> the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or <sup>o</sup> the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; <sup>p</sup> but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17 For the LORD our God, he *it* is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

open force, but by crafty counsels, warlike stratagems, and wicked devices. *I would not hearken unto Balaam*—It appears by this, that Balaam had a great inclination to do what Balak desired, and that he asked leave of God to curse Israel; and therefore it is not strange, that God, who permitted him simply to go, was highly angry with him for going with so wicked an intent, Numb. xxii. 22, 32. *So I delivered you*—From Balak's malicious designs against you.

Ver. 11, 12. *I delivered them into your hand*—Namely, successively; for in these few words he seems to comprise all their wars, which being fresh in their memories, he thought it needless, particularly to mention. *I sent the hornet before you*—This may signify, either that before the Israelites came into those parts, God sent hornets, which so infested the inhabitants, that many of them were compelled to leave their country, or that, when they were actually engaged in battle with their enemies, these dreadful swarms, which first appeared in their war with Sihon and Og, tormented the Canaanites with their stings, and terrified them with their noise; so that they became an easy prey to Israel. God had promised to do this for them, Exod. xxiii. 27, 28; and here Joshua reminds them of the fulfilment of the promise.

Ver. 14. *Put away the gods*—By this it appears, that although Joshua had doubtless prevented and purged out all public idolatry, yet there were some of them who practised it in their private houses and retirements. *Your fathers*—Terah, and Nahor, and Abraham, as Ver. 2, and others of your ancestors. *In Egypt*—See Ezek. xxiii. 3, 8, 19, 21, 27. Under these particulars, no doubt, he comprehends, all other

false gods, which were served by the nations amongst whom they were, but only mentions these, as the idols which they were in more danger of worshipping than those in Canaan; partly, because those of Canaan had been now lately and palpably disgraced by their inability to preserve their worshippers from total ruin; and partly, because the other idols came recommended to them by the venerable name of antiquity, and the custom of their forefathers.

Ver. 15. *Seem evil*—Unjust, unreasonable or inconvenient. *Choose ye*—Not that he leaves them to their liberty, whether they would serve God or idols; for Joshua had no such power himself, nor could give it to any other; and both he and they were obliged by the law of Moses, to give their worship to God only, and to forbear all idolatry in themselves, and severely to punish it in others; but his words are a powerful insinuation, which implies, that the worship of God is so highly reasonable, necessary, and beneficial; and the service of idols so absurd, vain, and pernicious, that if it were left free for all men to take their choice, every man in his right senses must needs choose the service of God, before that of idols. And he provokes them to bind themselves faster to God by their own choice. *We will serve the Lord*—But know this, if you should all be so base and brutish, as to prefer senseless and impotent idols, before the true and living God, it is my firm purpose, that I will, and my children, and servants (as far as I can influence them) shall be constant and faithful to the Lord. And that, whatever others do. They that resolve to serve God, must not start at being singular in it. They that are bound for heaven must be

A. M. 2577.  
B. C. 1427.

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he *is* our God.

q Matt. 6.  
24.  
r Lev. 19.  
2.  
s Exod. 20.  
5.  
t Exod. 23.  
21.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, <sup>q</sup>Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he *is* an <sup>r</sup>holy God; he *is* <sup>s</sup>a jealous God; <sup>t</sup>he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

u 1 Chron.  
28, 9.  
v Ezra 8, 22.  
x Ch. 23, 15.

20 <sup>u</sup>If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, <sup>x</sup>then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

willing to swim against the stream, and must do, not as *most do*, but as *the best do*.

Ver. 19. *Ye cannot*—He speaks not of an absolute impossibility, (for then both his resolution to serve God himself, and his exhortation to them had been vain) but of a moral impossibility, or a very great difficulty, which he alleges not to discourage them from God's service; but to make them more considerate in obliging themselves; and more resolved in answering their obligations. The meaning is, God's service is not, as you seem to fancy, a slight and easy thing, but it is a work of great difficulty, and requires great care and courage, and resolution; and when I consider the infinite purity of God, that he will not be mocked or abused; and withal your proneness to superstition and idolatry, even during the life of Moses, and in some of you, while I live, and while the obligations which God has laid upon you in this land, are fresh in remembrance; I cannot but fear that, after my decease, you will think the service of God burdensome, and therefore will cast it off and revolt from him, if you do not carefully avoid all occasions of idolatry. *A jealous God*—In the Hebrew, *He is the holy Gods, holy Father, holy Son, holy Spirit*. He will not endure a partner in his worship; you cannot serve him and idols together. *Will not forgive*—If you who own yourselves his people and servants, shall wilfully transgress his laws, he will not let this go unpunished in you, as he doth in other nations; therefore consider what ye do, when you take the Lord for your God; weigh your advantages and inconveniences together; for as, if you be sincere and faithful in God's service, you will have admirable benefits by it; so if you be false to your professions, and forsake him whom you have so solemnly avouched to be your God, he will deal more severely with you than with any people in the world.

Ver. 20. *He will turn and do you hurt*—That is, he will alter his course, and the manner of his dealing with you, and will be as severe as ever he was kind and gracious. He

A. M. 2577.  
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22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses against yourselves that <sup>y</sup>ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are witnesses*.

y Ps. 119.  
173.

23 Now therefore <sup>z</sup>put away, *said* <sup>z</sup>Ver. 14. *he*, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua <sup>a</sup>made a covenant <sup>a</sup>Exod. 15.  
25. with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance <sup>b</sup>in <sup>b</sup>Ver. 16. Shechem.

26 ¶ And Joshua <sup>c</sup>wrote these <sup>c</sup>Dent. 31.  
21.

will repent of his former kindnesses, and his goodness abused will be turned into fury.

Ver. 21, 22. *Nay, but we will serve the Lord*—Namely, him only, and not strange gods. *Ye are witnesses against yourselves*—This solemn profession will be a swift witness against you, if hereafter ye apostatize from God. *They said, we are witnesses*—Here they renew their choice of Jehovah for their God and king, which their forefathers made when they came out of Egypt, Exod. xix. 7, and xxiv. 7; and acknowledge they should be self-condemned if they did not make it good.

Ver. 23. *Put away the strange gods which are among you*—Meaning those idols which they had either brought out of Egypt, or had taken in Canaan, and which some of them kept, contrary to God's command, whether for the preciousness of the matter, or rather from some secret inclination to superstition and idolatry.

Ver. 25. *So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day*—Engaged them to make good this solemn profession, by renewing the covenant they had formerly entered into, both in the days of Moses, and in his time, wherein they promised to worship God alone, and be obedient to him. Some think this covenant was now established by sacrifice, as it was when they came out of Egypt, Exod. xxiv. 4, 5, and when they came into Canaan, Jos. viii. 31. But as there is no mention of an altar or any offering, so it is not likely that Joshua would offer any sacrifice but in the place which God had chosen, which was Shiloh.

Ver. 26. *Joshua wrote these words*—Viz. this covenant, or agreement of the people with the Lord. *In the book of the law of God*—That is, in the volume which was kept in the ark, Deut. xxxi. 9, 26, whence it was taken and put into this book of Joshua; this he did for the perpetual remembrance of this great and solemn action, to lay the greater obligation upon the people to be true to their engagement; and as a witness for God against the people, if afterward he

A.M. 2577.  
B. C. 1427.  
d Judg. 9. 6.  
e Gen. 28.  
f Gen. 35. 4.  
words in the book of the law of God, and took <sup>d</sup> a great stone, and <sup>e</sup> set it up there <sup>f</sup> under an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.

g Gen. 31.  
h Deut. 32.  
i  
27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be <sup>g</sup> a witness unto us; for <sup>h</sup> it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

i Judg. 9. 6.  
28 So <sup>i</sup> Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.

k Judg. 2. 8.  
29 ¶ <sup>k</sup> And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old.

l ch. 19. 50.  
30 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in <sup>l</sup> Timnath-serah, which *is* in mount Eph-

A.M. 2577.  
B. C. 1427.  
rain, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

in Judg. 2. 7.  
31 And <sup>m</sup> Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that <sup>n</sup> over-lived Joshua, and which had <sup>o</sup> known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.  
† Heb. prolonged their days after Joshua.  
n Deut. 11. 2.

o Gen. 50. 25.  
32 ¶ And <sup>p</sup> the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground <sup>q</sup> which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred <sup>r</sup> pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.  
p Gen. 33. 19.  
q Or, lands.  
r 14. 0.

33 ¶ And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill *that pertained to* <sup>s</sup> Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim.  
s Exod. 6. 25.

punished them for their defection from him, to whom they had so solemnly and freely obliged themselves. *Set it up*—As a witness and monument of this great transaction, according to the custom of those ancient times. Possibly this agreement was written upon this stone, as was then usual, *Under an oak that was by the sanctuary*—That is, near the place where the ark and tabernacle then were; for though they were forbidden to *plant a grove of trees near unto the altar*, as the Gentiles did, yet they might for a time set up an altar, or place the ark, near a great tree which had been planted there before.

Ver. 27. *It hath heard*—It shall be as sure a witness against you, as if it had heard. This is a common figure, whereby the sense of hearing is often ascribed to the heavens and the earth, and other senseless creatures.

Ver. 32. *The bones of Joseph*—Joseph died two hundred years before in Egypt, but gave commandment concerning his bones, that they should not rest in a grave till Israel rested in the land of promise. Now, therefore they were deposited in that piece of ground which his father gave him near Shechem. One reason why Joshua called all Israel to Shechem,

might be to attend Joseph's bones to the grave. So that he now delivered, as it were, both Joseph's funeral sermon, and his own farewell sermon. And if it was in the last year of his life, the occasion might well remind him of his own death now at hand. For he was just of the same age with his illustrious ancestor, who died, being *one hundred and ten years old*, Gen. 1. 29.

Ver. 33. *They buried him in an hill which was given him*—By special favour, and for his better conveniency in attending upon the ark, which then was, and for a long time was to be in Shiloh, near this place: whereas the cities which were given to the priests were in Judah, Benjamin, and Simcon, which were remote from Shiloh, though near the place where the ark was to have its settled abode; namely, at Jerusalem. It is probable Eleazar died about the same time with Joshua, as Aaron did in the same year with Moses. While Joshua lived, religion was kept up, under his care and influence, but after he and his cotemporaries were gone, it swiftly went to decay. How well is it for the Gospel Church that Christ, our Joshua, is still with it by his Spirit, and will be always, even to the end of the world!

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THE

# BOOK OF JUDGES.

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## ARGUMENT.

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*This Book contains the History of the Israelites under the Judges, which lasted two hundred and ninety-nine years : under Othniel, forty ; under Ehud, eighty ; under Barak, forty ; under Gideon, forty ; under Abimelek, three ; under Tola, twenty-three ; under Jair, twenty-two ; under Jephtha, six ; under Ibsan, seven ; under Elon, ten ; under Abdon, eight ; under Samson, twenty. As for the years of their servitude, they coincide with the years of some or other of the Judges. In the five last Chapters we have an Account of some memorable Events, which happened in the days when the Judges ruled. As to the state of Israel during this period, 1, They were miserably corrupted, and miserably oppressed. Yet we may hope, the tabernacle service was kept up, and that many attended it. 2, It seems, each tribe had its government within itself, and acted separately, without any common head. This occasioned many differences among themselves. 3, The government of the Judges was not constant but occasional. By their judging Israel is meant chiefly, their avenging Israel of their enemies, and purging them from their idolatries. 4, During the government of the Judges, God was in an especial manner the king of Israel. It is not improbably supposed, that the prophet Samuel was the penman of this Book.*

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A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1425.

### CHAP. I.

*The conquests made by Judah and Simeon, ver. 1—20. Benjamin failed, ver. 21. The house of Joseph took Bethel, ver. 22—26. But Manasseh did not drive out the Canaanites, ver. 27, 28. Nor Ephraim, ver. 29. Nor Zebulun, ver. 30. Nor Asher, ver. 31, 32. Nor Naphtali, ver. 33. Nor Dan, ver. 34—36.*

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CHAP. I. Ver. 1. *After the death of Joshua*—Not long after it; for Othniel, the first Judge, lived in Joshua's time. *Asked the Lord*—Being assembled together at Shiloh, they inquired of the high priest by the Urim and the Thummim. *Against the Canaanites first*—Finding their people multiply exceedingly, and consequently the necessity of enlarging their quarters, they renew the war. They do not inquire who

**N**OW after the death of Joshua A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1425. it came to pass, that the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? a Num. 27.  
31.

2 And the LORD said, <sup>b</sup>Judah b Gen. 49. 9.

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shall be captain-general to all the tribes; but what tribe shall first undertake the expedition, that, by their success, the other tribes might be encouraged to make the like attempts upon the Canaanites in their several lots.

Ver. 2. *Judah*—The tribe of Judah is chosen for the first enterprise, because they were both most populous, and so most needed enlargement; and withal most valiant, and

A. M. 2679.  
B. C. 1428. shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

c Ver. 17. 3 And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot; that we may fight against the Canaanites; and <sup>c</sup> I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

d 1 Sam. 11. 4 And Judah went up; and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in <sup>d</sup> Bezek ten thousand men.

5 And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

6 ¶ But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes.

A. M. 2679.  
B. C. 1428. 7 And Adoni-bezek said, Three-score and ten kings, having † their thumbs and their great toes cut off, || gathered their meat under my table: <sup>e</sup> as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem; and there he died.

8 ¶ Now <sup>f</sup> the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.

9 <sup>g</sup> And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the || valley.

10 ¶ And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron: (now the name of Hebron before was <sup>h</sup> Kirjath-arba:) and they slew She-

therefore most likely to succeed; for God chooseth fit means for the work which he designs. Moreover the Canaanites were numerous and strong in those parts, and therefore it was necessary they should be suppressed before they grew too strong for them.

Ver. 3. *Judah said unto Simeon*—As nearest to him, both by relation, being his brother by both parents, and by habitation. *Come up with me—against the Canaanites*—Which people, with the Perizzites, still possessed a considerable part of the lot which fell to Judah. *And I will likewise go with thee*—To drive the Canaanites out of that part of the country which was the portion of Simeon. *So Simeon went with him*—They joined their forces together in this expedition, under the conduct, no doubt, of some eminent leader.

Ver. 4. *Judah went up*—The people of that tribe were principally concerned in this expedition, and therefore are only mentioned, though those of the tribe of Simeon went up with them. *And the Lord delivered, &c.*—We meet with no such pious expression (which occurs often here) in any heathen writer. In them every success is attributed to the conduct and valour of the generals, or the strength and courage of the forces; but in the Scriptures every success is attributed to God only. *They slew them in Bezek*—Not in the city, for that was not yet taken, Ver. 5, but in the territory of it.

Ver. 5, 6. *Adoni-bezek in Bezek*—He was the king or lord of that place, as his name imports, and, as it appears, he had fled into it for safety when he had lost the field. *They fought against him*—That is, against the city, wherein he had taken refuge, and against the rest of his army. *Cut off his thumbs and great toes*—That he might be incapable of war hereafter, being rendered unable to handle arms, or to

run swiftly. This severe treatment had been practised upon other kings by himself, as appears, by his own confession, in the next verse, which, it is probable, made the Israelites think it reasonable to serve him in the same way: and perhaps they acted by the direction of God in the matter.

Ver. 7. *Three score and ten kings*—Anciently each ruler of a city or great town was called a king, and had kingly power in that place; and many such kings we meet with in Canaan; and, it is probable, that, some years before, kings had been more numerous there, till the greater destroyed many of the less. Add to this, that it is likely some of these seventy kings had reigned in one and the same place, and had successively opposed him. *Have gathered their meat under my table*—An act of barbarous inhumanity, thus to insult over the miserable, joined with abominable luxury. So that it appears, by his own confession, he had been proud and insolent, as well as cruel, to a most high degree; and therefore what befel him may well be considered, which indeed he acknowledges, as a just punishment inflicted upon him by the order of Divine Providence. *As I have done, so hath God requited me*—This, his acknowledgment of God's justice in his punishment, hath made some think he became a penitent and convert to the true religion. He speaks not of gods, as was customary with the heathen, but of God, in the singular number, and this appearance of penitence and faith in the true God, might possibly be the reason why the Israelites spared his life.

Ver. 8—10. *Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and taken it*—Yet some of the inhabitants retired into the castle, and held out there till David's time. *Judah went against the Canaanites*—In Hebron—Under the conduct of Caleb, as is recorded, Josh. xv. 14, &c. for that relation and this are,



A. M. 2579.

B. C. 1425.

i Josh. 15.  
15.

shai, and Ahiman, and Talmai.

11 ¶ And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir : and the name of Debir before was Kirjath-sepher :

6144.

k Josh. 15.  
16.

12 <sup>k</sup> And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

l Ch. 3. 9.

13 ¶ And Othniel the son of Kenaz, <sup>l</sup> Caleb's younger brother, took it : and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

m Josh. 15.  
16, 19.

14 <sup>m</sup> And it came to pass, when she came to him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field : and she lighted from off her ass ; and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou ?

n Gen. 33.  
11.

15 And she said unto him, Give me a blessing : for thou hast given me a south land ; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

o Josh. 1425.

p Ch. 4. 15,  
17.

16 ¶ And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wil-

q Deut. 34.  
2.

doubtless, one and the same expedition, and it is mentioned there by anticipation.

Ver. 16. *The children of the Kenite*—Jethro, Moses' father-in law, seems to have been called a Kenite from the people from whom he was descended, Numb. xxiv. 21, 22. His posterity, it appears, came into Canaan with the Israelites, and were settled there with them. *Went up from the city of Palm-trees*—That is, from Jericho, so called, Deut. xxxiv. 3 ; not indeed the city, which had been destroyed ; but the territory belonging to it, where, it seems, they were seated in a most pleasant, fruitful, and safe place, according to the promise made by Moses to their father, Numb. x. 31, 32 ; and whence they might remove either to avoid the neighbouring Canaanites, or out of love to the children of Judah. *In the south of Arad*—The southern part of the land of Canaan, where Arad was, Numb. xxi. 1. *And dwell among the people*—Heb. *that people* ; namely, those children of Judah that lived there.

Ver. 17. *Judah went with Simeon*—According to their promise, Ver. 3, and the laws of justice and gratitude, having finished, as far as they were able, the conquest of what belonged to the tribe of Judah, they went to assist the Simeonites to acquire the possession of what was comprehended in

derness of Judah, which *lieth* in the south of <sup>q</sup> Arad ; and they went and dwelt among the people.

A. M. 2579.

B. C. 1425.

q Num. 21.

r Num. 10.

s Ver. 2.

17 ¶ And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called <sup>t</sup> Hormah.

t Num. 21.

u Josh. 11.

v Ver. 2.

18 Also Judah took <sup>u</sup> Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.

19 And <sup>x</sup> the LORD was with Judah ; and <sup>y</sup> he drave out *the inhabitants* of the mountain ; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had <sup>y</sup> chariots of iron.

Or, he possessed the mountain.

y Josh. 17.

z Num. 14.

aa Ver. 24.

20 And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said : and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.

21 ¶ And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem ; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

a Josh. 15.

ab Ver. 63.

22 ¶ And the house of Joseph,

their lot. *The name of the city was called Hormah*—Either the same place, so called Numb. xxi. 3 ; in which case what was there vowed is here executed ; or some other place called by the same name upon the like occasion, which seems more probable.

Ver. 18. *Judah also took Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron*—These three cities were in the country of the Philistines, upon the sea-coast, and the Israelites did not hold them long before the Philistines recovered them again. For as the Israelites contented themselves with taking these cities, and making the people tributary without destroying them, it was not difficult for them to regain their liberty.

Ver. 19. *Could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley*—Because of their unbelief, through which they distrusted God's power to destroy those who had chariots of iron, and so gave way to their own fear and sloth, whereby God was provoked to withdraw his helping hand.

Ver. 22—25. *The house of Joseph*—That is, the tribe of Ephraim. *Show us the entrance into the city*—That is, where it may be most easily entered. For they did not inquire the way to the gate, which, no doubt, was common and plain enough ; but for the weakest part, where the walls were lowest, or most out of repair, or had the least guard. Or

A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1475. they also went up against Beth-el:  
b Ver. 19. <sup>b</sup> and the LORD was with them.

c Josh. 9. 1. 23 And the house of Joseph <sup>c</sup> sent to descry Beth-el. (Now the name of the city before was <sup>d</sup> Luz.)

d Gen. 28.  
19. 24 And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and <sup>e</sup> we will shew thee mercy.

e Josh. 2.  
12, 13. 25 And when he shewed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family.

26 And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.

f Josh. 11.  
11, 12. 27 ¶ Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

they desired him, perhaps, to shew them some private way to get into it, which none knew but the inhabitants. *He shewed them the entrance*—Upon which, we may suppose, notice was immediately sent to the army, which lay near. *They smote the city*—Came upon them suddenly, and attacked them where they least expected it; so that the assailants met with little resistance.

*Ver. 26. The man went and built a city*—Which is an argument that the children of Ephraim dismissed him and his family, with all their goods and estate. *The land of the Hittites*—Where the Hittites fixed themselves after they were driven out of Canaan, which seems to have been northward from Canaan, and not far distant from it.

*Ver. 27. Neither did Manasseh, &c.*—That is, that half of this tribe which dwelt in Canaan. *Beth-shean*—A place near Jordan, Josh. xvii. 11. *Taanach*—Of which see Josh. xii. 21. *Dor*—A great town, with large territories, Josh. xi. 2, and xii. 23. *Megiddo*—A royal city, Josh. xii. 21, and xvii. 11. *But the Canaanites would dwell in the land*—Namely, by force or agreement. So that it appears, although, during the life of Joshua, the Israelites had conducted themselves with a degree of bravery, and had expelled several

28 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.

A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1475. 29 ¶ Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

g Josh. 16.  
10.  
1 Kings 9.  
16. 30 ¶ Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the <sup>h</sup> inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.

h Josh. 19.  
15. 31 ¶ Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob:

i Josh. 19.  
24—30. 32 But the Asherites <sup>k</sup> dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out.

k Ps. 106. 31.  
& 140. 5. 33 ¶ Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he <sup>m</sup> dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-

bodies of the Canaanites; yet, after his death, they became pusillanimous and remiss in driving them out, and made peace with them, which was the first step of their defection.

*Ver. 28. When Israel was strong they put the Canaanites to tribute*—Herein they violated the law, whereby they were enjoined to destroy or expel that people when they were able. And as they were strong enough to impose tribute on them, they undoubtedly might have driven them entirely out of the land. But it cost them less trouble and brought them more profit to make them tributaries than to expel them, and therefore they preferred it, being influenced by sloth and covetousness. And this seems to be here spoken of as their common fault at this time.

*Ver. 29. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites*—So far from it, that it appears they did not so much as exact any tribute from them, but made a covenant of friendship with them, which was a still greater crime. *The Canaanites dwell in Gezer*—Which they possessed till Solomon's time. 1 Kings ix. 6. And to dwell among a people, often signifies to have a quiet settlement, as 2 Kings iv. 13.

*Ver. 32. The Asherites dwell among the Canaanites*—This manner of speaking seems to imply that these Canaanites still

A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1423.  
n Ver. 30.

shemesh and of Beth-anath <sup>a</sup> became tributaries unto them.

34 ¶ And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain : for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley :

Josh. 19. 42.

35 But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres <sup>o</sup> in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim : yet the hand of the house of Joseph † prevailed, so that they became tributaries.

† Heb. was heavy.

p Num. 34. 4.

36 And the coast of the Amorites was <sup>p</sup> from || the going up to Akkrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

Or, Mualchakrabbim.

CHAP. II.

*An angel reproves Israel, who bewail their sins, ver. 1—5. They served God during the life of Joshua, and his cotemporaries, ver. 7—9. Their frequent revolts to idolatry, ver. 10—19. God stops their success, ver. 20—23.*

Or, messenger. Ver. 5.

AND an || angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal <sup>a</sup> to Bo-

remained the lords of the country, and that the Asherites were only permitted to dwell among the Canaanites, who certainly appear to have paid them no tribute, and to have owed them no subjection.

Ver. 34, 35. *They would not suffer them to come down into the valley.*—That is, into the plain country; which was the occasion of that expedition for the obtaining of territory elsewhere, of which we read Josh. xix. 47, and Judg. xviii. 2. *The hand of the house of Joseph prevailed.*—That is, of the Ephraimites, who helped their brethren the Danites against the Amorites.

Ver. 36. *From the going up to Akkrabbim.*—Which was in the southern part of Canaan, Josh. xv. 2, 3, from whence it went up towards the north. This is added to shew the great power and large extent of this people.

CHAP. II. Ver. 1. *An angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal.*—This, no doubt, was the Angel of the covenant, the same divine being that appeared to Joshua near Jericho, Josh. v. 13, 14; to whom the conduct of Israel out of Egypt into Canaan, and their conquests and success there are frequently ascribed. He alone could speak the following words in his own name and person; whereas created angels and prophets universally usher in their message with, *Thus saith the Lord*, or some equivalent expression. And, having assumed the shape of a man, he imitates the motion of a man, and appears to come from Gilgal to the place where they now were, probably in order to remind the Israelites of his appearing to Joshua near that place, of the assurance he then

A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1423.

chim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land, which I swore unto your fathers; and <sup>b</sup> I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

b Gen. 17. 7.

2 And <sup>c</sup> ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land :

c Deut. 7. 2.

<sup>d</sup> ye shall throw down their altars :

d Deut. 17. 2.

<sup>e</sup> but ye have not obeyed my voice ; why have ye done this ?

e Jer. 20.

3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you ; but they shall be <sup>f</sup> as thorns in your sides, and <sup>g</sup> their gods shall be a <sup>h</sup> snare unto you.

f Josh. 23. 13.

g Ch. 3. 6.

h Exod. 23. 13. & 34. 12.

4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept.

5 And they called the name of that place || Bochim : and they sacrificed there unto the LORD.

That is, weepers.

cir. 1444.

6 ¶ And when Joshua had let the

Josh. 22. 6.

gave them of his intended presence with them in the conquest of the country, and of the solemn covenant they made with him by the renewal of circumcision. This was a reproof to them for their base ingratitude to God, and their pusillanimous sloth in not endeavouring to expel the Canaanites. *To Bochim*—A word signifying weepers. This was not the name of the place before, but was given it on this occasion, on account of the lamentations of the children of Israel for what the angel said to them, Ver. 5. It seems to have been no other than Shiloh, where, it is probable, the people were met together upon some solemn festival occasion. *And I said, I will never break my covenant with you*—That is, upon condition of your keeping covenant with me.

Ver. 2—5. *Ye shall make no league, &c.*—These express and frequently repeated commands of God they had disobeyed. *Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out, &c.*—That is, I have now taken up this peremptory resolution. *They shall be as thorns in your sides, &c.*—This signifies, what they were assuredly to expect in breaking the covenant on their part; and the sentence here pronounced, or prediction uttered, soon begun to take effect and be accomplished. *The people lift up their voice and wept*—Some of them, it is probable, from a true sense of their sins; others from a just apprehension of their approaching misery. *They sacrificed there*—For the expiation of their sins, by which they had provoked the Lord to this resolution, and in order to regain his compassion and favour.

Ver. 6. *And when Joshua*—It should rather be rendered, *Now when Joshua, &c.* For it does not relate to the preced-

A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1495.

people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

k Josh. 24.  
31.

7 <sup>k</sup> And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that † outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.

† Heb. prolonged  
days after  
Joshua.l Josh. 24.  
29.

8 And <sup>l</sup> Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old.

cir. 1496.

m Josh. 24.  
31.

9 <sup>m</sup> And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in <sup>n</sup> Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

n Josh. 19.  
51.  
Timnath-heres.

10 ¶ And also all that generation

were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which <sup>o</sup> knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

A. M. 2579.  
B. C. 1496.o Exod. 5.  
2.  
1 Sam. 9.  
12.

11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

12 And they <sup>p</sup> forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed <sup>q</sup> other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and <sup>r</sup> bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

cir. 1406.  
p Deut. 31.  
16.q Deut. 6.  
11.r Exod. 20.  
5.

13 And they forsook the LORD,

ing story, but is a repetition of what was declared Josh. xxiv. 28—31, and is here recorded by way of introduction to the following account of the people's defection and punishment, contained in the subsequent parts of the book. *Let the people go*—When he had distributed their inheritances, and dismissed them severally to take possession of them. "The sacred writer," says Dr. Dodd, "having just related the reproaches delivered by the angel of the Lord against the Israelites, would now shew his readers how and when the nation had incurred those reproaches. To this end he carries the matter as far back as possible; and, first, he ascends to that happy period when, Joshua having finished the division of the conquered country of the Canaanites, the Israelites went each to his inheritance, and possessed it, and dwelt in the portion of the land which had fallen to his lot. This division was in fact the immediate work of providence. Lots were cast *before the Lord*: he had presided over them, and without doubt, Joshua, who had used such fine exhortations to the two tribes and a half beyond Jordan, when they set out to take possession of their territories, failed not strongly to recommend religion and obedience to the other tribes, in settling them in the lands that had been assigned to them; which he repeated before his death in the most affecting manner. See on Josh. xxiv. All of them, therefore, equally instructed, and impressed with gratitude, had entered upon their estates with intentions, promising a constant fidelity. But the love of this world seduced them. They soon thought only of their private interest, how to extend and aggrandize themselves; and speedily losing sight of the public good, shamefully neglected the sacred duties of religion."

Ver. 10. *And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers*—Not only those who had beheld the wonderful works of God in Egypt, and in the wilderness, but those also who had seen Jordan dried up, the walls of Jericho fall down, the sun stand still at the word of Joshua, and their enemies overwhelmed with hailstones, &c. which had created such impressions in their hearts, that they generally continued in the service of God while they lived, and kept

others in obedience to him. *Another generation which knew not the Lord*—Which had no serious and affectionate knowledge of God or of his works.

Ver. 11. *The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord*—Which marks the heinousness and impudence of their sins, above other people's; because God's presence was with them, and his eye upon them in a peculiar manner, which also they were not ignorant of, and therefore were guilty of more contempt of God than other people. *And served Baalim*—false gods, which were called by this general name Baalim, which signifies *Lords*. For among the Pagans, as St. Paul observes, there were *gods many and lords many*, and the gods of the Canaanites and the neighbouring nations, which Israel worshipped, were most of them called by the name of Baal; as *Baal* of the Sidonians, and *Baal* of the Amorites, Moabites, Ammonites.

Ver. 13. *They served Baal and Ashtaroth*—By *Baal* or *lord* here, it is probable, we are to understand the sun, and by *Ashtaroth*, the same, it seems, with *Astarte*, the moon, worshipped in different countries under the name *Juno* and *Venus*. So that they had he-gods and she-gods, and gods of all kinds, as many as a luxuriant fancy pleased to make and multiply them. It may not be improper to observe here that "the reason why the Israelites so often lapsed into idolatry, may easily be deduced from the common notion of tutelary deities, which they had imbibed during their residence in Egypt, which was the fruitful parent of science and idolatry. One generally received consequence of this opinion was, that the peculiar or tutelary deity of any country could not be neglected, even by the conquerors of that country, without impiety, and that their impiety would certainly meet with punishment from the deity whom they thus neglected. The Israelites, therefore, unwilling to expose themselves to the resentment which the tutelary deity was supposed to take on those who, inhabiting his land, yet slighted his worship; unwilling likewise to leave their paternal God, they incorporated the worship of both; and served not only the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but likewise the *Baalim*,

<sup>A. M. 2599. s</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1466.</sup> and served Baal and Ashtaroth.  
14 ¶ <sup>u</sup> And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he <sup>u</sup> delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and <sup>x</sup> he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they <sup>y</sup> could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and <sup>z</sup> as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

16 ¶ Nevertheless <sup>a</sup> the LORD raised up judges, which <sup>†</sup> delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

17 And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they <sup>b</sup> went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in; obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so.

18 And when the LORD raised them up judges, then <sup>c</sup> the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: <sup>d</sup> for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

19 And it came to pass, <sup>e</sup> when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and <sup>||</sup> corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they <sup>†</sup> ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

20 ¶ And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath <sup>g</sup> transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

21 <sup>h</sup> I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died:

22 <sup>i</sup> That through them I may <sup>k</sup> prove Israel, whether they will

or local tutelary deities of the countries wherein they were settled. In process of time this weakness increased to such a degree, that the rights of the tutelary deity of the country were acknowledged to be superior to those of the Gentilitical God of the conquerors. This might arise from the common opinion, that the favours of the local deity were particularly attached and confined to one certain spot; or from an apprehension of the strength of the inhabitants among whom they were settled, who would not have endured to have their god slighted, without vindicating his honour, and endeavouring to extirpate the offenders. This piece of complaisance and condescension the Israelites seem to have been guilty of, when they are said to have forsaken the Lord God of their fathers; and to have followed other gods, the gods of the people that were round about them. Their defection from the God of Israel did not, however, consist in rejecting him as a false god, or in renouncing the law of Moses as a false religion: but only in joining foreign worship and idolatrous ceremonies to the ritual of the true God." Div. Leg. vol. iv. p. 44.

Ver. 14, 15. *Sold them*—That is, delivered them up, as the seller doth his commodities, unto the buyer. *Whithersoever they went out*—That is, whatsoever expedition or business they undertook, which is equally signified by going out and coming in. *The hand of the Lord was against them for evil*—Disappointing their expectations, opposing and thwart-

ing their designs, and blasting all their prospects. *They were greatly distressed*—Thus is sin uniformly followed by suffering.

Ver. 16, 17. *Nevertheless the Lord raised up*—By inward inspiration and excitement of their hearts, and by outward designation testified by some extraordinary action. *Judges*—Supreme magistrates, whose office it was, under God, and by his particular direction, to govern the commonwealth of Israel by God's laws, and to protect and save them from their enemies, to preserve and purge religion, and to maintain the liberties of the people against all oppressors. *Yet they would not hearken to their judges*—Who admonished them of their sin and folly, and of the danger and misery which would certainly befall them.

Ver. 18, 19. *For it repented the Lord*—That is, the Lord changed his course and dealings with them, as penitent men use to do; removed his judgments, and returned to them in mercy. *When the judge was dead they returned*—To their former and usual course. *More than their fathers*—In Egypt, or in the wilderness. *Their own doings*—That is, from their evil practices, which he calls their own, because they were agreeable to their own natures, which in all mankind are deeply and universally corrupted, and because they were familiar and customary to them.

Ver. 22. *That through them I may prove Israel*—That I may try and see whether Israel will be true and faithful to

A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1408. keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.

1 Or. suffered. 23 Therefore the LORD || left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

## CHAP. III.

*A general account of Israel's enemies, ver. 1—7.  
A particular account of Othniel, ver. 8—11. Of Ehud, ver. 12—30, and of Shamgar, ver. 31.*

a Ch. 2. 21.  
22. **N**OW these are <sup>a</sup> the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, *even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;*

2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;

b Josh. 13.  
2. 3 *Namely,* <sup>b</sup> five lords of the Phi-

A. M. 2599.  
B. C. 1409. listines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.

4 <sup>c</sup> And they were to prove Israel c Ch. 2. 28. by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

5 ¶ <sup>d</sup> And the children of Israel d Ps. 106.  
25. dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:

6 And <sup>e</sup> they took their daughters e Exod. 24.  
16. to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. cl. 1408.

7 <sup>f</sup> And the children of Israel did f Ch. 2. 11. evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, <sup>g</sup> and g Ch. 2. 13. served Baalim and <sup>h</sup> the groves. h Exod. 24.  
17.

me, or whether they will suffer themselves to be corrupted by the counsels and examples of their bad neighbours.

CHAP. III. Ver. 1. *Now these are the nations, &c.*—The sacred historian having declared, in general, that God did not judge it proper to drive out all the Canaanites, because he intended to try the fidelity and zeal of his people in his service, proceeds now to enumerate the particular nations which remained unsubdued. *As many as had not known all the wars of Canaan*—That is, such as were born since the conclusion of the wars, or were but infants during their continuance, and therefore had no experience of them, nor of God's extraordinary power and providence manifested therein.

Ver. 2. *Only that the generations, &c.*—Le Clerc and some other versions, instead of *only put and*, this seeming to be a new and additional reason alleged why God left some of the Canaanitish nations in the land, viz. that the Israelites might be enured to war and hardship, and thereby be preserved from sinking into sloth and luxury; and that by the neighbourhood of such warlike enemies, and a knowledge of the danger they were in from them, they might never be carnally secure, but stand continually on their guard, and keep close to that God of whose protection and aid they had such great and constant need.

Ver. 3. *Five lords of the Philistines*—See Josh. xiii. 2, 3, and Judg. i. 18, where it appears that three of them had been, in some measure, subdued, but had now recovered their country again, in consequence of the slothful conduct

of the Israelites. *All the Canaanites*—Properly so called; who were very numerous, and dispersed through several parts of the land, whence they gave denomination to all the rest of the people. *Sidonians*—The people living near Zidon, and subject to its jurisdiction. *Baal-hermon*—Which was the eastern part about Lebanon.

Ver. 4. *To prove Israel*—That their piety and faithfulness to the one living and true God might appear, if they did not imitate these nations, and relapse into idolatry, and their baseness and degeneracy if they did. *To know whether they would hearken*—That is, that they themselves and others might know by experience.

Ver. 6, 7. *They took their daughters—and served their gods*—Were drawn to idolatry by the persuasions and examples of their yoke-fellows. *And served Baalim and the groves*—Or *Baalim in groves*; that is, false gods, or rather their images, set up under shady trees, contrary to the command given, Exod. xxxiv. 13. Some expositors, however, think the meaning is, *Baalim and Ashtaroth*, for by the addition of a single letter, the Hebrew word rendered *groves*, will be *Ashtaroth*, and the greater part of the versions so render it, understanding thereby *goddesses*, as distinguished from Baalim or lords. It must be acknowledged, however, that the trees themselves, which composed those shady retreats in which they placed their idols, and which were consecrated to their honour, were accounted sacred by the ancient Pagans, and held in great veneration. They decorated them with ribbands and lights, made vows to them, and hung the spoils of their enemies upon them: insomuch that it was

A.M. 2610.  
B. C. 1391.

i Ch. 9. 14.  
k Hab. 3. 7.  
cir. 1402.  
† Heb. A-  
rammah-  
rainm.

8 ¶ Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of <sup>k</sup>Chushan-rishathaim king of † Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years.

l Ch. 4. 3. & 1  
G. 7.

m Ch. 2. 16.  
† Heb. saviour.  
cir. 1391.  
n Ch. 1. 13.

9 And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a † deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, *even* <sup>n</sup>Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother:

o Num. 97.  
p Ch. 6.  
34.  
q Chron. 15. 1.  
† Heb. war.

10 And <sup>o</sup>the Spirit of the LORD † came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of † Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim.

† Heb. A-  
ramm.

customary for travellers to stop, when they were to pass by them, and approach them with veneration and religious awe, as if they had been the habitation of some god.

Ver. 8. *He sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim*—So that the first enemies that oppressed the Israelites were the Syrians; who, either out of hatred, or a desire to enlarge their dominions, came over the Euphrates, and invaded them, and kept them in subjection eight years. *King of Mesopotamia*—Which was that part of Syria which lay between the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates. This lay at such a distance, that one would not have thought Israel's trouble should have come from such a far country; but this shews so much the more that the hand of God was in it.

Ver. 9, 10. *When the children of Israel cried unto the Lord*—When they returned to him in repentance, acknowledged him to be their only Protector and Saviour, and prayed fervently for pardon and deliverance. *The Lord raised up a deliverer*—Qualified a person for, and called him to the great work of delivering them. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon him*—With extraordinary influence, endowing him with singular wisdom and courage, and stirring him up to this great undertaking. *Judged Israel*—That is pleaded and avenged the cause of Israel against their oppressors. *And went out to war*—The sacred historian gives us no further account of this war than that Othniel obtained a victory over the king of Mesopotamia, and a peace which lasted forty years. This victory and deliverance of Israel, it seems, happened about thirty-eight years after the death of Joshua.

Ver. 12. *And the children of Israel did evil again*—This was the case of the Israelites during all the time of their judges: the same person who freed them from servitude, purified them also from idolatry; but he was no sooner dead, than their religion was at an end, though their peace and

A.M. 2609.  
B.C. 1392.

r Ch. 2. 19.

cir. 1354.

q 1 Sam. 13. 9.

r Ch. 5. 14.

s Ch. 1. 10.

t Dent. 92. 40.

cir. 1336.

u Ver. 9.

v Or, the son of Gemai.

11 And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

12 ¶ <sup>p</sup>And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened <sup>q</sup>Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and <sup>r</sup>Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed <sup>s</sup>the city of palm trees.

14 So the children of Israel <sup>t</sup>serviced Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

15 ¶ But when the children of Israel <sup>u</sup>cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, <sup>v</sup>|| a Benjamite;

happiness were sure to expire with it. Thus every epocha of their history, during the administration of the judges, is only an alternate succession of sinning and contrition, of servitude and deliverance. This may evince what a mighty influence even one good man, in authority, may have over a whole people. *The Lord strengthened Eglon*—By giving him courage, and power, and success against them. As God raised up deliverers to Israel, when they became penitent, so he spirited up enemies against them, and gave them power to oppress them, whenever they revolted from his service.

Ver. 13, 14, *City of Palm-trees*—That is, Jericho. Not the city which was demolished, but the territory belonging to it. Here he fixed his camp, for the fertility of that soil, and because of its nearness to the passage over Jordan, which was most commodious both for the conjunction of his own forces, which lay on both sides of Jordan, to prevent the conjunction of the Israelites in Canaan with their brethren beyond Jordan, and to secure his retreat into his own country. *Eighteen years*—The former servitude lasted but eight years; this eighteen; for if smaller troubles do not the work, God will send greater.

Ver. 15. *A Benjamite*—This tribe was next to Eglon, and doubtless most afflicted by him; and hence God raised a deliverer. *Left handed*—Which is here noted, as a considerable circumstance in the following story. The Seventy render the word *αριστεροχεις*, *Who could use both his hands alike*, which is probably the true meaning, as the same quality is ascribed to 700 chosen men of the tribe of Benjamin, Chap. xxvi. 16, all of whom one can hardly believe to have had no use of their right hands. *The children of Israel sent a present*—Some interpreters understand by this, the tribute which had been imposed upon them; but it rather signifies a voluntary present above their usual payments; where, by they hoped to mollify his mind, and render him favour.



A. M. 2668.  
B. C. 1336. a man † left-handed: and by him  
† Heb. that  
of his  
right.  
Ch. 20. 16. the children of Israel sent a present  
unto Eglon the king of Moab.

16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.

17 And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.

18 And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.

19 But he himself turned again \* from the || quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him.

20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in † a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.

21 And Ehud put forth his left

able to them. For the Hebrew word *Mincha*, is used for such offerings as were presented to God in order to obtain his gracious regards.

Ver. 16. *Ehud made him a dagger*—It is probable, that none of the Israelites were suffered to wear arms, and therefore this particular is mentioned of Ehud; and that he wore it under his upper garment to conceal it: for it does not appear that he made it purposely for the occasion, in which, we are told in the following verses, he employed it. *A cubit length*—Long enough for his design, and not too long for concealment. *His right thigh*—Which was most convenient both for the use of his left hand, and for avoiding suspicion.

Ver. 18, 19. *He sent away the people*—He accompanied them part of the way, and then dismissed them, and returned to Eglon alone, that so he might have more easy access to him. He himself turned again from the quarries. As if he had forgotten some important business. Houbigant takes the word *פסילים*, *pesilim*, here rendered *quarries*, for the name of a place. But the Septuagint and Vulgate take it for *graven images*, as indeed it commonly signifies in the Scriptures, and as it is rendered in the margin of our Bibles. Some suppose that these images had been placed there by the Moabites, in contempt of the God of Israel, who had so long honoured Gilgal with his presence; and that they might ascribe the subjection of the land to their idols, as the Israelites gave the glory of their conquests to the true God: And they farther suppose that when Ehud beheld these idolatrous images, he was inflamed with zeal and indignation, so that instead of proceeding any farther in his return home, he went back with a full resolution to revenge the indignity offered to the Divine Majesty, as well as the oppression of his people. *Who said, Keep silence*—That is, forbear to speak till my servants are withdrawn. For he would not have them to be made acquainted with a business which he supposed to be of great importance.

Ver. 20. *He was sitting in a summer parlour*—Into which, it is probable, he used to retire from company; which is mentioned as the reason why his servants waited so long ere they went in to him, Ver. 25. *I have a message from God unto thee*—To be delivered not in words, but by actions. This was true if Ehud was stirred up to this, as it appears he was, by a divine influence. Ehud, however, expressed

himself in this manner to remove from the king any apprehensions of danger; and likewise to oblige him to rise from his seat, which Ehud knew he would do, since such was the common practice of the heathen, when receiving, or expecting to receive messages from the gods they worshipped. He designedly made use of the word *Elohim*, which was common both to the true God and the Pagan deities; and not the word *Jehovah*, which was peculiar to the true God; because thus Eglon, not knowing whether the message came not from his own false god, would have the greater inclination to rise, whereby Ehud would have an opportunity of directing his blow in the most advantageous manner: Whereas he would possibly have shewn his contempt of the God of Israel, by sitting still to hear his message. *And he arose out of his seat*—In token of reverence to God. This is a remarkable instance of the ancient veneration men paid to whatsoever carried the name and authority of God in it, and it reproaches those who can now presume to behave themselves irreverently, even in the time and place of divine worship.

Ver. 21. *Ehud put forth his hand and took the dagger*—It is justly observed by Dr. Dodd, that this action of Ehud “is certainly amongst the number of those which are not to be imitated without that which gave it all its sanction; namely, a divine commission. The text expressly says, *The Lord raised up Ehud*; and it is well known that all the deliverances, which the Jews had under the Judges, were directed and conducted by the immediate hand of God, according as the people, by their repentance, became fit to receive them. A divine warrant, in such a case, is a clear ground to go upon, but it can be no precedent for others to go upon, who have no divine warrant at all, but quite the contrary. What is reason and understanding given us for, but to distinguish upon cases and circumstances?” As reasons why God excited Ehud to this action, it may be observed, that Eglon had been the aggressor, and that he was the oppressor of God’s people, and held them under a cruel subjection and bondage; that he was undoubtedly guilty of great injustice and violence towards them, and, in all probability, continued to make many thousands of them miserable daily, by means of their servitude, which he had no right to do. Therefore God, who had called Ehud to the office of delivering and governing Israel, stirred him up on this occasion, to take this method of cutting off their enemy and oppressor.

A.M. 2668.  
B.C. 1336.

A.M. 266.  
B.C. 1336.

hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly :

22 And the haft also went in after the blade ; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly ; and || the dirt came out.

23 Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.

24 When he was gone out, his servants came ; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he || covereth his feet in his summer chamber.

25 And they tarried till they were ashamed : and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour ; therefore they took a key, and opened them : and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.

26 And Ehud escaped while they

tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.

27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that y he blew a trumpet in the z mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.

28 And he said unto them, Follow after me : for a the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took b the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.

29 And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all † lusty, and all men of valour ; and there escaped not a man.

30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And c the land had rest fourscore years.

31 ¶ And after him was d Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of

Or, it came out at the fundament.

Or, doeth his case-ment, 1 Sam. 24. 3.

Ch. 5. 14.  
A. 6. 34.  
z Josh. 17. 15.

Ch. 7. 9. 15.

b Josh. 2. 7. Ch. 12. 6.

† Heb. fat.

c Ver. 11.

d Ch. 5. 6, 8. It seems to concern only the country next to the Philistines.

Ver. 22. *And the dirt came out*—The Hebrew word פִּרְסוֹתָא, *parschedona*, here translated *dirt*, is found only in this place. It is from the Chaldee that it is thus rendered, and all agree that it signifies the excrements.

Ver. 23. *Ehud went forth*—With a composed countenance and motion, being well assured that God, who by his extraordinary call had excited him to this enterprize, would, by his special providence, carry him through it. *And shut the doors upon him*—Upon, or after himself. *And locked them*—Either pulling them closely after him, as we do, when doors have spring-locks ; or taking the key with him.

Ver. 24. *He covereth his feet*—This phrase is used only here, and 1 Sam. xxiv. 3. A late judicious interpreter expounds it, of composing himself to take a little sleep, as it was very usual to do in the day-time in those hot countries. And when they did so in cool places, such as this summer parlour unquestionably was, they used to cover their feet. And this may seem to be the more probable, both because the summer parlour was proper for this use, and because this was a more likely reason of their long waiting at his door, lest they should disturb his repose. And this sense best agrees with Saul's case in the cave, when being asleep, David could more securely cut off the lap of his garment.

Ver. 25. *They tarried till they were ashamed*—Till they were in great confusion, not conceiving what could cause him to sleep so much longer than usual ; and not knowing what to say or think, afraid that they should either disturb him, or be guilty of neglect towards him. *They took a key and opened them*—Another key, it being usual in the courts of

kings for more persons than one to be intrusted with keys to the same room.

Ver. 27, 28. *He blew a trumpet*—In order to summon those who were disposed to recover their liberty to take arms and follow him. *And the children of Israel went down with him*—Whom doubtless he had prepared by his emissaries, and gathered together in considerable numbers. With these he attacked the Moabites who were in garrisons on the west of Jordan, and slew 10,000 of their best men ; which utterly broke the power of Moab, and freed the Israelites from the yoke of that nation. *They took the fords of Jordan*—Where that river was usually passed, that neither the Moabites that were in Canaan might escape, nor any more Moabites come over Jordan to their succour.

Ver. 30. *The land had rest fourscore years*—Not the whole land of Israel, but the eastern part of it, which had thus shaken off the yoke of Moab. For in the mean time the Philistines invaded the western parts, as it here follows, and were repulsed by Shamgar ; and Jabin afflicted the northern, as it follows in the next chapter.

Ver. 31. *After him was Shamgar*—He was the third judge of the Israelites, and delivered them from some small oppressions which they suffered from the Philistines. The sacred text gives us no further particulars concerning him than that he slew six hundred of them with an ox-goad ; or, as the Latin and Greek versions render it, with a plough-share. Indeed the Hebrew מַלְמַד הַבָּקָר, *malmad habakar*, signifies any instrument by which oxen are broken to labour. The Philistines, it seems, were more careful than any other nation to

A. M. 2664.  
B. C. 1536.  
e 1 Sam. 17.  
47, 50.  
f Ch. 2. 16.  
g So part  
is called  
Israel,  
Ch. 4. 1,  
3, &c.

the Philistines six hundred men <sup>e</sup> with  
an ox goad; <sup>f</sup> and he also delivered  
<sup>g</sup> Israel.

CHAP. IV.

*Israel revolting from God, is oppressed by Jabin, ver. 1—3. Deborah conceals their deliverance with Barak, ver. 4—9. Barak takes the field and conquers, ver. 10—16. Sisera flies and is killed, ver. 17—21. Barak sees him, and Israel is delivered, ver. 22—24.*

cir. 1316.  
a Ch. 2. 19.

**A**ND <sup>a</sup> the children of Israel again  
did evil in the sight of the  
LORD, when Ehud was dead.

b Ch. 2. 14.

2 And the LORD <sup>b</sup> sold them into  
the hand of Jabin king of Canaan,

strip the Israelites of all their military weapons whenever they had them in subjection; and if this was the case at present, it is likely that the expression means only such rustic instruments as he could lay his hand on. It is probable he was following the plough when the Philistines made an inroad into the country, and having neither sword nor spear, when God put it into his heart to oppose them, he took up the instrument which was next at hand. "It is no matter," says Henry, "how weak the weapon is, if God direct and strengthen the arm. An ox-goad, when God pleaseth, shall do more than Goliath's sword. And sometimes he chooseth to work by such unlikely means, that the excellency of the power may appear to be of God," and that he may have all the glory. If we may believe Mr. Maundrel, however, he saw goads used in Palestine which were of an extraordinary size, several of them being about eight feet long, and at the thicker end six inches in circumference. They were armed, he tells us, at the smaller end, with a sharp prickle for driving the oxen, and at the other end with a small spade or paddle of iron, strong and massy, for cleansing the plough from the clay that is wont to encumber it in working. And he conjectures it was with such a goad as one of these that Shamgar made this prodigious slaughter, and judges that such an instrument "was not less fit, perhaps fitter than a sword for such an execution."—See Journey from Aleppo, p. 110. It is evident, however, that the sacred writer here does not attribute the slaughter made, and victory obtained by Shamgar to the excellency of the weapon which he used, but to the power of God.

CHAP. IV. Ver. 2. *Jabin*—This Jabin was probably descended from the other prince of that name, who fell by the hands of Joshua, Josh. xi. 11. He doubtless had watched all opportunities to recover his ancient possessions, and to revenge his own and his father's quarrel. *King of Canaan*—That is, of the land where most of the Canaanites, strictly so called, now dwelt, which seems to have been the northern part of Canaan. *That reigned in Hazor*—In the territory or kingdom of Hazor, which might now be restored to its former extent and power. Perhaps he had seized

A. M. 2664.  
B. C. 1516.  
c Josh. 11.  
1, 10.  
d 1 Sam. 17.  
9. Pa. 55.  
9.  
It seems  
to concern only  
North Is-  
rael.  
e Ver. 13.  
f Ch. 1. 19.  
g Ch. 5. 8.

that reigned in <sup>c</sup> Hazor; the captain  
of whose host *was* <sup>d</sup> Sisera, which  
dwelt in <sup>e</sup> Harosheth of the Gentiles.

3 And the children of Israel cried  
unto the LORD: for he had nine hun-  
dred <sup>f</sup> chariots of iron; and twenty  
years <sup>g</sup> he mightily oppressed the  
children of Israel.

4 ¶ And Deborah, a prophetess,  
the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Is-  
rael at that time.

5 <sup>b</sup> And she dwelt under the palm <sup>b</sup> Gen. 35. 8.  
tree of Deborah between Ramath  
and Beth-el in mount Ephraim: and  
the children of Israel came up to her  
for judgment. cir. 1996.

on the spot where Hazor formerly stood, and rebuilt that city. *Harosheth of the Gentiles*—So called, because it was much frequented and inhabited by the Gentiles; either by the Canaanites, who being beaten out of their former possessions, seated themselves in those northern parts; or by other nations coming thither for traffick, whence Galilee, where this was, is called Galilee of the Gentiles.

Ver. 3. *Mightily oppressed*—More than former tyrants; from his malice and hatred against the Israelites; and from God's just judgment, the growing punishment being suitable to their aggravated wickedness.

Ver. 4. *A prophetess*—Such a one as Miriam, Exod. xv. 23; Huldah, 2 Kings xxii. 14, and divers others; but the word *prophets* or *prophetesses* is ambiguous, sometimes being meant of persons extraordinarily inspired by God, and endowed with the power of working miracles, and foretelling things to come; and sometimes of persons endowed with special gifts or graces, for the better understanding and discoursing about the word and mind of God. Of this sort were the sons of the prophets, or such as were bred in the schools of the prophets, who are often called prophets, as 1 Sam. x. 5, 10. And because we read nothing of Deborah's miraculous actions, some have thought she was only a woman of eminent holiness, and knowledge of the holy Scriptures, by which she was singularly qualified for judging the people according to the laws of God. It appears, however, from Verses 7, 9, that she was endowed with the gift of prophecy, properly so called, or of foretelling, at least in some instances, future events. *Judged Israel*—That is, determined causes and controversies arising among the Israelites, as is implied, Ver. 5. And this Jabin might suffer to be done, especially by a woman. Yet the frequent discharge of this part of the judge's office, whereby she gained great power and authority with the people, did, in a peculiar manner, (though not observed by the tyrant), prepare the way for her sliding into the other part of her office, which was to defend and rescue the people from their enemies.

Ver. 5. *And she dwelt*—Or, as the Septuagint and Vulgate understand it, *she sat*: she had her judgment-seat in the open air, under the shadow of that tree; which was an emblem of

A. M. 2704.  
B. C. 1246.  
i Mcbr. 11.  
32.  
k Josh. 19.  
37.

6 And she sent and called <sup>i</sup> Barak the son of Abinoam out <sup>k</sup> of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, *saying*, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?

<sup>l</sup> Exod. 14. 4. <sup>m</sup> Ch. 5. 21. 7 And <sup>l</sup> I will draw unto thee to the <sup>m</sup> river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand.

8 And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, *then* I will not go.

9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for

thine honour; for the LORD shall <sup>A. M. 2705.  
B. C. 1246.</sup> sell Sisera into the hand of a wo- <sup>a</sup> Ch. 2. 14. man. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

10 ¶ Barak called <sup>o</sup> Zebulun and <sup>o</sup> Ch. 5. 16. Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men <sup>p</sup> at his <sup>p</sup> Exod. 11. 8. feet: and Deborah went up with him.

11 Now Heber <sup>q</sup> the Kenite, *which* <sup>q</sup> Ch. 1. 16. was of the children of <sup>r</sup> Hobab the <sup>r</sup> Num. 10. 29. father-in-law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, <sup>s</sup> which is by Kedesh. <sup>s</sup> Ver. 6.

12 And they shewed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor.

13 And Sisera <sup>†</sup> gathered together <sup>†</sup> Heb. gathered by cry, or proclamation. all his chariots, *even* nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people

the justice she administered there: thriving and growing against opposition, as the palm-tree does under pressures. *Came to her*—To have their suits and causes determined by her sentence.

Ver. 6. *Called Barak*—By virtue of that power which God had given her, and the people owned in her. *Out of Kedesh-naphtali*—So called, to distinguish it from other places of that name, one in Judah, and another in Issachar. *Hath not the Lord, &c.*—That is, assuredly God hath commanded thee; this is not the fancy of a weak woman, which peradventure thou mightest despise; but the command of the great God by my mouth. *Mount Tabor*—A place most fit for his purpose, as being in the borders of divers tribes, and having a large plain at the top of it, where he might conveniently marshal and discipline his army. *Naphtali and Zebulun*—These shé names because they were nearest and best known to Barak, and therefore would soonest be brought together; because they were nearest to the enemy, and therefore must speedily be assembled, or else they were likely to be hindered in their design; whilst the other tribes, being at a distance, had better opportunity of gathering forces for their succour; and because these had most smarted under this oppressor, who was in the heart of their country; but these are not named exclusively, as appears by the concurrence of some other tribes.

Ver. 7. *Draw to thee*—By my secret and powerful providence, ordering and over-ruling his inclinations. In fixing the very place, she gave him a sign which might confirm his faith, when he came to engage.

Ver. 8. *If thou wilt go with me then I will go*—No doubt he thought he had great reason for making this resolution; because he might want her advice in doubtful matters, and

her authority also, both to raise men and to keep them together in good order, and likewise to inspire them with courage. His offer to go with her, shews the truth of his faith, for which he is praised, Heb. xi. 32; but his refusal to go without her, shews the weakness of his faith, that he could not trust God's bare word, as he ought to have done, without the pledge of the presence of his prophetess.

Ver. 9. *The journey thou takest*—Heb. *The way thou takest*, which may mean the course he had resolved upon, not to go without her. *Shall not be for thine honour*—Though his faith was accepted, yet the weakness of it somewhat eclipsed his glory. *The Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman*—It is greatly to the honour of a conqueror to take the general of the enemy's army, or to kill him with his own hand; which, she tells him, should be denied him, as a small punishment for his diffidence and reluctance to comply with her directions; and as he would not go without a woman, so a woman should take away his honour from him.

Ver. 10. *With ten thousand men at his feet*—That is following him as their leader. Possibly it also intimates that they were all footmen; there being no horses in Judea but what were brought out of other countries. This made the victory the more glorious, by the overthrow of a vast number of chariots and horses in the opposite army.

Ver. 11, 12. *Now Heber the Kenite*—The husband of Jael. *Had severed himself from the Kenites*—From the rest of his brethren, who lived in the wilderness of Judah. What the reason was of his leaving them is not known; but there was a special providence of God in it. *Pitched his tent*—That is, his dwelling, which probably was in tents, as shepherds used to live. *They shewed Sisera*—That is, his people shewed him, or his spies.

A. M. 2786.  
B. C. 1296.

that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

14 And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: 'is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.

Dent. 9. 3.  
2 Sam. 8.  
24.Ps. 83. 9.  
10.

15 And the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet.

16 But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto

Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not † a man left.

A. M. 2786.  
B. C. 1296.

† Heb. unto one.

17 ¶ Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle.

Or, rug.  
or blanket.

19 And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink;

Ver. 14. *Deborah said unto Barak, Up*—Heb. *Arise*, Delay not. If we have ground to believe that God goes before us we may well go on with courage and cheerfulness. *Is not the Lord gone before thee?*—Namely, as general of thine army, to fight for thee. *So Barak went down*—He did not make use of the advantage which he had of the hill, where he might have been out of the reach of Sisera's iron chariots, but boldly marched down into the valley, to give him the opportunity of using all his horses and chariots, that so the victory might be more glorious.

Ver. 15. *The Lord discomfited Sisera*—The particulars of the battle are not recorded in the sacred text; but it evidently appears from thence that there was something extraordinary and miraculous in this defeat of Jabin's host. The Hebrew word *יָהָם*, *jaham*, imports that they were discomfited with great terror and noise, probably with thunder, lightning, and hail-stones, poured upon them from heaven, as is implied, Chap. v. 20; and as the same word is used, Josh. x. 10, and 1 Sam. vii. 10. Josephus confirms this opinion, assuring us that "as soon as the armies were engaged, there arose a prodigious tempest of hail and rain, which drove in the faces of the Canaanites, and occasioned a total rout of them."—Antiq. lib. v. Cap. v. The heavens, therefore, had the principal share in this great overthrow. *With the edge of the sword*—That is, by the sword of Barak and his army, whose ministry God used; but so, it seems, that they had little else to do but to kill those whom God, by more powerful arms, had put to flight. *And fled away on his feet*—He thought his chariot not swift enough to carry him out of danger, and imagined he should be less exposed to observation, and less liable to be discovered, when he fled like a common soldier. To which we may add, that in ancient times valiant men were wonderfully swift of foot; as is observed of Asahel, 2 Sam. ii. 18; and every one knows it was the character of Achilles among the Greeks.

Ver. 16, 17. *There was not a man left*—In the field; for there were some who fled away, as Sisera did. *The tent of*

*Jael*—For women had their tents apart from their husbands. And here he probably thought he would be more secret and secure than in her husband's tent, or in any other place in that encampment, as it would have been a much greater insult to Heber for any Israelite to search for him there than in any other of his tents. *For there was peace between Jabin and the house of Heber*—Not a covenant of friendship which they were forbidden to make with the Canaanites, but a cessation of hostilities which Jabin granted them, because they were peaceable people, abhorring war, and wholly minding pasturage, and were not Israelites, with whom his principal quarrel was. Add to this, that God disposed his heart to favour those who were careful to shun idolatry, and other sins wherewith Israel had corrupted themselves.

Ver. 18, 19. *Jael said unto him, Turn in, my lord*—If Jael now intended to betray and deliver him to Barak, or otherwise to injure him, her addressing him in this manner was dissimulation and treachery, and is not to be excused. But it is highly probable that she had now no other intention towards him, in inviting him into her tent, than merely to afford him that shelter and protection which he sought of her, and such relief and refreshment as she would have afforded to any weary and distressed Israelite. Accordingly she covered him with a mantle, that he might take rest in sleep, and when he asked for a little water to drink, because he was thirsty, she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink.—In what she did afterwards she seems to have been actuated by a divine impulse or suggestion, of which she had beforehand neither thought nor conception. God, it must be remembered, had foretold by the prophetess, not only before the battle, but before the enterprize to shake off the yoke of Jabin was undertaken, that he would deliver Sisera, "into the hand of a woman," Ver. 9. This method then, God, who is wise in all his ways, and holy in all his works, took to accomplish the prediction. He brought Sisera to Jael's tent, disposed her mind to invite him in, and when he lay sunk in sleep, powerfully suggested to her mind what before was the very

A. M. 2710.  
B. C. 1296.  
x Ch. 5. 25.

for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him.

20 Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent; and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? that thou shalt say, No.

y Ch. 5. 26.  
† Heb. put

21 ¶ Then Jael Heber's wife y took a nail of the tent, and † took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.

22 And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.

reverse of all her thoughts, viz. to take his life, and that in a way so very singular and unprecedented, that one can hardly suppose she would ever have thought of it, had not God put it into her mind, and impelled her to it. Bishop Patrick justly observes, "she might as well have let Sisera lie in his profound sleep till Barak took him, if she had not felt a divine power moving her to this, that the prophecy of Deborah might be fulfilled." Dr. Waterland is of the same opinion. "It can scarce be doubted," says he, "but that Jael had a divine direction or impulse to stir her up to this action. The enterprize was exceeding bold and hazardous, above the courage of her sex, and the resolution she took very extraordinary, and so it has the marks and tokens of its being from the extraordinary hand of God." Certainly, as Dr. Dodd remarks, "Nothing but this authority from God could warrant such a fact, which seemed a breach of hospitality, and to be attended with several other crimes; but was not so when God, the Lord of all men's lives, ordered her to execute his sentence upon Sisera. In this view all is clear and right, and no objectors will be able to prove there was any treachery in it: for she ought to obey God rather than man; and all obligations to man cease, when brought in competition with our higher obligations towards God." And that this is the true view of the action appears still more evident from the celebration of it by Deborah the prophetess, in an hymn or song of solemn praise and thanksgiving offered to God on the occasion of it, See Chap. v. 24—27. In Dr. Leland's answer to *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, p. 2, and in Saurin's 11th Discourse, Vol. 3,

23 ¶ So \* God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

24 And the hand of the children of Israel † prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

A. M. 2710.  
B. C. 1296.  
z Ps. 18. 47.

† Heb.  
going  
went and  
was hard.

## CHAP. V.

*Deborah's song begins with praise, ver. 1—3. Compares God's present appearance for them with his appearance on mount Sinai, ver. 4, 5. Describes the condition they were in before, ver. 6—8. Calls all the delivered to join in praise, ver. 9—13. Commends those tribes that were forward in the war, and censures those that declined the service, ver. 14—19. Takes notice how God fought for them, and how Jael slew Sisera, ver. 20—30. Concludes with prayer, ver. 31.*

THEN \* sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

cir. 1006.  
A Exod. 15.  
1. Ps. 124.  
title.

the reader will find a more complete justification of this affair.

Ver. 21, 22. *Then Jael—took a nail of the tent*—That is, one of that sort on which the cords of the tent were fastened, and which consequently were of a large size. *Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest*—Thus both parts of Deborah's prophecy concerning Sisera were fulfilled. He was delivered into the hand of Barak, according to the prediction, Ver. 7; but not alive, and therefore not to Barak's honour, as was foretold, Ver. 9. For, *when he came into her tent, behold Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.*

CHAP. V. Ver. 1. *Then sang Deborah*—The composer of this song, one of whose special gifts, as a prophetess, it was to sing God's praises, 1 Chron. xxv. 1—3. *And Barak*, who was now probably become a judge, in consequence of this great deliverance which God had wrought by him. *On that day*—In which they had completed their victory, by the destruction of Jabin's kingdom. Whether they two only sang this song, or the elders of the people, called together into one assembly, sang it with them, is not certain. The text, however, only speaks of its being sung by them two; and Dr. Kennicott has expressed his opinion strongly, that they sang it in alternate verses, answering each other, and that the not observing this has rendered many parts of it obscure, and of difficult interpretation, and destroyed the force and beauty of the whole. "It is certain," says he, "though very little attended to, that it is said to have been

A. M. 9108.  
B. C. 1296.  
b Pa. 18. 47.  
c 3 Chron.  
17. 16.

2 Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.

d Deut. 32.  
1, 3.

3 Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.



sung by Deborah and by Barak. It is also certain, there are in it parts, which Deborah could not sing; as well as parts which Barak could not sing. And therefore, it seems necessary, in order to form a better judgment of this song, that some probable distribution should be made of it; whilst those words, which seem most likely to have been sung by either party, should be assigned to their proper name; either to that of Deborah the prophetess, or that of Barak the captain-general. For example: Deborah could not call upon Deborah, exhorting herself to awake, &c.: as in Ver. 12. Neither could Barak exhort himself to arise, &c. in the same Verse. Again: Barak could not sing, *Till I Deborah arose, a mother in Israel*, in Ver. 7. Nor could Deborah sing about a damsel or two for every soldier, in Ver. 30: though indeed, as to this last article, the words are probably misunderstood." The Doctor, therefore, to do more justice, as he judges, to "this celebrated song," which, he says, "is deservedly admired, furnishes us with a new translation of it, assigning therein to Deborah and Barak, the parts which he supposes each to have sung, and representing them, through the whole, as answering each other. See Kennicott's Remarks on Select Passages of the Old Testament, p. 94. We must leave the reader to judge for himself, what weight there is in what the Doctor advances, and shall only observe as to this hymn in general, that, like the songs of Moses, Exod. xv.; and Deut. xxxii; it is distinguished in the Hebrew, as being poetry, and in our present translation would appear to more advantage, if printed in Hemisticks. See on Deut. xxxii. 1. It must be evident to every reader, that it is expressed in another kind of style, than that of the historical part of this Book; and in language so majestic, in such a variety of elegant figures, and such natural expressions of those affections which the occasion requires, that none of the ancient Greek or Latin poets have equalled the noble flow of these divine strains.

Ver. 2. *Praise ye the Lord*, &c.—This Verse seems to be no more than the Exordium, or Preface to the song, expressing the subject or occasion of it, viz. *the avenging of Israel*, or the deliverance of them from Canaanitish slavery, and the people's willingly offering themselves to battle. Houbigant renders the Verse thus,

"Because the leaders of Israel undertook the war, Because the people willingly offered themselves, Praise ye the Lord."—And Dr. Kennicott supposes, that the first line was sung by Deborah: that Barak answered her in the second, and that they both joined in the last, which, according to the Hebrew, he more properly translates, *Bless ye Jehovah*.

Ver. 3. *Hear, O ye kings*, &c.—The prophetess begins her song with summoning the attention of the neighbouring kings and princes, that they might understand and lay to heart what God had done for Israel, and learn from thence not to op-

A. M. 9108.  
B. C. 1296.  
c Deut. 32.  
2.

4 LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.

2a Sam. 22.  
8.

5 The mountains † melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai

d Deut. 4.  
11.  
Ps. 97. 5.  
Heb. flowed.  
h Exod. 19.  
18.



press them, lest the same vengeance which had fallen upon Jabin and his people, should be inflicted on them. *I, even I, will sing unto the Lord*—She declares that Jehovah should be the object of her praise, who, she would have the world to know, was superior to all in power, and would defend his people while they depended on him alone.

Ver. 4. *Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir*—Thus the prophetess, by a sudden apostrophe, addresses him, not as their present deliverer, but as the God who had formerly exerted his miraculous power to bring them into the promised land; leaving her hearers to recollect, that it was the same power which had now subdued the Canaanites, that at first expelled them; the same power which had now restored to the Israelites the free enjoyment of their country, that at first put them in possession of it. In other words, being to praise God for the present mercies, she takes her rise higher, and begins her song with the commemoration of the ancient deliverances afforded by God to his people; and the rather, because of the great resemblance this had to them, in the miraculous manner of them. *Seir and Edom* are the same place, and these two expressions mean the same thing, even God's marching at the head of his people, from Seir or Edom, towards the land of Canaan. *The earth trembled*—God prepared the way for his people, and struck a dread into their enemies, by earthquakes, as well as by other terrible signs. *The heavens dropped*—That is, thou didst send storms and tempests, thunder and lightning, and other tokens of thy displeasure upon thine enemies. The Books of Moses, indeed, do not mention any earthquake as happening, during their march from Seir in Edom, to war against Sihon and Og, and take possession of their land; but it is highly probable, from what is repeatedly spoken of the terror occasioned by their march, and the universal fear that was spread round because of them, that it was attended with such commotions of nature. See Psal. lxxviii. 7, 8; Isai. lxiv. 3; Hab. iii. 6; Deut. i. 19, 20.

Ver. 5. *The mountains melted*—Or flowed with floods of water, poured out of the clouds upon them, and from them flowing down in mighty streams upon the lower grounds, and carrying down part of the mountains with them. *Even that Sinai*—Or rather, *As did Sinai itself*. The whole verse might be better translated, *The mountains flowed down at the presence of Jehovah; as did Sinai itself at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel*. And Dr. Kennicott supposes that, when the ode was sung, the first clause was uttered by Deborah, the second by Barak, and that they both joined in the third. The prophetess here slides into the mention of a more ancient appearance of God for his people at Sinai, it being usual with the inspired writers, in repeating former actions, to put divers together in a narrow compass. The sense is, No wonder that the mountains of the Amorites and Canaanites melted and trembled, when thou didst lead thy



A. M. 2708.  
B. C. 1296.

from before the LORD God of Israel.

<sup>l</sup> Ch. 3. 31.

6 In the days of <sup>i</sup> Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of <sup>k</sup> Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the † travellers walked through † by-ways.

<sup>l</sup> Lev. 20. 22.  
<sup>2</sup> Chron. 15. 5.

† Heb. *walkers of paths.*  
† Heb. *crooked ways.*

7 *The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose* <sup>m</sup> *a mother in Israel.*

<sup>m</sup> Isa. 49. 35.

people towards them; for even Sinai itself could not bear thy presence, but melted in like manner before thee.

Ver. 6. *In the days of Shamgar, &c.*—In this and the two following verses Deborah, to give the Israelites a just sense of their deliverance, and excite them to greater thankfulness, represents the miseries to which the Canaanites had reduced them by twenty years oppression; their public roads or highways were deserted for fear of robbers or violence; their villages depopulated; their cities blocked up, and their country overrun with the enemy's soldiers; whilst themselves were disarmed, dispirited, and helpless; till it pleased God to look down upon them with compassion, and raise up deliverance for them. *In the days of Jael, &c.*—Jael, though an illustrious woman, effected nothing for the deliverance of God's people. *The travellers walked through by-ways*—Because of the Philistines and Canaanites, who, besides the public burdens which they laid upon the Israelites, waited for all opportunities to do them mischief secretly; watching for travellers in common roads, as is usual with enemies in times of war; and, because of the wicked even of their own people, who having cast off the fear of God, and there being no king in Israel to punish them, broke forth into acts of injustice and violence, even against their own brethren. The Jael mentioned in this verse is generally taken to be the wife of Heber, who slew Sisera. But "the phrase, *in the days of Jael*, implies times past, and supposes that Jael was dead as well as Shamgar. Besides, what honour could redound to the prophetess from such a comparison? Is it worthy of a boast, that she, who was judge in Israel, had done more in delivering them from the enemy than Heber's wife, who was only a sojourner in Israel, and whose husband was at peace with the enemy? The Jael, therefore, here mentioned, seems to have been a prophetess raised up before Deborah to judge Israel, but who died without delivering them. It is true indeed, the name of this prophetess is not mentioned before; but neither are any of the transactions of the time in which she is supposed to have lived recorded; nor is Shamgar's name mentioned more than once, Chap. iii. 31, and then principally on account of that single exploit, of slaying six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad."—Dodd.

Ver. 7. *The inhabitants of the villages ceased*—The people forsook all their unfortified towns, not being able to protect them from military insolence. *A mother*—That is, to be to them as a mother, to instruct, and rule, and protect them, which duties a mother owes to her children.

Ver. 8. *They chose, &c.*—That is, the Israelites, after the death of Ehud forsook the Lord, and served other gods.

8 They "chose new gods; then *was war in the gates*: ° was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?

A. M. 2708.  
B. C. 1296.

<sup>n</sup> Deut. 34. 16.  
<sup>o</sup> So 1 Sam. 15. 19, 22.

9 My heart *is* toward the governors of Israel, that <sup>p</sup> offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.

<sup>p</sup> Ver. 2.

10 || <sup>q</sup> Speak, ye <sup>r</sup> that ride on white asses, <sup>s</sup> ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

<sup>l</sup> Or, *meditate.*  
<sup>q</sup> Ps. 103. 2.  
<sup>r</sup> Ch. 10. 4.  
<sup>s</sup> Ps. 107. 32.

And they did not only submit to idolatry when they were forced to it by tyrants, but they freely chose it. *New gods*—New to them, and unknown to their fathers, and new in comparison of the true and everlasting God of Israel, being but of yesterday. *There was war in the gates*—That is, in their walled cities, which have gates and bars; *gates* are often put for *cities*; then their strong holds fell into the hands of their enemies. *Was there a shield? &c.*—There was not. The meaning is not, that all the Israelites were without arms; but, either they had but few arms among them, being many thousands of them disarmed by the Canaanites and Philistines, or that they generally neglected the use of arms, as being without all hope of recovering their liberty.

Ver. 9. *My heart is toward the governors*—I honour and love those, who, being the chief of the people in wealth and dignity, did not withdraw themselves from the work, as such usually do; but exposed themselves to the same hazards, and joined with their brethren in this noble but dangerous attempt. It seems by this that there were some of the greatest men in the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, who, of their own accord, hazarded their lives among the common people in this service. And towards these Deborah expresses singular affection; and with the praises of God intermixes the commendation of those who were his instruments in this deliverance. *Bless ye the Lord*—Who inclined their hearts to this undertaking, and gave them success in it. This she adds like a prophetess of the Lord, who, when she commends the most deserving of men, would not fail to raise their thoughts to God, the original source of all that is excellent and praiseworthy.

Ver. 10. *Speak ye*—Celebrate the praise of our mighty God, and give him thanks. The word שִׁיחַ, *sichu*, however, here rendered, *Speak ye*, more properly signifies to *consider, meditate, or reflect* deeply, viz. on the miserable condition they were in before, and on the great deliverance God had wrought out for them. *Ye that ride on white asses*—That is, magistrates and nobles, who used to do so, Chap. x. 4, and xii. 14. These could not appear in any splendour during the servitude and oppression under Jabin, but now were restored to their dignity, which she calls upon them to consider, and for which to praise the Lord. There were few horses in Judea but what were brought out of other countries, so that the greatest persons rode on asses, as appears by the sacred history; but in this country they were commonly of a red colour, (whence, as Bochart observes, an ass hath the name of חמור, *chamor*) and therefore *white*, or, as he translates the word, *whitish asses*, or those streaked with white, were

A. M. 3704.  
B. C. 1206.† Heb.  
righteous-  
ness of  
the  
LORD.  
† 1 Sam. 12.  
7.

\* Ps. 57. 8.

11 *They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the † righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.*

12 *Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise,*

and *lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.*

13 *Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.*

14 *Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people;*

A. M. 3704.  
B. C. 1206.  
\* Ps. 68. 18.

\* Ps. 68. 18.

\* Ch. 3. 7.

\* Ch. 3. 12.

highly esteemed for their rarity. *Ye that sit in judgment*—These that sat as judges in the gates, which were no longer possessed by the enemies, she here exhorts to join with the nobles before-mentioned. *And walk by the way*—The merchants, traffickers, and others, who could now travel safely about their business, which they durst not do before this deliverance, Ver. 6; for which, therefore, they were bound to praise God.

Ver. 11. *From the noise of archers*—From the triumphant noise, and shouts of archers, rejoicing when they met with their prey. Together with the princes, judges, and merchants, she would have the shepherds praise the Lord every time they came to water their flocks; remembering how they were formerly disturbed by the archers lurking in the woods or thickets, who shot whole quivers of arrows at them and their cattle, whereby they were put to great difficulty and danger in watering their cattle, which now they brought safely to the pits or springs. *There shall they rehearse, &c.*—When they come to those places with freedom and safety, which before they could not approach but with extreme danger, they shall rehearse the righteous and gracious acts of the Lord, who had taken a just vengeance on their oppressors, and most graciously delivered them from their tyranny. *Towards the inhabitants of his villages*—She would have the meanest peasants bear them company in the praises of God; for now they lived as quietly in their open villages as if they had been in the strongest cities. *Then shall the people go down to the gates*—The great prophetess sums up all in these words, that the whole country was bound to praise the Lord, every man having liberty to go down safely to the gate of his own city, from whence, undoubtedly many had been driven by the Canaanites, and forced to wander abroad. The gates of their cities, it must be observed, were the chief places to which both city and country resorted for public business and matters of justice, from both of which they had been debarred by their oppressors, but which would now resume their wonted course, and the people have free access and passage, either in or out of their gates, as their affairs required. And they who had been compelled to leave their cities would now return in peace and triumph.

Ver. 12. *Awake, awake, Deborah*—Stir up thyself with all that is within thee, to admire and praise Jehovah. This work needs, and well deserves the utmost liveliness and vigour of soul. Thus, having called upon all others, she now excites herself, with the most earnest and zealous affection, (expressed by the repetition of the same thing four times) to celebrate the wonderful works of God. One cannot help observing the decorum which the prophetess ob-

serves, in speaking of herself. Though she went along with Barak to levy his forces, accompanied him to the field of battle, and gave him the word of command, when to charge the enemy, Chap. iv. 9—14; yet suitably to her sex and office, she only speaks of uttering a song of praise on the occasion, while she assigns to him, under God, the glory of the victory, and the honour of the triumph. *Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive*—She calls on Barak, to shew his captives, and spoils, that the Israelites might see how great reason they had for giving thanks to God. Some ask what captives he could have to lead when the whole army of Sisera was cut off? Chap. iv. 16. To which the answer is easy, that when Barak, after he had routed their army, pursued his victory as far as Harosheth, he doubtless took many prisoners, and probably not a few of the best quality, and brought them captive with him out of the country.

Ver. 13. *Then he made him that remaineth have dominion, &c.*—This Verse is very obscure, nor is it easy to fix the sense of the original, the principal verb in the sentence, *Jerad*, which occurs in both clauses of it, meaning both to *come*, or to *cause to have dominion*, and also to *descend*, or *come down*. According to our translation, which seems as accurate as any proposed, the sense is, that God had not only preserved a remnant of his people from the fury of the oppressor, and from the destruction which Sisera designed, but also now gave them the victory, and thereby the dominion over the nobles of Canaan, who had been combined against them. *The Lord made me have dominion*—Though but a weak woman. But Dr. Kennicott's translation of the verse, which is countenanced by the Seventy, is,

“Then, when the remainder descended after their chiefs,  
“Jehovah's people descended after me against the mighty:”

which interpretation agrees in substance with that of the ingenious Mr. Green and some others.

Ver. 14. *Out of Ephraim, &c.*—The prophetess, having directed their praises to the author of their deliverance, proceeds to speak with commendation of the instruments of it, and gives us the muster of those tribes, which freely offered themselves to battle. She assigns the first place to the tribe of Benjamin, the second to those of her own tribe who were settled in Amalek; the third to the Manassites beyond Jordan; the fourth to the tribe of Zebulun; and the last to the tribe of Issachar. *There was a root of them against Amalek*—This translation is very obscure, and therefore it might be better rendered, and more agreeably to the Hebrew, *Out of Ephraim came down those who were planted, or whose rest was*

A. M. 2708.  
B. C. 1296.  
out of <sup>b</sup> Machir came down governors,  
and out of Zebulun they that † handle  
the pen of the writer.

15' And the princes of Issachar  
were with Deborah; even Issachar,  
and also <sup>c</sup> Barak: he was sent on  
† foot into the valley. || For the di-  
visions of Reuben *there were great*  
† thoughts of heart.

16 Why abodest thou <sup>d</sup> among the  
sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of  
the flocks? || For the divisions of

Reuben *there were great searchings*  
of heart.

17 <sup>e</sup> Gilead abode beyond Jordan: <sup>e</sup> and why did Dan remain in ships? <sup>f</sup>

† Asher continued on the sea || shore,  
and abode in his || breaches.

18 <sup>g</sup> Zebulun and Naphtali *were a*  
people that † jeoparded their lives  
unto the death in the high places of  
the field.

19 The kings came *and fought*,  
then fought the kings of Canaan in

in Amalek; meaning some of the tribe of Ephraim, who were settled in or about the mount of Amalek. See Judges xii. 15. *And out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer*—Mr. Green has observed, and with great reason, that there is a manifest impropriety in penmen coming down to a battle; and that the word שֵׁבֶט shebet, which is here translated a pen, never signifies so throughout the Scriptures, but always a sceptre, or staff of command; and therefore, he thinks our translation has mistaken the meaning here, and that it ought to be translated—*And out of Zebulun those that rule or lead with the sceptre.* The word שֹׁפֵר *sofer*, rendered *writer*, he thinks belongs to the next Verse, and should be translated *numbered*. This certainly would make that verse more plain and significant. It would then be, *And the princes of Issachar were numbered with Deborah*, that is, these princes, together with Barak the general, were mustered along with Deborah herself.

Ver. 15. *He was sent on foot*—Or, when he was sent, *with his foot, into the valley.* This is not an immaterial remark of the prophetess. It expresses that the tribe or people of Issachar, following the counsel and example of their princes, were as hearty and valiant in the cause as Barak their general; and as he marched *on foot* to attack Sisera with his horses and nine hundred armed chariots, and that into the valley or plain, where horses and chariots are chiefly useful; so did they with no less courage and resolution. This she said to shew, that the battle was Jehovah's, and that he saveth not by horses, nor by chariots. *For the divisions of Reuben*—Or, separations; not so much of one from another, (for they seem to have been all well agreed in abiding at home with their sheep) as of all from their brethren, from whom they were divided no less in their designs and affections, than in their situation by the river Jordan: and they would not join their interests and forces with them in this common cause. *Great thoughts*—Or, *great searchings*, great and sad thoughts, and debates, and perplexities of mind among the Israelites, to see themselves deserted by so great and potent a tribe as Reuben was.

Ver. 16. *Why*, &c.—Having mentioned with honour the tribes that willingly offered themselves, the prophetess proceeds to expostulate with those who, when summoned to the assistance of their brethren, shamefully refused to arm in the common cause. The two first that she upbraids, are Reuben and Gad, who were more solicitous about their cattle than their brethren. The two next are Dan and Asher, who were

as meanly intent upon their commerce. *Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds?*—Why wast thou so unworthy and cowardly, that thou wouldest not engage thyself in so just, so necessary, and so noble a cause, but didst prefer the care of thy sheep, and thy own ease and safety, before this generous undertaking? Reuben thought neutrality their wisest course; being very rich in cattle, Numb. xxxii. 1. They were loath to run the hazard of so great a loss, by taking up arms against so potent an enemy as Jabin: and the bleatings of their sheep were so loud in their ears, that they could not hear the call of Deborah and Barak.

Ver. 17. *Gilead abode*, &c.—Or, why did Gilead abide? Gilead was divided between the children of Machir and the tribe of Gad, Josh. xiii. 24—31. The children of Machir came down to the battle, and therefore the tribe of Gad can only be meant here, the land of Gilead being put for the inhabitants of it. *Beyond Jordan*—In their own portions, and did not come over Jordan to the help of the Lord, and of his people, as they ought to have done. *Why did Dan remain in ships?*—Their coast being near the sea, they were wholly intent on their merchandise, and therefore did not join in this land expedition. *Asher continued on the sea-shore*—Where their lot lay. *Abode in his breaches*—Either in his creeks and small havens, where vessels lay to go out to sea, or in their broken and craggy rocks and caves.

Ver. 18. *Zebulun and Naphtali*, &c.—These were the two tribes, out of which Barak, by the order of God, Chap. iv. 6, drew 10,000 men, who charged the enemy from mount Tabor; and Deborah here celebrates their gallant behaviour. *That jeoparded their lives*—Heb. חָרַר, *cherep*, *despised their lives*, or exposed them to the danger of death, as making no account of them, in comparison of joining with their brethren to shake off the yoke of the Canaanites, and recover their liberty. They chose rather to venture upon a generous and honourable death, than to enjoy a shameful and servile life. *In the high places of the field*—That is, upon that large and eminent plain in the top of mount Tabor, where they put themselves in battle array, and expected the enemy; though, when they saw that the Canaanites did not come up to them, they marched down to meet them.

Ver. 19. *The kings came and fought*—There were divers petty kings in those parts who were subject to Jabin. *Taanach and Megiddo*—Were two eminent cities not far from mount Tabor, nor from the river Kishon. *They took no gain of money*—Some interpret this as meaning they fought without

A. M. 1708.  
B. C. 1296.  
h Ch. 4. 16. **Taanach by the waters of Megiddo ;**

<sup>i</sup> See Josh. 19. 11.  
k Ch. 4. 14. <sup>k</sup> **they took no gain of money.**  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. <sup>paths.</sup> **20** <sup>i</sup> **They fought from heaven :**  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. <sup>paths.</sup> **the stars in their †courses fought**  
**against Sisera.**

l Ch. 4. 7. **21** <sup>i</sup> **The river of Kishon swept**  
**them away, that antient river, the**  
**river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast**

trodden down strength.

**22** **Then were the horse-hoofs**  
**broken by the means of the || prans-**  
**ings, the pransings of their mighty**  
**ones.** <sup>Or, tramping, or plunging.</sup>

**23** **Curse ye Meroz, said the angel**  
**of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the in-**  
**habitants thereof ;** <sup>m</sup> **because they** <sup>m Ch. 21. 2</sup>

pay, whether from mere hatred of the Israelites, and a desire to be revenged on them, or from a full hope and confidence of paying themselves abundantly out of Israel's spoils. But it may be intended as a sarcasm upon the kings of Canaan for their lucrative views in fighting against Israel. They came to the help of Jabin for lucre's sake ; namely, to enrich themselves with the spoils ; but the Israelites fought for liberty.

Ver. 20. *They fought from heaven*—The prophetess having, in the foregoing verse, mentioned who were the allies and helpers of Jabin, does here, in a very magnificent manner, represent who were the allies and helpers of Israel: *They fought from heaven* on this side ; viz. the very angels of God themselves, the hosts of heaven, the armies of the Almighty. *The very stars in their courses fought for Israel against Sisera.* The elements, by the order of God, came to their assistance. The air and waters ranged themselves on their side ; the rivers, even the small streams, lift up themselves and swept away their enemies. This is the magnificent and tremendous idea which the prophetess gives us of this victory over Sisera, See on Chap. iv. 15. In the poetical Scriptures, thunder and lightning are represented as the artillery of heaven. The prophet Habakkuk, speaking of the defeat of the confederate kings of Canaan by Joshua, where there is no mention of thunder and lightning in the history, thus addresses Jehovah, Chap. iii. 11.

The sun and moon stood still in their habitation ;  
By their light thine arrows went abroad ;  
And by their shining thy glittering spear.

Ver. 21. *The river of Kishon*—Which, though not great in itself, was now much swelled by the foregoing storm and rain, and therefore drowned those who, being pursued by the hand of God and by the Israelites, were forced into it, and thought to pass over it, as they did before. *Ancient river*—So called, either, first, in opposition to those rivers which are of a later date, being made by the hand and art of man ; or, secondly, because it was a river anciently famous for remarkable exploits, for which it was celebrated by the ancient poets or writers, though not here mentioned. *O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength*—Thou, O Deborah, though but a weak woman, hast, by God's assistance, subdued a potent enemy ; a beautiful apostrophe this of the prophetess ; turning her speech to herself, as it were, to congratulate herself on the success of the commission which she had received from God to stir up Barak ; and on the great efficacy of her prayers to God ; for it cannot be doubted but that she implored help from heaven, while Barak fought with Sisera.

Ver. 22. *Then were the horses' hoofs broken*—This verse finely expresses, and gives us the strongest image of the confusion and rapidity of the flight of Sisera's captains and great men, as well as of the multitude, from God and Israel ; which was such that the very hoofs of their horses were broken by their swift and violent running over the stony ground. *Pransings*—Or, *because of their fierce or swift courses.* The word דָּהָר, *dahar*, here rendered *pransings*, is used also Nahum iii. 2, where, from the word it is joined with, says Dr. Dodd, it must mean the clattering of the horse on full speed. The marginal reading, *trampings*, or *plungings*, he thinks preferable to the text, and observes, that the meaning of it cannot perhaps be better expressed than by the well-known line of Virgil ;

*Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.*  
"They shake with horny hoofs the solid ground."

Dr. Waterland proposes that אַבִּירַי, *abiray*, here rendered *their mighty ones*, should be translated *their mighty horses*, an interpretation which the word will easily bear, and which increases the force and beauty of the passage, as they were doubtless "not common horses, but their best and strongest, whose hoofs were broken on this occasion." The reader will observe that it was not the custom to shoe their horses in these ancient times, and indeed according to Tavernier, Montfaucon, and others, they have at present excellent horses in Arabia and Tartary which are never shod. See Dodd.

Ver. 23. *Curse ye Meroz*—A place then, no doubt, eminent and considerable, though now there be no remembrance of it left, which possibly might be the effect of this bitter curse ; as God cursed Amalek in this manner, that he might utterly blot out their remembrance. And this place, above all others, may be thus severely cursed ; because it was near the place of the fight, and therefore had the greatest opportunity and obligation to assist their brethren. *The angel, &c.*—She signifies that this curse proceeded not from her ill-will towards that place, but from divine inspiration ; and that if all the rest of the song should be taken but for the mere aspirations and effusions of a pious soul, but liable to mistake, yet this branch of it was immediately directed to her by the Lord, the angel of the covenant. *To the help of the Lord*—Of the Lord's people ; for God takes what is done for or against his people as if it were done to himself. The cause between God and the mighty, the principalities and powers of the kingdom of darkness, will not admit of a neutrality.

A. M. 2708.  
B. C. 1296.  
1 Sam. 17.  
47.  
came not to the help <sup>u</sup> of the LORD,  
to the help of the LORD against the  
mighty.

24 Blessed above women shall  
Ch. 4. 17. <sup>o</sup> Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite  
p Luke 1.  
24. be; <sup>p</sup> blessed shall she be above wo-  
men in the tent.

Ch. 4. 19. 25 <sup>q</sup> He asked water, *and* she gave  
*him* milk: she brought forth butter  
in a lordly dish.

Ch. 4. 21. 26 <sup>r</sup> She put her hand to the nail,  
and her right hand to the workman's  
hammer; and <sup>†</sup> with the hammer  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. she  
hammer-  
ed. she smote Sisera, she smote off his  
head, when she had pierced and  
stricken through his temples.

Ver. 24. *Blessed, &c.*—This is a beautiful and striking transition, whereby the prophetess passes from the curse pronounced by the command of the angel on the Merozites to the blessing of Jael, on whom she passes the finest encomium, because, though only a sojourner in Israel, she had done them most signal service in taking off Sisera, their most inveterate enemy. *Blessed above women*—Celebrated and endowed with all sorts of blessings more than they. *In the tent*—In her tent and habitation; in her house and family, and all her affairs. The Kenites lived not in houses, but in tents. But the tent is here mentioned as an allusion to the place where the fact was done.

Ver. 25. *He asked water, &c.*—The original here is very poetical and elegant, and not badly imitated in our translation of it, if it were placed in hemisticks thus:

He asked water, and she gave milk;  
She brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

The last clause, however, perhaps had better be rendered, *cream in a princely bowl*; that is, she brought forth the choicest of her milk in the best dish or bowl she had; not indeed such a one as the luxury of after-ages introduced, but such as was agreeable to the simplicity of those times and of this family, and such as the better sort of people then used. Jael, we have observed, on Chap. iv. 19, probably at that time intended him no other than kindness, till God, to fulfil Deborah's prophecy, by an immediate impulse on her mind, directed her to do otherwise.

Ver. 26. *She smote off his head*—Or rather, smote through his head, for there is not the least hint given in the story that she cut off his head. The latter part of the verse, *When she pierced, &c.* may be rendered, *She wounded, and pierced through his temples.*

Ver. 27. *At her feet he bowed, &c.*—This verse is considered by many as a description of the struggles of Sisera after he was wounded; but perhaps it may only be a relation of his lying down to sleep quite spent with fatigue, from which he

A. M. 2708.  
B. C. 1296.  
† Heb.  
between.  
† Heb.  
destroyed.  
27 <sup>†</sup> At her feet he bowed, he fell,  
he lay down: at her feet he bowed,  
he fell: where he bowed, there he  
fell down <sup>†</sup> dead.

28 The mother of Sisera looked  
out at a window, and cried through  
the lattice, Why is his chariot so  
long in coming? why tarry the wheels  
of his chariots?

29 Her wise ladies answered her,  
yea, she returned <sup>†</sup> answer to her-  
self, <sup>†</sup> Heb. her  
words.

30 <sup>o</sup> Have they not sped? have  
they *not* divided the prey; <sup>†</sup> to every  
man a damsel or two? to Sisera a  
prey of divers colours, a prey of di-  
<sup>Exod. 15.  
9.  
† Heb. to  
the head  
of a man.</sup>

never rose again. For it is expressly said, Chap. iv. 21, that Jael smote the nail quite through his temples, so as to fasten him to the ground; from whence there is great reason to conclude that the blow was instantaneously fatal, and that he never struggled nor stirred. This verse is thus translated by Dr. Kennicott:

At her feet he bowed, he fell!  
At her feet he bowed, he fell!  
Where he bowed, there he fell dead.

And he supposes, naturally enough, the first line to be sung by Deborah, the second by Barak, and that they both joined in singing the third. The whole verse is greatly expressive of the joy of Deborah on this occasion, and shews, in a strong light, her love for her country and people. She dwells on every circumstance with seeming pleasure; she repeats them, as it were, to enjoy the idea and contemplation of them the longer. And one would think all the enemies of Israel had perished in this one man.

Ver. 28—30, *The mother of Sisera looked out at a window*—Expecting to see him returning; for she concluded that he went forth not so much to fight as to take the spoil. *Have they not divided the spoil?*—That is, it is certain they have got the prey, only they tarry to distribute it, according to every man's quality and merit. It is scarcely possible to conceive any thing more beautiful or expressive than these verses. No writer, either poet or orator, ever formed a finer image upon any subject. It seems even beyond all that painting could express. No picture could have represented to us so much of the action as these words do. We perfectly see the mother of Sisera waiting for the victorious return of her son, and looking out at a window to behold, his triumphant chariot at some distance. We see her rejoicing over the Israelitish captives. We see her, as it were, examining and delighting her eyes with the rich and gorgeous spoils which they had brought home. How does all this heighten, in our imagination, the fall of Sisera, who lies at the same time dead

A. M. 2749.  
B. C. 1456. vers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?

17 Ps. 53. 9. 31<sup>t</sup> So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be<sup>u</sup> as the sun<sup>x</sup> when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years.

## CHAP. VI.

*The calamities of Israel by the Midianites, ver. 1--6. The message God sent them by a prophet, ver. 7--10. God's commission to Gideon, confirmed by a sign, ver. 11--24. He breaks down the altar of Baal, ver. 25--32. His preparation for war, and encouragement by another sign, ver. 33--40.*

air 1856.

a Ch. 2. 19.

b Hab. 3. 7.

† Heb. was strong.

AND<sup>a</sup> the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand<sup>b</sup> of Midian seven years.

2 And the hand of Midian † prevailed against Israel: and because of

A. M. 2749.  
B. C. 1456. the Midianites the children of Israel made them<sup>c</sup> the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds.

3 And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and<sup>d</sup> the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them;

4 And they encamped against them, and<sup>f</sup> destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza; and left no sustenance for Israel, neither || sheep, nor ox, nor ass.

5 For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came<sup>e</sup> as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it.

6 And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel<sup>h</sup> cried unto the LORD.

in the tent of Jael, without pomp or attendant, without mother, or sister, or brother, to weep over him, slain by the hand of a woman! This fine conclusion of the relation of Sisera's fall, may be said to have all the beautiful colouring of a Titian, and all the force of a Raphael or Reubens; for no one pencil ever expressed any thing so perfectly.

Ver. 31. *So let thine enemies perish, O Lord*—That is, so suddenly, so surely, so effectually and irrecoverably; an elegant apostrophe of the prophetess this, in turning and addressing her speech to God; that as her speech begun with him, so it might likewise conclude with him. And with what gracefulness, and, at the same time, with what grandeur and sublimity does she change the subject! How was it possible for her to conclude her song in a finer manner than by this sudden, but, at the same time, earnest wish that all the enemies of Jehovah might perish as Sisera had done. And that all that love him might, like the rising sun, proceed from strength to strength, till they should arrive at the highest pitch of glory. Deborah was a prophetess, and this prayer may be considered as a two-fold prediction, importing both that, in due time, all God's enemies shall perish; and that those who love him in sincerity, and persevere in so doing shall shine for ever as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

CHAP. VI. Ver. 1. *And the children of Israel did evil*—The Israelites, having forgot the signal deliverance which God had wrought for them by Deborah and Barak, were con-

demned to a new state of misery and oppression, compared to which that under Jabin may almost be called freedom, Deborah being then allowed to judge Israel in the face of the sun; whereas now they were not only destitute of a judge, but were often without habitations, except those they were forced to seek for among the clefts, and caverns of rocks, and in some few strong holds or fortresses, Ver. 2; and if they found time and convenience for sowing their lands, their enemies poured in upon them, and wrested from them the fruits of their labour. *Into the hand of Midian*—For although the generality of the Midianites had been cut off by Moses about two hundred years ago, yet many of them doubtless fled into the neighbouring countries, whence afterwards they returned into their own land, and in that time might easily grow to be a very great number; especially when God furthered their increase, that they might be a scourge for Israel when they transgressed. Let all that sin, expect to suffer; let all that turn to folly, expect to return to misery.

Ver. 3—5. *The children of the east*—Probably the Ishmaelites, or Arabians, especially the eastern part of them. *Unto Gaza*—That is, from the east, on which side they entered, to the west, where Gaza was, near the Mediterranean Sea. So that they destroyed the whole land. *Without number*—That is, so many that it was not easy to number them. And not in a regular army to engage, but in a confused swarm, to plunder the country. Yet Israel, being forsaken of God, had not spirit to make head against them; God fight-



A. M. 2759.  
B. C. 1219.

cir. 1240.

† Heb. a  
man, a  
prophet.

† Ps. 41. 2, 3.

† 9 Kings  
17. 35, 37,  
85.

7 ¶ And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites,

8 ¶ That the LORD sent † a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage ;

9 And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and I drove them out from before you, and gave you their land ;

10 And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God ; <sup>k</sup> fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell : but ye have not obeyed my voice.

11 ¶ And there came an angel of

ing against them with those very terrors, with which otherwise he would have fought for them.

Ver. 8. *The Lord sent a prophet*—We have reason to hope, God is designing mercy for us, if we find he is by his grace preparing us for it.

Ver. 10. *Ye have not obeyed my voice*—And therefore all these evils are come upon you. This is said to bring them to repentance. And our repentance is then genuine, when the sinfulness of sin, as disobedience to God, is that which we chiefly lament.

Ver. 11. *And there came an angel of the Lord*—It is probable that many of the Israelites laid the prophet's message to heart, and began to repent and reform, and that therefore God had compassion upon them, and sent an angel to appoint them a deliverer. *In Ophrah*—In Manasseh : there was, however, another Ophrah in Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 23. *The Abi-ezrite*—Of the posterity of Abiezer. *Threshed*—Not with oxen, as the manner was, Deut. xxv. 4, but with a staff to prevent discovery. *Wine-press*—In the place where the wine-press stood, not in the common floor, because none would suspect that he was there so employed.

Ver. 12. *The Lord is with thee*—That is, to guide and strengthen thee, to animate and support thee. He is with thee, giving thee a commission to go out against the enemies of Israel, communicating to thee all necessary qualifications for the execution of this commission, and assuring thee of success therein. The Chaldee interprets it, *The Word of the Lord is thy help*, "which shews," says Dr. Dodd, "that the ancient Jews looked upon this angel as the Lord himself, which is confirmed by the Targum translation of the following verse. *Is the Schechinah of the Lord our help? Whence then hath all this happened unto us?* A paraphrase which shews that they took the *Word of the Lord*, to be the same with the *Schechinah of the Lord*." *Thou mighty man*

the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash <sup>1</sup>the Abi-ezrite : and his son <sup>m</sup> Gideon threshed wheat by the wine-press, † to hide it from the Midianites.

12 And the <sup>n</sup> angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is <sup>o</sup> with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my LORD, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us ? and <sup>p</sup> where be all his miracles <sup>q</sup> which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt ? but now the LORD hath <sup>r</sup> forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And the LORD looked upon

*of valour*—To whom I have given courage and strength for the work to which I have called thee. Gideon, though a mighty man, could bring nothing to pass without the presence of God. But as that presence is enough to make any man mighty in valour, and to give him courage at any time ; so it is all in all to our prosperity, whatever we do.

Ver. 13. *If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?*—All this trouble and distress from the incursions of the Midianites? All this loss, and grief, and dismay? *Where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of?*—We are too apt to conclude, that those instances of God's power which have not been exerted for a long time, will never be renewed. Gideon seems here to have given way to this common weakness of our nature and tendency to unbelief and distrust of God's power, and love, and faithfulness. And we frequently find the prophets expostulating with the people for thinking that the *hand of the Lord was shortened*, or, that he could not exert the same wonderful power, producing the same glorious effects for them, which he had formerly exerted and produced for their fathers. The angel had spoken to him in particular, *The Lord is with thee* : but he pleads and expostulates for all, *If the Lord be with us*—Associating himself with the thousands of Israel, and admitting no comfort but what they might be sharers in. Gideon does not seem yet to have had any idea that the person that spoke to him was an angel or heavenly being ; but appears to have taken him only for some respectable person, or at most a prophet, for the expression, *my Lord*, with which he addresses him, was no more than was generally used towards persons of respectability.

Ver. 14. *The Lord looked upon him*—With a settled, pleasant, and animating countenance, as a testimony of his favour and readiness to help him. *And said, go in this thy might*—In the power of this commission which I have now

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1219.

1 Josh. 17.

in Hebr. 11. 32, called Gideon.

† Heb. to cause it to flee.

n Ch. 13. 3.

o Josh. 1. 5.

p Ps. 59. 49.

q Ps. 44. 1.

r 2 Chron. 15. 2.



A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1249.  
1 Sam. 12.  
11.  
Josh. 1. 9.  
him, and said, <sup>s</sup> Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: <sup>t</sup> have not I sent thee?

15 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold <sup>u</sup> || my family is poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house.

16 And the LORD said unto him, <sup>x</sup> Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

17 ¶ And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then <sup>y</sup> shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

18 <sup>z</sup> Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my || present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

19 <sup>a</sup> And Gideon went in, and made ready <sup>†</sup> a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the

broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it.

20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and <sup>b</sup> lay them upon this rock, and <sup>c</sup> pour out the broth. And he did so.

21 ¶ Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and <sup>d</sup> there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

22 And when Gideon <sup>e</sup> perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God! <sup>f</sup> for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.

23 And the LORD said unto him, <sup>g</sup> Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

24 ¶ Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD; and called it

given thee; and in the strength which thou hast already received, and dost now farther receive from me. *Have not I sent thee?*—Have not I hereby given thee a commission, a command to do this work? God's fitting men for his work is a sure evidence of his calling them to it.

Ver. 15. *Behold, my family*—Heb. *my thousand*; for the tribes were distributed into several thousands, whereof each thousand had its peculiar governor. *Is poor*—Weak and contemptible. *I am the least in my father's house*—Either for age or qualifications for such a work. It is no proof that a person is unfit for an important work, because he thinks himself so. *Before honour, is humility*. Indeed God delights to advance the humble, and often chooses to do great things by those that are little, especially that are so in their own eyes. "He chooseth the weak things of the world to confound the wise, and things that are despised, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh may glory in his presence."

Ver. 16, 17. *Thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man*—As easily as if they were all but one man. *Shew me a sign*—This Gideon desired, that he might be sure the commission was divine, and that God, who called him to this work, would give him success in it. This is one proof, among many others which might be produced, that a sign or miracle was esteemed in these days, both as a necessary and a sufficient evidence of a divine commission. And from hence we may

learn, that we have abundant reason to be satisfied and assured respecting the ground of our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, inasmuch as he was most abundantly approved of God, by signs, and miracles, and wonders, which God wrought by him, in the sight of all men. *That thou talkest with me*—By authority from God: or, that thou art a messenger from him, that discourest with me. Or, a sign of the accomplishment of that, concerning which thou talkest with me; that is, that by me thou wilt smite the Midianites.

Ver. 18, 19. *Until I—bring forth my present*—A repast for the angel, whom he thought to be a man. *And set it before thee*—That thou mayest eat and refresh thyself. *An ephah of flour*—The choicest part of a whole ephah; as also he brought to him the best part of a kid dressed; for a whole ephah, and a whole kid had been superfluous, and improper to provide for one man.

Ver. 20. *Lay them upon this rock*—Undoubtedly it gave Gideon some surprise, to be commanded to dispose thus of the refreshments which he had so hospitably prepared; but as he had doubtless by this time conceived an high opinion of this unknown person, (though he had not discovered him to be an angel,) so he readily obeyed his command.

Ver. 21—24. *There rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh*—By which he shewed himself not to be a man that needed such provisions, but the Son of God; and by this instance of his omnipotency, gave him assurance, that

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1319.

|| Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it  
is yet <sup>h</sup> in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

25 ¶ And it came to pass the same  
night, that the LORD said unto him,  
Take thy father's young bullock,  
|| even the second bullock of seven  
years old, and throw down the altar  
of Baal that thy father hath, and  
cut down the grove that is by it:

26 And build an altar unto the  
LORD thy God upon the top of this  
† rock, || in the ordered place, and  
take the second bullock, and offer a  
burnt sacrifice with the wood of the  
grove which thou shalt cut down.

27 Then Gideon took ten men of  
his servants, and did as the LORD

he both could, and would consume the Midianites. *Alas, O Lord God*—I am an undone man: I must die, and that speedily; for that he feared, Ver. 23, according to the common opinion in that case. *The Lord said unto him*—Perhaps by an audible voice, for it does not seem as if the angel spoke these words. *Peace be to thee*—Thou shalt receive no hurt by this vision; but only peace, that is, all the blessings needful for thy own happiness, and for the present work. *Gideon built an altar there*—On the top of the rock, as is evident from Ver. 26, where that which is here expressed only in general, is more particularly described. *Jehovah Shalom*—That is, *the Lord's peace*; the sign or witness of God's speaking peace to me, and to his people: or the place where he spake peace to me, when I expected nothing but destruction.

Ver. 25. *The same night—the Lord said unto him*—Most likely in a dream. *Take—the second bullock*—Houbigant and some others suspect that there is a deficiency in the text here, as nothing is said of the first bullock. Perhaps he was to offer both bullocks, one for himself, and the other for the sins of the people, whom he was to deliver. For, till sin was pardoned, through sacrifice offered for it, no good was to be expected. Dr. Dodd, however, conjectures that there is a false reading in the Hebrew, and that פַּר הַשְּׁשִׁיר, *par-hasshor*, which is the expression in the first clause, and is rendered *young bullock*, has, by the mistake of transcribers, been written שֵׁר הַשְּׁשִׁיר, *par hassheni*, *second bullock*, in the next clause. He therefore proposes to render the passage, *Take thy father's young bullock, even the young bullock of seven years old*; the Hebrew phrase פַּר הַשְּׁשִׁיר, *par hasshor*, implying no more than the offspring of a bull. Perhaps, what some commentators have observed, is more fanciful than just, viz. "that as this bullock was calved when the oppression of the Midianites began"; so it was now ordered to be sacrificed in token that the oppression should end with this bullock's death." *Throw down the altar of Baal*—Thus God commands Gideon to begin his heaven-appointed task, with the destruction of the altar of Baal, the fatal source of Israel's defection and

had said unto him; and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night.

28 ¶ And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built.

29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.

punishment; and to expiate their crime by a sacrifice, in the place where they had rendered divine honours to that despicable deity of the Midianites. *That thy father hath made*—Which was in his ground, and perhaps erected at his expense, though it was for public use, as appears from Ver. 28. Cut down the grove planted by the altar for idolatrous uses, as the manner of idolaters was. *That is by it, or upon it*—Perhaps by אֲשֵׁרָה, *Asherah*, which we translate grove, may be meant the image in the grove, and which was placed on the altar. This, Mr. Seldon conjectures, with great probability, was the image of Ashtaroath, or Astarte, for she was worshipped together with Baal. There could be no hope of deliverance till religion was reformed, with which God therefore orders Gideon to begin. This action of Gideon might seem injurious to his father's authority; but God's command was a sufficient warrant, and Gideon was now called to be the supreme magistrate, whereby he was made his father's superior, and was authorised to root out all idolatry, and the instruments thereof.

Ver. 26. *Upon the top of this rock*—Heb. *of this strong hold*: for in that calamitous time the Israelites retreated to such rocks, and hid and fortified themselves in them. *In the ordered place*—That is, in a plain and smooth part of the rock, where an altar may be conveniently built. *And offer a burnt-sacrifice*—Gideon was no priest, nor was this the appointed place of sacrifice; but God can dispense with his own institutions, though we may not; and his call gave Gideon sufficient authority.

Ver. 27. *Then Gideon took ten men*—Whom doubtless he had acquainted with his design, and the assurance of success in it, whereby they were easily induced to assist him. *He feared*—Not so much, lest he should suffer for it, as lest he should be prevented from doing it.

Ver. 28, 29. *The bullock was offered*—Not upon Baal's altar, for which it was designed; but upon an altar erected in contempt of Baal. *When they enquired—they said*—Probably some of the persons employed in it.

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1319.

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1249.

30 Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it.

31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst *it is yet morning*: if he *be* a god, let him plead for himself, because *one* hath cast down his altar.

† That is, Let Baal plead. cir. 1249. k 1 Sam. 19. 11. 2 Sam. 11. 21. Jerub-beth; that is, Let the shameful thing plead: See Jer. 11. 13. 1 Ver. 3.

32 Therefore on that day he called him ||<sup>k</sup> Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

33 ¶ Then all <sup>1</sup>the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children

Ver. 31. *Joash said—Will ye plead for Baal?*—Why are you so zealous in pleading for that Baal for whose worship you suffer such grievous calamities at this day? It is plain that Joash had been a worshipper of Baal, having gone with the stream, as we find the altar of Baal on his estate; but probably he was now convinced of his sin and folly by Gideon, being made acquainted with the appearance of the angel to him, and of the divine commission which he had received. Hence he resolutely declares himself on the side of the God of Israel, and when the people demanded that his son should be put to death for casting down the altar of Baal, he boldly demands, according to the law of Moses, that whatever man should plead for Baal should be put to death, idolatry being a capital offence. *While it is yet morning*—That is, immediately; for it was in the morning, as we learn from Ver. 28, that this tumult was made. *If he be a god let him plead for himself*—As the God of Israel hath often done when any indignity or injury hath been done him. But Baal hath now shewed, that he is neither able to help you, nor himself; and therefore is not worthy to be served any longer. This resolute answer was necessary, to stop the torrent of the people's fury; and it was drawn from him by the sense of his son's extreme danger; and by the confidence he had that God would plead his son's cause, and use him for the rescue of his people. It is probable that, by what Joash now said, the eyes of the people were opened, to see how impotent the god was whom they had worshipped; as by comparing it with what they had heard the God of Israel had frequently done in vindication of his honour, they might well conclude how inferior he was to Jehovah, the one living and true God, or rather, in the language of Scripture, that he was *nothing*, a mere non-entity.

Ver. 32. *He called his name Jerub-baal*—That is, *Let Baal plead*. The meaning is, either that Joash called Gideon

of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in <sup>m</sup>the valley of Jezreel.

A. M. 2756.  
B. C. 1249.  
m Josh. 17. 16.

34 But <sup>n</sup>the Spirit of the LORD <sup>†</sup>came upon Gideon, and he <sup>o</sup>blew a trumpet; and Abi-ezer <sup>‡</sup>was gathered after him.

n Ch. 3. 10.  
† Heb. clothed.  
o Num. 10. 3.  
‡ Heb. was called after him.

35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manassch; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

36 ¶ And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said,

37 <sup>p</sup>Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and *it be dry* upon all the earth *beside*, then shall

p Exod. 4. 3. 7.

so, Chap. viii. 1, in remembrance of this noble exploit, and to put a brand on Baal; or that his countrymen gave him this name. For, as Houbigant observes, the Hebrew may be rendered, *On that day they gave him the name of Jerub-baal*—It is a probable conjecture, that that Jerombalus, whom Sanchoiathon, (one of the most ancient of all the heathen writers) speaks of as priest of Jao (a corruption of Jehovah), and to whom he was indebted for a great deal of knowledge, was this Jerub-baal.

Ver. 33, 34. *Then all the Midianites—were gathered together, &c.*—As was their usual custom every year, that they might waste the country. *And pitched in the valley of Jezreel*—Not Jezreel in Judah, but another place of that name in the borders of Manasseh and Issachar, which was not far distant from Ophrah, where Gideon dwelt. *But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon*—Inspiring him with extraordinary wisdom, and courage, and zeal, to vindicate God's honour and his country's liberty. The Hebrew is, *The Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon*; clothed him as a robe, to put honour upon him; clothed him as a coat of mail, to put a defence upon him. Those are well clad that are thus clothed. *Abi-ezer*—That is, the Abiezrites, his kindred, and their servants, and others; who finding no harm coming to him for destroying Baal, but rather a blessing from God, in giving him strength and courage for so great an attempt, changed their minds, and followed him as the person by whose hands God would deliver them.

Ver. 35. *All Manassch*—On both sides of Jordan. *Unto Asher, &c.*—Because these tribes were nearest, and so could soonest join with him; and were nearest the enemy also, Ver. 33, and therefore were most sensible of the calamity, and would in all reason be most forward to rescue themselves from it.

A. M. 2756.  
B. C. 1249.

I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

38 And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

39 And Gideon said unto God,

Gen. 18.  
52.

Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

## CHAP. VII.

*God's direction to Gideon for modelling his army, ver. 1---8. The dream of the Midianite, ver. 9---15. His manner of attacking the camp of Midian, ver. 16---20. Their total overthrow, ver. 21---25.*

Ver. 39. *Gideon said*—In a way of humble supplication, for the strengthening his own faith, and for the greater encouragement of his soldiers in this great attempt. *On all the earth*—That is, upon all that spot of ground which encompasses the fleece. *On the ground*—Which was more preternatural than the former instance, because if there be any moisture, such bodies as fleeces of wool are likely to drink it up.

Ver. 40. *And God did so*—See how tender God is even of the weak; and how ready to condescend to their infirmities! These signs were very expressive. They are going to engage the Midianites. Could God distinguish between a small fleece of Israel and the vast floor of Midian? Yes, by this token it appears that he can. Is Gideon desirous that the dew of divine grace might descend on himself in particular? He sees the fleece wet with dew, to assure him of it. Does he desire that God will be as the dew to all Israel? Behold all the ground is wet!

CHAP. VII. Ver. 1. *Gideon—rose up early*—As one whose heart was upon his business, and who was afraid of losing time. Being now sure God was with him, he is impatient of any delay. *And pitched by the well of Harod*—That his army might not be distressed for want of water; and he gained the higher ground, which possibly might be some advantage to him, for the Midianites were beneath him in the valley. Our faith in God's promises must not slacken, but rather quicken our endeavours. When we are sure God goes before us in any undertaking, we must be the more active, and exert ourselves the more to accomplish it.

A. M. 2755-  
B. C. 1249.  
Ch. 6. 32.

THEN Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring

Ver. 2. *The people that are with thee are too many*—The army consisted of thirty-two thousand men, a small army in comparison of what Israel might have raised on so great an occasion, and a very small one in comparison with that which the Midianites had now brought into the field. Gideon, doubtless, was ready to think they were too few; but God comes to him and tells him they were too many. It is indeed the same thing with God to save by many or by few; but man being prone to attribute every thing to natural causes rather than to God, it is one great design of God in all his dispensations, both of providence and grace, to counteract this evil disposition in our nature which robs God of his glory, and to cause us to consider him, and see his hand more in all things.

Ver. 3. *From Mount Gilead*—Not that Mount Gilead which was on the east side of Jordan, for the camps, both of the Israelites and Midianites, were on the west side of that river, in the land of Canaan; but another Mount Gilead in the tribe of Manasseh. *There returned of the people twenty and two thousand*—These, finding their whole army very small, in comparison of that of their enemies, who were a hundred and thirty-five thousand, Chap. viii. 10, and all, no doubt, well armed and disciplined, and encouraged by long success, whereas the Israelites were dispirited with long servitude, and many of them unarmed, lost the courage which they had at first; and therefore returned.

Ver. 4. *The Lord said—The people are yet too many*—For my purpose, which is so to deliver Israel that it may appear to be by my own act; that so I may have all the glory, and they may be more strongly obliged to serve me. God fore-

A. M. 2756.  
B. C. 1219.

them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lapped of the water with his tongue, as a dog lapped, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 ¶ And the LORD said unto Gideon, <sup>d 1 Sam. 16.</sup> By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every

man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all *the rest of* Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

9 ¶ And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, <sup>Gen. 46:2, 3.</sup> Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host:

11 And thou shalt hear what <sup>Ver. 13, 15.</sup> they say; and afterwards shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the **||** armed men that <sup>Or, ranks by fire.</sup> were in the host.

12 And the Midianites and the Amalekites and <sup>Ch. 4: 23.</sup> all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and

saw that if the Israelites had fought against the Midianites, even only with ten thousand men, they would have attributed victory to their own strength and courage; they were therefore reduced to 300 only, that there might not be the least room left for thinking that their own hand had saved them. *Bring them down unto the water*—Either that which ran from the well of Harod, mentioned Ver. 1, or some other brook.

Ver. 6. *That lapped*—Taking up a little water in the palm of their hands. It is probable that Gideon, upon this occasion, commanded his whole army to leave their baggage behind them, and among that the vessels and cups they used to drink out of; and, when he had brought them to the river-side, told them to drink of it, as they were going upon an expedition which would not admit of the carrying water with them, and in which they would not soon meet with any. Something of this kind we may reasonably imagine, to account for the whole army's drinking at the same time, and not one of them using any kind of cup. The whole army, except 300 men, upon the command being given, seem to have flung themselves down on the river's bank, as it were, to indulge themselves, which is probably meant by bowing down their knees to drink. But the 300 men, probably more intent on the expedition, contented themselves with taking up some water in the palm, or hollow of their hands, and so quenching

their thirst, without laying aside their arms, or putting themselves off their guard.

Ver. 7. *Every man unto his place*—That is, to his own home. "By this farther distinction," says Henry, "it was proved, that none should be made use of, but 1. Men that were hardy, that could endure fatigue, without complaining of thirst or weariness: 2. Men that were hasty, that thought it long, till they were engaged with the enemy, preferring the service of God and their country before their necessary refreshment. Such as these God chooses to employ, that are not only well affected, but zealously affected to his work."

Ver. 8. *Their trumpets*—That is, the trumpets belonging to the whole army, which he retained for the use following. Gideon seems to have been now inspired with the thought of the stratagem which he put in execution afterwards, otherwise he would not have ordered every one of the three hundred to take a trumpet in his hand.

Ver. 9—11. *The same night*—After he had dismissed all but the three hundred. *The Lord said*—In a dream or vision of the night. *But if thou fear to go down*—Viz. with thy 300 men to attack the Midianites. *Afterwards shall thine hands be strengthened*—Thou wilt be encouraged to proceed, notwithstanding the smallness of thy number.

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1349.

their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude.

13 ¶ And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

15 And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and † the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16 ¶ And he divided the three

† Heb. the breaking thereof.

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1349.

hundred men *into* three companies, and he put † a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and || lamps within the pitchers.

† Heb. trumpets in the hand of all of them.

17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, so shall ye do.

Or, fire-brands, or, torches.

18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, *The sword of the LORD*, and of Gideon.

19 ¶ So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their

Ver. 13, 14. *And, lo, a cake—tumbled into the host of Midian*—A weak and contemptible thing: and in itself as unable to overthrow a tent as to remove a mountain; but being thrown by a divine hand, it bore down all before it. *His fellow answered, &c.*—As there are many examples of significant dreams, given by God to heathens, so some of them had the gift of interpreting dreams; which they sometimes did by divine direction, as in this case. For it is evident, that God influenced the mind of this man, to give this interpretation to the dream of his companion, for the encouragement of Gideon; otherwise, considering the numerous host of the Midianites, and the small force which Gideon had, it does not seem probable, that a Midianitish soldier should have entertained such a conjecture; and one may observe the soldier speaks, as if under some prophetic influence: *Into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host*—It is certain, at least, that the hand of God was in this affair, that Gideon should be directed to this particular tent, and that the soldier should be telling his dream just at that very moment.

Ver. 15, 16. *When Gideon heard—he worshipped*—He praised God for this special encouragement. *He divided the men into three companies*—To make a shew of a vast army. *Lamps within the pitchers*—The lights were put into the pitchers, partly to preserve them from the wind and weather, and partly that their approach to the Midianites, not being discovered, they might surprise them with sudden flashes of

light. But when every man had taken his post just on the outside of the camp, then they broke the pitchers, that they might have the advantage of the lamps, and at the same time cast a great terror upon the Midianites; who, from the number of the lights in different places, doubtless concluded, that they were surrounded by a numerous army; and to this terror, the number of trumpets, (each man sounding one,) and the shouts from different parts, greatly contributed.

Ver. 17, 18. *He said to them, Look on me*—For though two hundred of his men were placed on other sides of the camp; yet they were so disposed, that some persons, set as watchmen, might see what was done, and give notice to the rest to follow the example. *The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*—He mentions his own name, together with God's, not out of arrogance, as if he would equal himself with God; but from prudent policy, because his name was grown formidable to them, and so was likely to further his design,—See Ver. 14.

Ver. 19. *Middle watch*—That is, of the second watch; for though afterward the night was divided into four watches by the Romans, Matt. xiv. 25, yet in more ancient times, and in the eastern parts, it was divided into three: he chose the dark and dead of the night, to increase their terror by the trumpets, whose sound would then be loudest, and the lamps, whose light would then shine most brightly, to surprise them, and conceal the smallness of their numbers.

A.M. 2734.  
B.C. 1849. right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.

h Exod. 14. 13. 21 And they <sup>h</sup> stood every man in his place round about the camp: i Kings 7. 7. and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

k Josh. 6. 4. 16. 20. 22 And the three hundred <sup>k</sup> blew the trumpets, and <sup>l</sup> the LORD set l Ps. 83. 9. <sup>m</sup> every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah m 1 Sam. 14. 20. || in Zererath, and to the † border of Abel-meholah unto Tabbath.

23 And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

a Ch. 3. 27. 24 ¶ And Gideon sent messengers throughout all <sup>n</sup> mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and b Ch. 3. 28.  
p John 1. 28. <sup>o</sup> took the waters unto <sup>p</sup> Beth-barah and Jordan.

25 ¶ And they took <sup>q</sup> two princes A.M. 2735.  
B.C. 1849.  
q Ch. 8. 7. of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon <sup>r</sup> the rock r Isai. 10. 26. Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the wine-press of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the <sup>s</sup> other side Jordan. s Ch. 8. 4.

CHAP. VIII.

*Gideon pacifies the Ephraimites, ver. 1—3. Pursues the Midianites, ver. 4—12. Chastises the men of Succoth and Penuel, ver. 13—17. Slays the two kings of Midian, ver. 18—21. Declines the government of Israel, ver. 22, 23. Makes an ephod, ver. 24—27. Keeps the country quiet forty years, ver. 28. Dies, leaving a numerous family, ver. 29—32. Israel quickly forget God and him, ver. 33—35.*

**A**ND <sup>a</sup> the men of Ephraim said a Ch. 12. 1. unto him, † Why hast thou + Heb. What thing is this that thou hast done unto us? served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him † sharply. + Heb. strongly.

2 And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of you? *Is not the gleaning of the*

Ver. 21, 22. *They stood*—As if they had been torch-bearers to the several companies. *Every man's sword against his fellow*—They slew one another, because they suspected treachery, and so fell upon those they first met with; which they might more easily do, because they consisted of several nations, because the darkness of the night made them unable to distinguish friends from foes, because the suddenness of the thing struck them with horror and amazement; and because God had infatuated them, as he had done many others.

Ver. 23, 24. *The men of Israel gathered themselves together*—Upon advice of this flight of the Midianites, by swift messengers sent on purpose, the Israelites immediately poured down from all parts, to intercept them in their flight. *Take before them the waters*—That is, the passes over those waters to which they are likely to come. *Unto Beth-barah and Jordan*—The fords of Jordan, which they must pass over into their own country.

Ver. 25. *To Gideon on the other side Jordan*—For Gideon in the pursuit had passed over Jordan. Oreb and Zeeb had probably taken shelter, the one in a rock, the other by a wine-press. But the places of their shelter were made the

places of their slaughter, and the memory of it preserved in the names of the places.

CHAP. VIII. Ver. 1. *Why hast thou served us thus, &c.*—Why hast thou neglected and despised us in not calling us in to thy help? This they considered as very contemptuous treatment, since Gideon had sent to other tribes, that were meaner, and not so able to assist him as themselves. These were a proud people, puffed up with a conceit of their number and strength, and the preference which Jacob gave them above Manasseh, of which tribe Gideon was, who, by this act had seemed to advance his own tribe, and to depress theirs.

Ver. 2. *What have I done now?* &c.—What I have done in cutting off some of the common soldiers is not to be compared with your destroying their princes. I began the war, but you have finished it. Gideon here shews a noble temper of mind, which deserves admiration and imitation. Though in the midst of a most glorious victory, in which he was the chief instrument; yet, for the sake of the common good, that there might be no dissension, nor the help of the Ephraimites he wanting to distress the enemy, he receives their reproaches without anger, and even humbles himself before them; making



A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1449.

grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?

b Ch. 7. 24.  
25.

3 <sup>b</sup> God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their <sup>c</sup> anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

† Heb. spirit.  
c Prov. 15. 1.

4 ¶ And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing them.

d Gen. 33. 17.

5 And he said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

e 1 Kings 20. 11.

6 ¶ And the princes of Succoth said, <sup>e</sup> Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that

himself of no account in comparison with them, and magnifying their service as greatly superior to his own. He disarms their insolence by his humility; their anger by his meekness; "a singular instance," says Dr. Dodd, "of modesty and prudence in a man of Gideon's courage." *Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim*—What you have gleaned, or done after me; *better than the vintage of Abiezer*?—That is, of the Abiezrites, to whom he modestly ascribes the honour of the victory, and does not arrogate it to himself. It is not improbable but this might be a proverbial expression in those days, whereby it was customary to commend the smallest action of one as superior to the greatest of another. And the proverb, perhaps, was founded on fact, viz. that more grapes were usually gleaned in the large and extensive country occupied by the Ephraimites, than the whole vintage of the small district belonging to Abiezer afforded. Be this as it will, the proverb is here applied with all the propriety imaginable, and its meaning is obvious. It is as if he had said, These scattered parties which you have gleaned and picked up at the fords of Jordan, are much more considerable than those which I and my whole host have destroyed.

Ver. 3. *Then their anger was abated*—According to that fine maxim of Solomon, "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

Ver. 4. *Gideon came to Jordan and passed over*—Or rather, had passed over, for he went over Jordan before Oreb and Zeeb were taken; but this is not mentioned till now, that what concerned the Ephraimites might be related all together, without interruption. *And the three hundred men with him*—Who here shew the same noble spirit, fortitude, contempt of ease, and regard to what they were engaged in which Gideon manifested, for though they were faint with hunger, and much fatigued through what they had done; yet

we should give bread unto thine army?

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1449.  
f 3 Sam. 26. 11.

7 And Gideon said, Therefore when the Lord hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, <sup>g</sup> then I will <sup>h</sup> tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers.

g Ver. 16.

† Heb. thorns.

8 And he went up thence <sup>h</sup> to Penuel, and spake unto them likewise: and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him.

h Gen. 28. 20.  
i 1 Kings 12. 26.

9 And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in peace, <sup>k</sup> I will break down this tower.

i 1 Kings 22. 27.  
k Ver. 17.

10 ¶ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand men, all that were left of <sup>l</sup> all the

l Ch. 7. 12.

they were eager to do still more against the enemies of their country, and therefore persisted to pursue them. Thus our spiritual warfare must be prosecuted with what strength we have, though we may have but little: This is frequently the true Christian's case: like Gideon and his men, he is faint, yet pursuing.

Ver. 6. *Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand*?—Art thou so foolish as to think with thy three hundred faint and weary soldiers to conquer and destroy fifteen thousand men? Thus they make light of the advantage he had gained, and tauntingly tell him, that he had not yet got these kings into his hands, that they should run the danger of giving him and his men food, and so afterwards have those kings to fall upon them. Thus they shew the most dastardly and ungenerous spirit, and shut up the bowels of their compassion against their brethren, who, with extreme toil, and at the hazard of their lives, were endeavouring to deliver them and the rest of their country from a cruel slavery. Were these Israelites! Surely they were worshippers of Baal, or in the interest of Midian.

Ver. 7, 9. *With the thorns of the wilderness*—The city was near a wilderness that abounded with thorns and briers. *Penuel*—Another city beyond Jordan; both were in the tribe of Gad. *I will break down this tower*—Some strong fort in which they greatly confided, and their confidence in which made them thus proud and presumptuous. Perhaps they pointed to it when they gave him their rude answer.

Ver. 10. *There fell an hundred and twenty thousand men*—Such a terrible execution did they make among themselves, and so easy a prey were they to Israel. *That drew the sword*—That is, persons expert and exercised in war, besides the retainers to them.

A. M. 2755.  
B. C. 1249.Or, an  
hundred  
and twen-  
ty thou-  
sand, every  
one draw-  
ing a  
sword, Ch.  
20. 2, 16,  
17, 25.  
Num. 29.  
26, 42.

Ch. 18. 27.

Ps. 85. 11.

Heb. ter-  
rified.

Heb. writt.

hosts of the children of the east :  
for there fell || an hundred and twen-  
ty thousand men that drew sword.

11 And Gideon went up by the  
way of them that dwelt in tents on  
the east of <sup>m</sup>Nobah and Jogbehah,  
and smote the host : for the host was  
<sup>n</sup> secure.

12 ¶ And when Zebah and Zal-  
munna fled, he pursued after them,  
and <sup>o</sup> took the two kings of Midian,  
Zebah and Zalmunna, and † discom-  
fited all the host.

13 ¶ And Gideon the son of Joash  
returned from battle before the sun  
was up,

14 And caught a young man of  
the men of Succoth, and enquired of  
him : and he † described unto him  
the princes of Succoth, and the el-

ders thereof, *even* threescore and  
seventeen men.

15 And he came unto the men of  
Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and  
Zalmunna, with whom ye did <sup>p</sup> up-<sup>p</sup> Ver. 6.  
braid me, saying, *Are* the hands of  
Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine  
hand, that we should give bread  
unto thy men *that are* weary ?

16 ¶ <sup>q</sup> And he took the elders of <sup>q</sup> Ver. 7.  
the city, and thorns of the wilder-  
ness and briers, and with them he  
† taught the men of Succoth.

17 ¶ <sup>r</sup> And he beat down the tower <sup>r</sup> Ver. 9.  
of <sup>s</sup> Penuel, and slew the men of the <sup>s</sup> 1 Kings  
city. <sup>s</sup> 14. 26.

18 ¶ Then said he unto Zebah and  
Zalmunna, What manner of men  
*were they* whom ye slew at <sup>t</sup> Tabor ? <sup>t</sup> Ch. 4. 6.  
And they answered, As thou art,

Ver. 11. *By the way of them that dwell in tents*—That is, the Arabians, termed *Scenitæ*, from their dwelling in tents. He fetched a compass by their country, and so poured in upon the rear of Zeba and Zalmunna, where they suspected no danger. *He smote the host; for the host was secure*—Being now got safe over Jordan, and a great way from the place of battle. And as they had fled as fast as they could the day before, and part of the preceding night, and were therefore weary, and now thought themselves out of all danger, it is probable they were gone to take their rest, and that Gideon fell upon them when they were fast asleep, as he had done at first on their main army.

Ver. 13. *Gideon returned—before the sun was up*—By which it may be gathered, that he came upon them in the night, which was most convenient for him who had so small a number with him; and most likely to terrify them by the remembrance of the last night's sad work. It must be acknowledged, however, that different interpretations are given of this passage. The Seventy, the Syriac, and Arabic versions take *הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ* *hechures*, here rendered *sun*, for the name of a place, in which they are followed by Houbigant, who translates the words, *By that place which is above Hures*. It is well known, however, that the word just quoted, does properly mean the sun, and is so translated in other passages of Scripture, and the translating it so here, both gives a more important sense to the passage, and is more agreeable to the context than the amendment proposed.

Ver. 14. *He described unto him, &c.*—Heb. *יִצְחָב*, *Jichtob*, he wrote down, probably the names and dwellings, and perhaps also, the qualities of the great men of the city, and of the judges, who were the persons that derided Gideon, and whom alone he intended to punish, and not all the people who were not guilty.

Ver. 16, 17. *With them he taught the men of Succoth*—

He tore their flesh with these thorns, (as he had threatened, Ver. 7.) It is not said that he tormented them till they expired, and therefore, he perhaps only put them to torture for some time, but if he put them to death, then the expression, *with them he taught the men of Succoth*, must mean, that he made their death an example to the rest of the inhabitants, to terrify them from such ungenerous behaviour for the future. "As their crime was the same," says Dr. Dodd, "as that of the men of Penuel, it seems likely that it was a punishment unto death. However severe, this chastisement was just. In refusing Gideon the succour which he demanded for the troops employed to save the state, they rendered themselves guilty of a species of rebellion; they sinned against the laws of humanity; they joined insult to their cruelty; and their refusal, unworthy a people who had any respect for religion, and any love for their country, merited a more public chastisement; as otherwise their example might have proved contagious, and have defeated all the good effects of Gideon's government." *He slew the men of the city*—Not all of them; probably only those who had affronted him.

Ver. 18. *What manner of men were they, &c.*—In outward shape and quality. *Whom ye slew at Tabor?*—Whither he understood his brethren had fled for shelter upon the approach of the Midianites, and where he learned that some Israelites had been slain, whom he suspected to be them. We have no mention of this slaughter before, and here the account of it is so short, that we can only form conjectures. It is evident, however, that these kings had slain Gideon's brethren; but, in what manner, and for what reason, we are not informed. They answered, *As thou art, so were they, &c.*—By this it appears that Gideon was of a goodly presence, carrying greatness and majesty in his aspect: and that kings in those days were wont to match only with graceful persons; by whom they might hope to have children like

A. M. 2155.  
B. C. 1349.Hob. ac-  
cording  
to the  
form, &c.

so *were* they; each one † resembled the children of a king.

19 And he said, They *were* my brethren, *even* the sons of my mother: as the LORD liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you.

20 And he said unto Jether his first-born, Up, *and* slay them. But the youth drew not his sword: for he feared, because he *was* yet a youth.

21 ¶ Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man *is*, so *is* his strength.

u Ps. 88. 11. And Gideon arose, and † slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the

Or. orna-  
ments like  
the Moor.

|| ornaments that *were* on their camels' necks.

22 ¶ Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

themselves. *Each one resembled the children of a king*—Not for their garb or outward splendour; but for the majesty of their looks. By which commendation they doubtless thought to have ingratiated themselves with their conqueror.

Ver. 19. *If ye had saved them alive, &c.*—For, as they were not Canaanites he was not obliged by any command of God to put them to death; but as they had killed his brethren, and that, it seems, in cold blood, he was, by God's law, the avenger of their death, being their near kinsman.

Ver. 20. *He said unto Jether—Up and slay them*—Some think he said this to animate his son to the use of arms for his God and country, and that he might have a share in the honour of the victory. It must be observed, that it was not unusual or disgraceful for great persons to do execution upon offenders in ancient times; no more than it was to sentence them to death: And therefore, they had not, as now, public executioners; but Saul commanded such as waited on him to kill the priests; and Doeg, one of his great officers, performed that office, 1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18. And Samuel himself is said to have hewed Agag to pieces in Gilgal; and Benaiah, the general of the army, to have fallen upon Joab at the horns of the altar. *But the youth—feared*—The two kings were men, it is likely, of good stature, and of a fierce and stern countenance.

Ver. 21. *Rise thou, and fall upon us*—They thought it better to die by the hand of Gideon, who was as eminent for his strength as his dignity, and would despatch them with more speed, than a stripling could.

Ver. 22. *Rule thou over us*—Not as a judge, for as such he already ruled over them, but as a king. *Both thou and thy son, &c.*—Let the kingdom be hereditary to thee and to

A. M. 2155.  
B. C. 1349.1 Sam. 9.  
7.Gen. 25.  
13.Or, sweet  
jewels.

Ch. 17. 8.

23 ¶ And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: \* the LORD † shall rule over you.

24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the ear-rings of his prey. (For they had golden ear-rings, † because they were † Ishmaelites.)

25 And they answered, We will willingly give *them*. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the ear-rings of his prey.

26 And the weight of the golden ear-rings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and || col-  
lars, and purple raiment that *was* on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that *were* about their camels' necks.

27 ¶ And Gideon † made an ephod †

thy family. *For thou hast delivered us*—This miraculous and extraordinary deliverance by thy hands deserves no less from us.

Ver. 23. *I will not rule over you*—As a king. He rejected their offer, because he looked upon God as their king, who appointed what deputy he pleased to govern them; and because he considered this proposal as an effort, or at least as tending to alter that form of government which God had instituted, and had given them no authority to change. *The Lord shall rule over you*—In a special manner, as he hath hitherto done, by judges. These God particularly appointed and directed in all the more important concerns of their office, even by *Urim* and *Thummim*, and, in a special manner assisted upon all occasions: whereas kings had only a general dependance on God. That God was their supreme Ruler and King was the foundation of their whole state. Hence the judgment which was administered among them is called God's judgment, Deut. i. 17. And Solomon is said to sit upon the *throne of the Lord*, 1 Chron. xix. 23, and the kingdom of his posterity is called *the kingdom of the Lord*, 2 Chron. xiii. 8; because before kings were settled in Israel, the Lord was their king; from whom the government was derived to the house of David by a special act of God.

Ver. 24. *Because they were Ishmaelites*—A mixture of people all called by one general name, Ishmaelites or Arabians, who used to wear ear-rings; but the greatest, and the ruling part of them were Midianites.

Ver. 27. *Gideon made an ephod thereof*—Not of all of it; for then it would have been too heavy for use; but of part of it, the rest being probably employed about other things ap-

<sup>A. M. 2155.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1249.</sup> thereof, and put it in his city, *even*  
<sup>a Ch. 6. 24.</sup> <sup>b Ps. 106.</sup> <sup>29.</sup> in Ophrah: and all Israel <sup>b</sup> went  
<sup>c Deut. 7.</sup> <sup>16.</sup> thither a whoring after it: which  
thing became <sup>c</sup> a snare unto Gideon,  
and to his house.

28 ¶ Thus was Midian subdued  
before the children of Israel, so that  
they lifted up their heads no more.  
<sup>d Ch. 5. 31.</sup> <sup>d</sup> And the country was in quietness  
forty years in the days of Gideon.

29 ¶ And Jerubbaal the son of  
Joash went and dwelt in his own  
house.

<sup>e Ch. 9. 2.</sup>  
<sup>h.</sup> 30 ¶ And Gideon had <sup>e</sup> threescore  
and ten sons <sup>†</sup> of his body begotten:  
for he had many wives.

<sup>† Heb. going out of his thigh.</sup>  
<sup>† Ch. 9. 1.</sup> 31 <sup>†</sup> And his concubine that *was*  
in Shechem, she also bare him a  
son, whose name he <sup>†</sup> called Abi-  
melech.  
<sup>† Heb. set.</sup>

32 ¶ And Gideon the son of Joash  
died <sup>e</sup> in a good old age, and was  
buried in the sepulchre of Joash his  
father, <sup>b</sup> in Ophrah of the Abi-ez-  
rites.

33 ¶ And it came to pass, <sup>i</sup> as soon  
as Gideon was dead, that the chil-  
dren of Israel turned again, and  
<sup>k</sup> went a whoring after Baalim, <sup>1</sup> and  
made Baal-berith their god.

34 And the children of Israel <sup>m</sup> re-  
membered not the LORD their God,  
who had delivered them out of the  
hands of all their enemies on every  
side:

35 <sup>n</sup> Neither shewed they kind-  
ness to the house of Jerubbaal,  
*namely*, Gideon, according to all the  
goodness which he had shewed unto  
Israel.

pertaining to it; which elsewhere are comprehended under the name of the ephod, as Chap. xvii. 5. *Put it in his city*—Not as a monument of the victory, for such monuments were neither proper nor usual; but for religious use, for which alone the ephod was appointed. The case seems to be this; Gideon having by God's command erected an altar in his own city, Ophrah, Chap. vi. 24; for an extraordinary time and occasion, thought it might be continued for ordinary use; and therefore as he intended to procure priests, so he designed to make priestly garments, and especially an ephod, which was the chief and most costly; which besides its use in sacred ministrations, was also the instrument by which the mind of God was enquired and discovered, 1 Sam. xxvi. 6—9; and it might seem necessary for the judge to have this at hand, that he might consult with God upon all occasions. *Israel went a whoring*—Committed idolatry with it; or went thither to enquire the will of God; whereby they were drawn from the true ephod, instituted by God for this end, which was to be worn by the high-priest only. *Which thing became a snare*—An occasion of sin and ruin to him, and his, as the next Chapter shews. Though Gideon was a good man, and did this with an honest mind, and a desire to set up religion in his own city and family; yet here seem to be many sins in it; 1, Superstition and will-worship, worshipping God by a device of his own, which was expressly forbidden. 2, Presumption, in wearing, or causing other priests to wear this kind of ephod, which was peculiar to the high-priest. 3, Transgression of a plain command, of worshipping God ordinarily but at one place and one altar, Deut. xii. 5, 11—14. 4, Making a division among the people. 5, Laying a stumbling-block, or an occasion of idolatry before that people, whom he knew to be too prone to it.

Ver. 28. *They lifted up their heads no more*—That is, they

recovered not their former strength or courage, so as to conquer or oppress others. *The country was in quietness forty years*—To the fortieth year from the beginning of the Midianitish oppression. *In the days of Gideon*—As long as Gideon lived.

Ver. 29. *Dwelt in his own house*—Not in his father's house, as he did before; nor yet in a court like a king, as the people desired; but in a middle state, as a judge, for the preservation and maintenance of their religion and liberties.

Ver. 31, 32. *His concubine that was in Shechem*—She dwelt there, and he often went thither, either to execute judgment, or upon other occasions. *Abimelech*—That is, *my father the king*; so he called him, probably, to gratify his concubine, who desired it either out of pride, or design. *Gideon died in a good old age*—His long life being crowned with the continuance of honour, tranquillity, and happiness.

Ver. 33. *As soon as, &c.*—Whereby we see the temper of this people, who did no longer cleave to God, than they were in a manner constrained to it, by the presence and authority of the judges. *Baalim*—This was the general name including all their idols, one of which here follows. *Baal-berith*—That is, *the Lord of the covenant*; so called, either from the covenant wherewith the worshippers of this god bound themselves to maintain his worship, or defend one another therein; or rather, because he was reputed the god and judge of all covenants, and promises, and contracts, to whom it belonged to maintain them, and to punish the violaters of them; and such a god both the Grecians and the Romans had.

Ver. 35. *Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Gideon*—No wonder they were so ungrateful to the family of this illustrious man, when they were so forgetful of the God of all their mercies. *According to the goodness he had shewed unto Israel*—In hazarding his life for their service, and ac-

A. M. 2795.  
B. C. 1209.

## CHAP. IX.

*Abimelech usurps the government at Shechem, ver. 1---6. Jotham's parable, ver. 7---21. Strife between Abimelech and the Shechemites, ver. 22---41. The slaughter of the Shechemites, ver. 42---49. The death of Abimelech, fulfilling Jotham's curse, ver. 50---57.*

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**A**ND Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying,

2 Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, †Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, *which are* <sup>b</sup> three-

† Heb. *if but is good? whether,* &c.  
b Ch. 5. 30.

completing a glorious deliverance in their favour; and in leaving them in the full enjoyment of their liberty, by refusing the despotic power with which they offered to invest him, and in governing them for the space of so many years with so much prudence, that he left them in a happy state of tranquillity, having the worship of the true God established among them, when he died.

CHAP. IX. Ver. 1, 2. *Abimelech—went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren*—That is, her relations, and communed with them—To try if he could engage them to favour and aid the design he had conceived to usurp the government of Israel, in direct opposition to his father's will, who had declared *no son of his should rule over them*. His mother had, probably, instilled into his mind some ambitious thoughts, and the name his father had given him, carrying royalty in its meaning, might help to blow up these sparks, and excite him to take the steps here mentioned. He had no call from God to this office and honour, as his father had, nor was there any present occasion for a judge to deliver Israel, as there was when his father was advanced; but his own ambition must be gratified, and that is all he aims at. *That all the sons of Jerubbaal reign over you*—He wickedly insinuates, though perhaps without any ground for it, that the sons of Jerubbaal were ambitious of the kingdom which their father refused; and therefore prays them to consider what horrible divisions and confusion it would make, if so many were permitted to pretend to the government, and how much better it would be to choose one from among the rest; pointing them, (in the next words) to himself. *Remember, I am your bone and your flesh*—Your kinsman, of the same tribe and city with you; which will be no small honour and advantage to you. Shechem was a city in the tribe of Ephraim, of great note. Joshua had held his last great meeting of the representatives of the tribes there. And, no doubt, Abimelech thought if that city would but declare for him, and abet his design, it would be a great step towards insur-

score and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you? Remember also that I am <sup>c</sup> your bone and your flesh.

3 And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words: and their hearts inclined † to follow Abimelech; for they said, He is our <sup>d</sup> brother.

4 And they gave him threescore and ten *pieces* of silver out of the house of <sup>e</sup> Baal-berith, wherewith Abimelech hired <sup>f</sup> vain and light persons, which followed him.

5 And he went unto his father's house <sup>g</sup> at Ophrah, and <sup>h</sup> slew his brethren the sons of Jerubbaal, *being*

ing the success of it. *They said, he is our brother*—And his advancement will be to our advantage. They were pleased to think of their city becoming a royal city, and the metropolis of Israel, and therefore were easily persuaded to what they believed would serve their interest.

Ver. 4. *They gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver*—To bear the charges which he would be put to in making good his pretensions. It is not said what the value of these pieces was: so many shekels would have been but a small present to make a man a prince, and too little to serve his purposes; and so many talents too much for them to give. Therefore the Vulgate translates it so many pounds weight of silver, which learned men approve. *Out of the house of Baal-berith*—Out of the sacred treasury of that idol-temple, which they had probably built since Gideon's death, (for he would never have suffered it while he lived) and endowed it with considerable revenues. *Wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons*—The word ריקים *reekim*, which we translate vain, signifies empty; that is, ignorant, inconsiderate, and needy persons. And the other word, פוחזים *pochazim*, means idle, vagabond fellows, that could settle to no business, but wandered about the country, who being commonly men of loose and profligate lives, were fittest for his purpose.

Ver. 5. *He went—and slew his brethren*—The persons who were most likely to hinder him in establishing his tyranny. *Threescore and ten*—Wanting one, as is here expressed. Here we see the power of ambition; what savage beasts it will render men to each other; how it will break through all the ties of natural affection, and natural conscience, and sacrifice that which is most sacred, dear, and valuable to its designs. We see also the peril attending high birth and honour. It was their being the sons of so great a man as Gideon that made Abimelech jealous of them, and exposed them thus to danger and to death. We find just the same number of Ahab's sons slain together at Samaria, 2 Kings x. 1. "Let none then," says Henry, "envy those

A. M. 2795.  
B. C. 1209.  
c Gen. 29.  
14.† Heb. *after.*  
d Gen. 29.  
15.e Ch. 6. 33.  
f Ch. 11. 3.  
g Chron. 13. 7.h Ch. 6. 26.  
i 2 Kings 11. 1.

A. M. 2795.  
B. C. 1399. threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself.

6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, † by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.

† Heb. or, by the oak of the pillar. See Josh. 24. 26.

cir. 1309.

i Deut. 11. 29. & 27. 12.

7 ¶ And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of <sup>i</sup> mount Gerizzim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto

A. M. 2795.  
B. C. 1399. them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

8 <sup>k</sup> The trees went forth on a time <sup>k 2 Kings 12. 9.</sup> to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, <sup>i</sup> Reign thou <sup>i Ch. 6. 9.</sup> over us.

9 But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, <sup>m</sup> wherewith by me they honour God <sup>m Ps. 104. 15.</sup> and man, and † go to be promoted <sup>† Heb. go up and down for other trees.</sup> over the trees?

10 And the trees said to the fig-

of high extraction, or complain of their own meanness and obscurity: the lower the safer." Upon one stone—As a stone was sometimes used for an altar, 1 Sam. vi. 14. some have conjectured from hence, that Abimelech intended to make his brethren a great victim to Baal, in revenge of the sacrifice of the bullock prepared for Baal, Chap. vi. 25; and to expiate the crime of Gideon, as these idolaters accounted it, by the sacrifice of all his sons.

Ver. 6. All the men of Shechem—That is, the great men, the chief magistrates of the city; and the house of Millo—Either some eminent and potent family living in or near Shechem; or the common council, the full house, or house of fulness, as the word signifies; those that met in their court-house or place of general assembly. Gathered together—Not to prosecute and punish Abimelech for this most barbarous murder, as they ought to have done, he being one of their citizens, but to make him a king. God was not consulted whether they should have any king at all, much less who it should be. They did not advise with the high-priest, or with their brethren of any other city or tribe, though it was designed that he should reign over all Israel, Ver. 22; but the Shechemites take upon them to do all of themselves, as if they were the men, and wisdom must die with them. In the mean time the rest of the Israelites were so very stupid and infatuated as to sit by unconcerned. They took no care to give any check to this usurpation, to protect the sons of Gideon, or to avenge their death; but tamely submitted to the bloody tyrant, as men that, with their religion, had lost their reason, and all sense of honour and liberty, justice and gratitude. How vigorously had their fathers appeared to avenge the death of the Levite's concubine? and yet so wretchedly degenerate are they now, as not to attempt the revenging of the death of Gideon's sons. It is for this that they are charged with ingratitude, Chap. viii. 35. Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal. By the plain of the pillar—The Hebrew word *עֵלֶן*, *celon*, here rendered plain, also signifies an oak, and therefore some render the passage, By the oak of the pillar—Viz. the oak where Joshua erected a pillar, as a witness of the covenant renewed between God and Israel, Josh. xxiv. 26. This place they chose, perhaps, to signify that they still owned Jehovah, and their covenant with him; and did not worship Baal in opposition to, but in conjunction with him, and in subordination to him.

Ver. 7. Jotham—stood in the top of mount Gerizzim—Which overlooked the city of Shechem. This was not on the same day when Abimelech was inaugurated, but some time after. The valley between Gerizzim and Ebal, was a famous place, employed for the solemn reading of the law, and its blessings and curses: and it is probable it was still used, even by the superstitious and idolatrous Israelites for such occasions, who delighted to use the same places, which their ancestors had used. And lift up his voice and cried—So that they who stood in the valley might hear him, though not suddenly come at him to take him. Ye men of Shechem—Who were here met together upon a solemn occasion, as Josephus notes, Abimelech being absent. That God may hearken unto you—When you cry unto him for mercy; so he conjures and persuades them to give him a patient audience.

Ver. 8. The trees went forth on a time—This is the first instance that we have of this manner of speaking by parables. But we find it in great use afterwards, and frequently adopted, not by prophets only, but by courtiers, politicians, and soldiers, in the Old Testament. See 2 Sam. xiv. 1; and 1 Kings xx. 38; Chap. xxii. 19. To anoint a king over them—Kings were appointed among the Israelites, and some other nations, with the ceremony of anointing. Olive-tree—By which he means Gideon.

Ver. 9. My fatness, wherewith they honour God—Oil being used in God's worship for divers things, as in sacrifices, in the dedication of persons and things to holy offices and uses, and for the lamps in the sanctuary. And man—For oil was used in constituting kings, and priests, and prophets, and for a present to great men, and to anoint the head and face. And go to be promoted, Heb. *לָנַח*, *lanuang*, to shake and move hither and thither, to wander to and fro, to exchange my sweet tranquillity and peace for incessant cares and travels. To undertake "the government of others," says Henry, "involves a man in a great deal of both toil and care. He that is promoted over the trees must go up and down for them, and make himself a perfect drudge to business. Those that are preferred to places of public trust and power, must resolve to forego all their private interests and advantages, and sacrifice them to the good of the community."

Ver. 11. The fig-tree said, &c.—Gideon refused this honour, both for himself, and for his sons; and the sons of

A. M. 2795.  
B. C. 1209. tree, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

11 But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

a Ps. 104. 15. 13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, <sup>n</sup> which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

Or, thistle. 14 Then said all the trees unto the || bramble, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

15 And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, *then* come *and* put your trust in my <sup>o</sup> shadow: and if not, <sup>p</sup> let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the <sup>q</sup> cedars of Lebanon. o Isai. 30. 2.  
p Ver. 20.  
q 2 Kings 14. 9.

16 Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him <sup>r</sup> according to the deserving of his hands;

17 (For my father fought for you,

Gideon, whom Abimelech had slain, upon pretence of their affecting the kingdom, were as far from such thoughts as their father.

Ver. 13. *Wine which checreth God and man*—"It has been objected," says Dr. Dodd, "that Scripture here suggests false and unworthy notions of the Supreme Being; but we are to remember, that the words are part of a parable. In a parable or fiction, every word or sentence is not to be interpreted with the utmost rigour, unless we are to take it to be Scripture doctrine that trees could talk. Jotham, to represent the forwardness, and self-assurance of foolish persons in undertaking high things, which wiser and better men would decline, brings in a fable, setting forth how the *olive-tree*, the *fig-tree*, and the *vine*, and all the choice trees had modestly refused a province not proper for them; but that the bramble, the unfittest of all, had accepted it notwithstanding, and was like to perform accordingly. Now the words here cited are the words of the vine, and perhaps run upon a pagan hypothesis, allowable in a fable or apologue. So Castalio, Le Clerc, and others, interpret the place; and they render the words, not *God and man*, but *gods and men*, which is better." There is another construction which some have recommended, namely, that wine cheereth both high and low, *princes* (who are sometimes called *elohim*, *gods*) and *peasants*. "But I prefer the interpretation of Le Clerc above-mentioned," says Dr. Waterland, *Scrip. Viind.* p. 80. And his interpretation is confirmed by the following ingenious remark of Bishop Warburton. "Jotham did not mean God the governor of the universe; but all must see his meaning is, that *wine checreth hero-gods and common men*; for Jotham is here speaking to an idolatrous city, which *ran a whoring after Baalim*, and made Baalberith their god; a god sprung from among men, as may partly be collected from his name, as well as from divers other circumstances of the story. This expression, which is very beautiful, contains one of the finest strokes of ridicule in the whole apologue, so much abounding with them; and insinuates to the Shechemites the vanity and pitiful original of their idolatrous gods, who were thought to be, or really had been, *refreshed with wine*." *Div. Leg.* vol. iii. p. 104.

Ver. 14, 15. *Then said all the trees unto the bramble, &c.*—Or thorn, fitly representing Abimelech, the son of a concubine, and a person of small use and great cruelty. *If in truth ye anoint me king*—If you deal truly and justly in making me king. *Then trust*—Then you may expect protection under my government. *Devour the cedars*—Instead of protection, you shall receive destruction by me; especially you cedars, that is, nobles, such as the house of Millo, who have been most forward in this work. By this fable Jotham signified to the Shechemites that the most worthy men in Israel, figured by the olive, the fig-tree, and the vine, which bear the most useful and excellent fruits, had not aimed at kingly dominion over them; and that his father Gideon had even refused it, when offered to him. By the bramble, the most worthless of shrubs, accepting the offer of the trees to be their king, and calling to them to put their trust in its shadow, though by its nature it could afford no shadow or protection to them, he shews what a worthless choice they had made. The speech of the bramble represents how foolish Abimelech was, in imagining he should be able to maintain the authority of a king, as he could by no means, any more than the bramble, afford the shade or protection he had promised: And the threat of the bramble seems to indicate the cruelty of Abimelech's temper, that he would destroy the Shechemites, if he found them unfaithful.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore if ye have done truly and sincerely, &c.*—In these and the following words, Jotham applies his parable to the Shechemites, and signifies, if they had dealt sincerely, and done that which was right to the family of Gideon, in slaying all his legitimate sons, and making the son of his concubine their king, that then he wished they might be happy in Abimelech as their king; but if they had done that which was unjust and ungenerous, (as they certainly had) he prays that mutual jealousies might break out between them, and that they might plague, injure, and destroy each other. And this prayer, we find, was heard, for it is said expressly in the 23d Verse, that within three years God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem: And the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.



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and † adventured his life far and delivered you out of the hand of Midian :

† Heb. cast his life.

18 <sup>a</sup> And ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother ;)

1 Isai. 9. 6.

19 If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, *then* † rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you :

u Ver. 15, 26.

20 But if not, <sup>u</sup> let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo ; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

x 2 Sam. 9. 14.

21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to <sup>x</sup> Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

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B. C. 1206.  
cir. 1206.

22 When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,

23 Then <sup>y</sup> God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem ; and the men of Shechem dealt <sup>z</sup> treacherously with Abimelech :

1 Sam. 16. 14.  
1 Kings 12. 15.

z Isai. 53. 1.

24 <sup>a</sup> That the cruelty *done* to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them ; and upon the men of Shechem, which † aided him in the killing of his brethren.

a 1 Kings 9. 33.

† Heb. strength-ened his hands to kill.

25 And the men of Shechem set liars in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them : and it was told Abimelech.

26 ¶ And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem : and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him.

27 And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode *the grapes*, and made

Ver. 18. *Ye have slain his sons, &c.*—Abimelech's crime is justly charged upon them, as being committed by their consent, approbation, and assistance: *Maid servant*—His concubine, whom he so calls by way of reproach. *Over Shechem*—By which limitation of their power, and his kingdom, he reflects contempt upon him, and chargeth them with presumption, that having only power over their own city, they durst impose a king upon all Israel.

Ver. 20. *Devour Abimelech*—This is not so much a prediction as an imprecation, which, being grounded upon just cause, had its effect, as others in like case have had.

Ver. 21. *Jotham ran away and fled*—Which he might easily do, having the advantage of the hill, and because the people were not forward to pursue a man whom they knew to have such just cause to speak, and so little power to do them hurt. *To Beer*—A place remote from Shechem, and out of Abimelech's reach.

Ver. 22. *Had reigned three years over Israel*—For though the men of Shechem were the first authors of Abimelech's advancement, the rest of the people easily consented to that form of government which they so much desired.

Ver. 23, 24. *God sent an evil spirit*—That is, gave Satan permission to work upon their minds. *That the cruelty done—to the sons of Jerubbaal, &c.*—That is, the punishment of the cruelty. Men may do evil, and think they have profited themselves ; may imagine they have strengthened

themselves in their wickedness, and are quite secure ; that they have procured themselves friends, who will stand by them, and save them : But God can, with the greatest ease, make all the devices of the wicked of none effect ; can turn their best contrivances to their ruin, and punish them by those on whom they depended for help and security. The example of Abimelech and the men of Shechem, recorded in this Chapter, may assure us, that God will not suffer the murderer to escape even in this world ; but will punish him in some grievous manner or other.

Ver. 25. *Set liars in wait for him*—To seize his person. *Robbed all*—Such as favoured or served Abimelech ; for to such only their commission reached, though it may be, they went beyond their bounds, and robbed all passengers promiscuously.

Ver. 26. *Gaal*—It is not known who he was ; but it is evident, he was a man very considerable for wealth, and strength, and interest, and that he was ill-pleased with Abimelech's power. *Went to Shechem*—By his presence and counsel to animate and assist them against Abimelech.

Ver. 27. *They went out into the fields*—Which, till his coming they durst not do, for fear of Abimelech. *Made merry*—Both from the custom of rejoicing, and singing songs in vintage time, and for the hopes of their redemption from Abimelech's tyranny. *Went into the house of their god*—Baal-berith, Ver. 4, either to beg his help against Abimelech,

A. M. 2799. B. C. 1206. || merry, and went into <sup>b</sup> the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech.

† Or. songs: Isa. 16. 9. Jer. 25. 30.

<sup>b</sup> Ver. 4. 28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, <sup>c</sup> Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? is not *he* the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? serve the men of <sup>d</sup> Hamor the father of Shechem: for why should we serve him?

<sup>e</sup> 1 Sam. 28. 10.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. 34. 9, 6.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Sam. 15. 4. 29 And <sup>e</sup> would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Sam. 15. 4.

30 ¶ And when Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was || kindled.

† Or. not.

31 And he sent messengers unto Abimelech † privily, saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed and his brethren be come to Shechem; and,

† Heb. craftily, or, to Tor-mah.

behold, they fortify the city against thee.

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32 Now therefore up by night, thou and the people that *is* with thee, and lie in wait in the field:

33 And it shall be, *that* in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city: and, behold, *when* he and the people that *is* with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them † as thou shalt find occasion.

† Heb. as thine hand shall find. 1 Sam. 10. 7. & 28. 9. Eccles. 9. 10.

34 And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that *were* with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies.

35 And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and the people that *were* with him, from lying in wait.

36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there

or to give him thanks for the hopes of recovering their liberty. *And did eat and drink*—To the honour of their idol, and out of the oblations made to him, as they used to do to the honour of Jehovah, and out of his sacrifices. *And cursed Abimelech*—Either by reviling him after their manner, or, rather in a more solemn and religious manner, cursing him by their god, as Goliath did David.

Ver. 28. *Who is Abimelech*—What is he but a base-born person, a cruel tyrant, and one every way unworthy to govern you? *Who is Shechem*—That is, Abimelech, named in the foregoing words, and described in those which follow. He is called Shechem for the Shechemite. The sense is, *Who is this Shechemite?* For so he was by the mother's side, born of a woman of your city, and she but his concubine and servant; why should you submit to one so basely descended? *Of Jerubbaal*—Of Gideon, a person famous only by his fierceness against that Baal which you justly honour and reverence, whose altar he overthrew, and whose worship he endeavoured to abolish. *And Zebul*—And you are so mean-spirited, that you do not only submit to him, but suffer his very servants to bear rule over you; and particularly, this ignoble and hateful Zebul. *Serve the men of Hamor, &c.*—If you love bondage, call in the old master and lord of the place; choose not an upstart, as Abimelech is; but rather take one of the old stock, one descended from Hamor, Gen. xxxiv. 2, who did not carry himself like a tyrant, as Abimelech did; but like a father of his city. This he might speak sincerely, as being himself a Canaanite and Shechemite, and possibly came from one of those little ones whom Simeon

and Levi spared when they slew all the grown males, Gen. xxxiv. 29. And it may be that he was one of the royal blood, a descendant of Hamor, who hereby sought to insinuate himself into the government, as it follows, Ver. 29, *Would to God that this people were under my hand*; which he might judge the people more likely to choose, both because they were now united with the Canaanites in religion; and because their present distress might oblige them to put themselves under him, a vigilant and expert commander.

Ver. 29. *Under my hand*—That is, under my command; I wish you would unanimously submit to me, as your captain and governor; for he found them divided; and some of them inclining towards Abimelech, whom they had lately rejected, according to the levity of the popular humour. *I would remove*—As you have driven him out of your city, I would drive him out of your country. *He said*—He sent this message or challenge to him. *Increase thine army*—I desire not to surprise thee at any disadvantage; strengthen thyself as much as thou canst, and come out into the open field, that thou and I may decide it by our arms.

Ver. 35, 36. *Gaal went out and stood*—To put his army in order, and to conduct them against Abimelech, whom he supposed to be at a great distance. *He said to Zebul*—Who concealed the anger which he had conceived, Ver. 30, and pretended compliance with him in this expedition, that he might draw him forth into the field where Abimelech might have the opportunity of fighting with him, and overthrowing him. *The shadow*—For in the morning, as this was, and in the evening, the shadows are longest, and move quickest,

A. M. 2798.  
B. C. 1206.

come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if *they were* men.

37 And Gaal spake again and said, See there come people down by the † middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of || Meonenim.

† Heb. *na-sel*.  
|| Or, the *gardens of the times*, Deut. 19. 14.  
¶ Ver. 28, 29.

38 Then said Zebul unto him, Where *is* now thy mouth, wherewith thou <sup>†</sup> saidst, Who *is* Abimelech, that we should serve him? *is* not this the people that thou hast despised? go out, I pray now, and fight with them.

39 And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.

40 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him, and many were overthrown *and* wounded, *even* unto the entering of the gate.

41 And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.

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42 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech.

43 And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and, behold, the people *were* come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them.

44 And Abimelech, and the company that *was* with him rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and the two *other* companies ran upon all *the* people that *were* in the fields, and slew them.

45 ¶ And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and <sup>g</sup> he took the city, and slew the people that *was* therein, and <sup>h</sup> beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.

46 And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard *that*, they entered into an hold of the house <sup>i</sup> of the god Berith.

Ver. 38—40. *Then said Zebul, Where is now thy mouth, &c.*—Now shew thyself a man, and fight valiantly for thyself and the people. *And he fled*—Being surprised by the unexpected coming of Abimelech, and probably not fully prepared for the encounter.

Ver. 41. *Abimelech dwelt at Arumah*—He did not prosecute his victory, but retreated to Arumah, to see whether the Shechemites would not, of themselves, return to his government, or in expectation that they would hereby grow secure, and so give him the greater advantage against them. *And Zebul thrust out Gaal*—Finding the spirit of Gaal's party a little cooled, perhaps through their suspecting him of cowardice, or ill conduct, he took the opportunity of expelling him and his brethren from the city; but seems to have shut the gates against Abimelech also. His interest, it seems, was not so considerable with the people that he could prevail with them either to kill Gaal and his brethren, or to yield themselves to Abimelech; and therefore he still complies with them, and waits for a fairer opportunity.

Ver. 42—44. *The people went out into the field*—To their usual employments about their land. *He—divided them into three companies*—Whereof he kept one with himself, Ver. 44, and put the rest under other commanders. *Abimelech*

*stood in the entering of the gate*—To prevent the retreat of the people into the city, and to give the other two companies opportunity to cut them off.

Ver. 45. *And sowed it with salt*—In token of his desire of their utter and irrecoverable destruction. For places situated in a salt soil being barren by nature, the sowing of salt upon a place, was a symbolical custom among the eastern people, at that time, to express great hatred and anger against any place, being as much as to express a desire that it should never be inhabited again, or produce its usual products, but become barren like a salt soil. For we cannot imagine that sowing of salt could render any soil barren ever after, but rather in some time more fruitful.

Ver. 46. *When the men of the tower heard*—Either a strong place belonging to the city of Shechem, and made for its defence without the city; or, perhaps a town at some distance from Shechem, but probably inhabited by Shechemites. When these people heard of the fate of the city, they retired to a strong hold adjoining to one of their temples, which used to be built on eminences, and to be fortified by nature as well as art. Either they fled, fearing the same destruction which had befallen Shechem, and here they hoped to be secure, partly by the strength of the place, and partly

A. M. 2798.  
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47 And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

k P. 68.  
ll.

48 And Abimelech gat him up to mount <sup>k</sup> Zalmon, he and all the people that *were* with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid *it* on his shoulder, and said unto the people that *were* with him, What ye have seen † me do, make haste, *and do as I have done.*

† Heb. †  
harc done.

49 ¶ And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put *them* to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

50 Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it.

51 But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut *it* to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower

52 And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

by the religion of it, thinking that either their god Baal-berith would protect them there, or that Abimelech would spare them out of regard to that god.

Ver. 48—51. *Zalmon*—A place so called from its shadowiness. *Thebez*—Another town near Shechem; and, as it seems, within its territory. *Thither fled all the men and women*—All that were not slain in the taking of the town. *And gat them up to the top of the tower*—Which was flat and plain, after their manner of building.

Ver. 53, 54. *A woman cast a piece of a mill-stone*—Such great stones, no doubt, they carried up with them, whereby they might defend themselves, or offend those who assaulted them. Here the justice of God is remarkable in suiting the punishment to his sin. He slew his brethren upon a stone, Ver. 5, and he loseth his own life by a stone. *A woman slew him*—Which was esteemed a matter of disgrace.

Ver. 56. *Thus God rendered, &c.*—This and the following verse conclude the history of Abimelech with a divine

53 ¶ And a certain woman <sup>l</sup>cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull.

A. M. 2798.  
B. C. 1206.  
1 2 Sam. 11.  
31.

54 Then <sup>m</sup>he called hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.

m 1 Sam.  
31. 4.

55 And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.

56 <sup>n</sup>Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren:

n Ver. 24.  
Job 31. 3.

57 ¶ And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them came <sup>o</sup>the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

o Ver. 26.

## CHAP. X.

*The government of Tola and Jair, ver. 1—5.—Israel's sin and trouble, ver. 6—9. Their repentance and reformation, which found acceptance with God, ver. 10—16. Preparation for their deliverance, ver. 17, 18.*

**A**ND after Abimelech there <sup>a</sup>arose to || † defend Israel Tola the

cir. 1206.  
a Ch. 2. 16.  
Or, deliver.  
† Heb. save.

admonition, that no man might think such things come to pass by chance. We see God, the judge of all, punished both Abimelech and the men of Shechem according to their deserts, and made them the instruments of each other's destruction. And it is remarkable that this punishment overtook them speedily, within less than four years after their crime was committed. *The wickedness of Abimelech*—In rooting out as far as he could the name and memory of his father.

Ver. 57. *The evil of the men of Shechem did God render, &c.*—Thus God preserved the honour of his government, and gave warning to all ages to expect blood for blood. The Lord is known by these judgments which he executeth, when the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Though wickedness may prosper for a time, it will not prosper always.

CHAP. X. Ver. 1. *There arose*—Not of himself, but

A. M. 2821.  
B. C. 1183. son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim.

cir. 1183. 2 And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

3 ¶ And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

b Ch. 5. 10.  
& 12. 14.  
c Deut. 3. 14.  
d Or, the villages of Jair, Num. 32. 41.  
cir. 1161. 4 And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, <sup>c</sup> which are called ¶ Havoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

5 And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

d Ch. 4. 11.  
& 5. 7.  
e Ch. 2. 18.  
f Ch. 2. 19.  
g 1 Kings 11. 38. 6 ¶ And <sup>d</sup> the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and <sup>e</sup> served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and <sup>f</sup> the gods of Syria, and the gods of <sup>g</sup> Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of

A. M. 2821.  
B. C. 1183. the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.

7 ¶ And the anger of the LORD cir. 1161. was hot against Israel, and he <sup>h</sup> sold b Ch. 2. 14. them into the hands of the children of Ammon.

8 And that year they vexed and <sup>†</sup> oppressed the children of Israel † Hab. crushed. eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead.

9 Moreover the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

10 ¶ <sup>i</sup> And the children of Israel i 1 Sam. 10. 10. cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.

raised by God, as the other judges were. *To defend*—Or, *to save*, which he did, not by fighting against, and overthrowing their enemies, but by a prudent and pious government of them, whereby he kept them from sedition, oppression, and idolatry. *He dwelt in Shamir*—Which was in the very midst of the land.

Ver. 3, 4. *Jair, a Gileadite*—Of Gilead, beyond Jordan. *He had thirty sons*—Who, it seems, were itinerant judges, and went from place to place, as their father's deputies, to administer justice. *That rode on thirty ass-colts*—It was customary for the noblest persons to ride on those beasts, and that not only in Judæa, but likewise in Arabia, and other countries, even among the Romans. *Thirty cities—called Havoth-jair*—That is, the villages of Jair. These villages were so called before this time from another Jair, but the old name was revived and confirmed upon this occasion.

Ver. 6. *Israel served—the gods of Syria*—They added to their former idolatries the worship of new gods; particularly those of Syria, which were Bel, or Baal, Astarte, Dagon, Moloch, Thammuz. *And the gods of Zidon*—The supreme gods of the Sidonians were Baal and Ashtaroth: but it is likely they had more, such as Asaroth, Asarim, Asarah. *And the gods of Moab*—The principal of which was Chemosh, 1 Kings xi. 7. *And the gods of the children of Ammon*—The chief of which was Milcom, 1 Kings xi. 5, where Ashtaroth is mentioned as the goddess of the Sidonians. *And the gods of the Philistines*—They had more, it seems, besides Dagon, but their names are not mentioned in Scripture. *And forsook the Lord*—They grew worse and worse, and ripened themselves

for ruin. Before, they worshipped God and idols together: now they forsake God, and wholly cleave to idols.

Ver. 7, 8. *He sold them into the hand of the Philistines, &c.*—The one on the west, the other on the east, so that they were molested on both sides. *That year they vexed, &c.*—Or, *that year they had vexed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years*—This was the eighteenth year from the beginning of that oppression. And these eighteen years are not to be reckoned from Jair's death, because that would enlarge the time of the judges beyond the just bounds; but from the fourth year of Jair's reign: so that the greatest part of Jair's reign was cotemporary with this affliction. This case of Jair and that of Samson seem to be much alike. For as it is said of Samson, that *he judged Israel in the days of the tyranny of the Philistines, twenty years*, Judg. xv. 20; by which it is evident, that his judicature, and their dominion, were cotemporary; the like is to be conceived of Jair, that he began to judge Israel, and endeavoured to reform religion, and purge out all abuses; but being unable to effect this through the backwardness of the people, God would not enable him to deliver the people, but gave them up to this sad oppression; so that Jair could only determine differences amongst the Israelites, but could not deliver them from their enemies.

Ver. 10. *We have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim*—Not contented to add idols to thee, we have preferred them before thee. All the rest of the Pagan gods, mentioned Ver. 6, are here comprehended under the name of *Baalim*. They were so many and various, that they had entirely alienated the affections of the Israelites from their

A. M. 2844.  
B. C. 1161.

11 And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, *Did not I deliver you* <sup>k</sup> from the Egyptians, and <sup>l</sup> from the Amorites, <sup>m</sup> from the children of Ammon, <sup>n</sup> and from the Philistines ?

<sup>k</sup> Exod. 14. 30.  
<sup>l</sup> Num. 31. 91, 21.  
<sup>m</sup> Ch. 3. 12.  
<sup>n</sup> Ch. 3. 31.  
<sup>o</sup> Ch. 5. 19.  
<sup>p</sup> Ch. 6. 3.  
<sup>q</sup> Ps. 106. 42.

12 <sup>o</sup> The Zidonians also, <sup>p</sup> and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, <sup>q</sup> did oppress you ; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.

<sup>r</sup> Deut. 32. 15.

13 <sup>r</sup> Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods : wherefore I will deliver you no more.

<sup>s</sup> Deut. 32. 37.

14 Go and <sup>s</sup> cry unto the gods which ye have chosen ; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

<sup>t</sup> 1 Sam. 3. 15.

15 ¶ And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned : <sup>t</sup> do thou unto us whatsoever

† seemeth good unto thee ; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.

A. M. 2843.  
B. C. 1161.

16 <sup>u</sup> And they put away the <sup>†</sup> strange gods from among them, and served the LORD : and <sup>x</sup> his soul <sup>†</sup> was grieved for the misery of Israel.

† Heb. *to good in thine eyes.*  
<sup>u</sup> 2 Chron. 7. 14.  
† Heb. *gods of strangers.*  
<sup>x</sup> Ps. 108. 44. Isai. 63. 9.  
† Heb. *was shortened.*

17 Then the children of Ammon were <sup>†</sup> gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in <sup>y</sup> Mizpeh.

† Heb. *cried together.*

<sup>y</sup> Ch. 11. 11, 29.

18 And the people *and* princes of Gilead said one to another, What man *is he* that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon ? he shall <sup>z</sup> be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

<sup>z</sup> Ch. 11. 8. 11.

own, that is, the true God, as they now acknowledge in a penitential strain.

Ver. 11. *The Lord said unto Israel*—Either by some prophet whom he raised up, and sent for this purpose, or by the high-priest consulting God for them by Urim and Thummim. For, we find, that the Israelites, notwithstanding their idolatries, when they were sorely afflicted, bethought themselves of repairing to the tabernacle, and asking counsel of the Lord. *Did not I deliver you from the Amorites ?*—Both Sihon and Og, and their people, and other kings of the Amorites. *From the children of Ammon*—Who were confederate with the Moabites, Judges iii. 13, 14.

Ver. 12. *The Zidonians*—We do not read of any oppression of Israel, particularly, by the Zidonians. But many things were done, which are not recorded. *The Maonites*—Either first, those who lived in, or near the wilderness of Maon, in the south of Judah, 1 Sam. xxiii. 25 ; xxv. 2, whether Edomites or others. Or, secondly, the Mehunims, a people living near the Arabians, of whom, 2 Chron. xxvi. 7. For in the Hebrew, the letters of both names are the same, only the one is the singular, the other the plural number.

Ver. 13, 14. *I will deliver you no more*—Except you repent in another manner than you yet have done: which when they performed, God suspended the execution of this threatening. *Cry unto the gods—you have chosen*—You have not been forced to worship those gods by your oppressors ; but you have freely chosen them before me.

Ver. 15. *Do thou unto us, &c.*—Do not give us up into the hands of these cruel men, but do thou chastise us with thine own hand as much as thou pleasest ; if we be not more faithful and constant to thee, than we have hitherto been.

Ver. 16. *They put away the strange gods*—As an evidence of the sincerity of their sorrow, and that they did not only confess their sins, but also forsake them. And it is probable that, for the present, a thorough reformation took place, and

that they entirely quitted the worship of strange gods, and served the Lord alone. *His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel*—That is, upon their repentance and reformation he turned away his anger, had compassion upon them on account of their miseries, and acted towards them like one that felt their sufferings. He changed his carriage towards them, and punished their enemies as sorely as if they had grieved and injured his own person. From this Chapter we may learn the amazing depravity of human nature, and how readily it falls from one degree of degeneracy to another. God, who knows what our nature is, foresaw that apostacy to idolatry would be the certain consequence of the Israelites' dwelling among the heathen nations, and therefore had strictly commanded them to expel those nations entirely out of Canaan, and to have no communication with them. But the Israelites did not obey his commands in this ; and in neglecting this one thing, fell into all the errors, crimes, and miseries, which God had forewarned them would be the consequence : They thought there was but little harm in letting the Canaanites remain among them as long as they lived peaceably with them. But, alas ! *Evil communication* unavoidably *corrupts good manners* ; they could not converse and traffick with the Canaanites without, by degrees, contracting a friendship with them, perhaps thinking they should be strengthened by these alliances with the inhabitants of the land. This naturally produced at least a complaisant deference to their customs and religious ceremonies, and, in a little longer time, the adjoining some of those customs and ceremonies with their own ; till at last they fell into all the abominations of the nations ; to deliver them from which, the true God had done so many wonderful works. From hence we may learn, how we may, by offending in a single point only, and that not seeming in itself absolutely immoral, or of any great consequence, be by degrees carried entirely out of the paths of piety, and brought to the greatest dege-

A. M. 2413.  
B. C. 1161.

A. M. 2413.  
B. C. 1161.

CHAP. XI.

*The birth of Jephthah, rejected by his brethren, ver. 1—3. The Gileadites choose him for their general, ver. 4—11. His treating with the king of Ammon, ver. 12—28. His war with, and victory over the Ammonites, ver. 29—33. His vow and the performance of it, ver. 34—40.*

<sup>a</sup> Hebr. 11. 32, called Jephthae.  
<sup>b</sup> Ch. 6. 12.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. a woman an harlot.

**N**OW <sup>a</sup>Jephthah the Gileadite was <sup>b</sup>a mighty man of valour, and he *was* the son of <sup>†</sup>an harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah.

2 And Gilead's wife bare him sons; and his wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our fathers house; for thou *art* the son of a strange woman.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. from the face.

3 Then Jephthah fled <sup>†</sup>from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered <sup>c</sup>vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 9. 4.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. after days.

4 And it came to pass <sup>†</sup>in pro-

neracy. We may further observe, from the circumstances of the Israelites, related in this Chapter, that afflictions are of great use, and are employed by God to bring men to a right sense of their duty, and into the paths of righteousness, from which they had wandered by their follies. And we may also learn, that God is always ready to receive us with forgiveness and mercy whenever we return to him.

CHAP. XI. Ver. 1. *Jephthah the Gileadite*—So called, either from his father Gilead, or from the mountain, or city of Gilead, the place of his birth. *Son of a harlot*—That is, a bastard. And though such were not ordinarily to enter into the congregation of the Lord, Deut. xxiii. 2; yet God can dispense with his own laws, and hath sometimes done honour to base-born persons, so far, that some of them were admitted to be the progenitors of the Lord Jesus Christ. *And Gilead begat Jephthah*—One of the children of that ancient Gilead, Numb. xxxii. 1.

Ver. 3. *Of Tob*—The name either of the land, or of the man who was the owner or ruler of it. This place was in or near Gilead, as appears by the speedy intercourse which there was between Jephthah and the Israelites. *Vain men*—Idle persons, who desired rather to get their living by spoil and rapine, than by honest labour. These evil persons Jephthah managed well, employing them against the enemies of God, and of Israel, that bordered upon them; and particularly against parties of the Ammonites, which made the Israelites more forward to choose him for their chieftain in this war.

cess of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel,

A. M. 2413.  
B. C. 1161.

5 And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob:

6 And they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon.

7 And Jephthah said unto the children of Gilead, <sup>d</sup>Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?

<sup>d</sup> Gen. 26. 7.

8 <sup>e</sup>And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we <sup>f</sup>turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be <sup>g</sup>our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 10. 14.

<sup>f</sup> Luke 17. 4.

<sup>g</sup> Ch. 10. 16.

9 And Jephthah said unto the

*Went out with him*—When he made excursions and attempts upon the enemy.

Ver. 4, 5. *The children of Ammon made war against Israel*—The Ammonites had oppressed them eighteen years, and now, when the Israelites begin to make opposition, they commence a war against them. *The elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah*—By direction from God, who both qualified him for, and called him to the office of a judge, otherwise they would not have been at liberty to choose a base-born person.

Ver. 7. *Did ye not hate me and expel me*—And deprive me of all share in my father's goods, which, though a bastard, was due to me? This expulsion of him was the act of his brethren; but he here ascribes it to the elders of Gilead; either because some of his brethren were among these elders, as is very probable from the dignity of this family; or because this act, though desired by his brethren, was executed by the decree of the elders, to whom the determination of all controversies about inheritances belonged; and therefore it was their faults they did not protect him from the injuries of his brethren.

Ver. 8. *Therefore we turn again to thee*—Being sensible we have done thee an injury, we come now to make thee full reparation. *That thou mayest go with us*—They acknowledge that they need his assistance, and are humble enough to request it.

Ver. 9. *If ye bring me home*—If ye recal me from this place where I am now settled to the place whence I was



A.M. 2561.  
B.C. 1143. elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your head?

Jer. 32. 5.  
Heb. be  
the hearer  
between  
us. 10 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, <sup>h</sup>The LORD †be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words.

Ver. 8. 11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him <sup>1</sup>head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words <sup>k</sup>before the LORD in Mizpeh.

Ch. 10. 17. 12 ¶ And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?

Num. 21.  
24, 26. 13 And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, <sup>1</sup>Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto <sup>m</sup>Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those lands again peaceably.

expelled. *Shall I be your head?*—Will you really make good this promise? Jephthah was so solicitous in this case, either from his zeal for the public good, which required that he should be so; or from the law of self-preservation, that he might secure himself from his brethren; whose ill-will he had experienced, and whose injuries he could not prevent, if, after he had served their ends, he had been reduced to his private capacity.

Ver. 10, 11. *The Lord be witness*—*The Lord be an hearer*; so the Hebrew word is. Whatever we speak, it concerns us to remember that God is an hearer! *The people made him head, &c.*—They confirmed in full assembly, by unanimous consent, what the elders, who had been sent to him had promised. *Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord*—That is, before the public congregation, where God was usually and then especially present. This most probably refers to the words of the people, in making him captain and head over them, which, it is likely, Jephthah repeated with an audible voice, calling God to witness to them at the same time, that the people might look upon their promise as more solemn, and that there might be no dispute afterwards about the offer which they now made to him.

Ver. 12. *Jephthah sent messengers*—That is, ambassadors, to prevent blood-shed, that so the Israelites might be acquit-

A.M. 2561.  
B.C. 1143. 14 And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon:

15 And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, <sup>a</sup>Israel took not away <sup>a</sup>the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: Deut. 2. 9.  
19.

16 But when Israel came up from Egypt, and <sup>o</sup>walked through the wilderness unto the Red sea, and <sup>p</sup>came to Kadesh; Num. 14.  
24.  
Num. 13.  
20.  
Num. 20.  
14.

17 Then <sup>q</sup>Israel sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: <sup>r</sup>but the king of Edom would not hearken *thereto*. And in like manner they sent unto the king of Moab: but he would not *consent*: and Israel <sup>s</sup>abode in Kadesh. Num. 20.  
14.  
Num. 21.  
4.  
Num. 21.  
11.  
Num. 21.  
14.

18 Then they went along through the wilderness, and <sup>t</sup>compassed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and <sup>u</sup>came by the east side of the land of Moab, <sup>x</sup>and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon *was* the border of Moab.

ted before God and men, from all the sad consequences of the war; and herein he shewed great prudence, and no less piety. *What hast thou to do with me, &c.*—What reasonable cause hast thou for this invasion? *To fight in my land*—He speaks this in the name of all the people.

Ver. 13. *Because Israel took away my land*—The land was not their's when the Israelites conquered it, but the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites. For as to the country of the Ammonites, God expressly charged the children of Israel not to meddle with it, Deut. ii. 19. It is true, this land which they now claimed, had formerly belonged to the Moabites, but Sihon had made a conquest of it, and driven them out, as we read, Numb. xxi. 26.

Ver. 16, 17. *Unto the Red Sea*—Unto which they came three times; once Exod. xiii. 18; again, a little after their passage over it; and a third time, long after, when they came to Ezion-Gaber, which was upon the shore of the Red Sea, from whence they went to Kadesh; of this time he speaks here. *In the like manner they sent to the king of Moab*—We do not read of such a message sent to the Moabites; but when the Israelites came from Ezion-Gaber into the wilderness of Moab, we find a command of God given to them not to distress the Moabites, nor contend with them in battle. This intimates there was some occasion for such a command,

<sup>A. M. 2861.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1144.</sup> 19 And <sup>y</sup> Israel sent messengers  
<sup>y</sup> unto Sihon king of the Amorites,  
<sup>z</sup> the king of Heshbon; and Israel said  
<sup>z</sup> unto him, <sup>z</sup> Let us pass, we pray  
<sup>z</sup> thee, through thy land unto my  
place.

<sup>a</sup> 20 <sup>a</sup> But Sihon trusted not Israel  
to pass through his coast: but Sihon  
gathered all his people together, and  
pitched in Jahaz, and fought against  
Israel.

<sup>b</sup> 21 And the LORD God of Israel del-  
ivered Sihon and all his people into  
the hand of Israel, and they <sup>b</sup> smote  
them: so Israel possessed all the  
land of the Amorites, the inhabitants  
of that country.

<sup>c</sup> 22 And they possessed <sup>c</sup> all the  
coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon  
even unto Jabbok, and from the  
wilderness even unto Jordan.

23 So now the LORD God of Israel  
hath dispossessed the Amorites from  
before his people Israel, and shouldst  
thou possess it?

24 Wilt not thou possess that  
which <sup>d</sup> Chemosh thy God giveth thee  
to possess? So whomsoever <sup>e</sup> the  
LORD our God shall drive out from  
before us, them will we possess.

25 And now *art* thou any thing  
better than <sup>f</sup> Balak the son of Zip-  
por, king of Moab? did he ever  
strive against Israel, or did he ever  
fight against them,

26 While Israel dwelt in <sup>g</sup> Hesh-  
bon and her towns, and in <sup>h</sup> Aroer  
and her towns, and in all the cities  
that *be* along by the coasts of Ar-  
non, three hundred years, why there-  
fore did ye not recover *them* within  
that time?

which was probably their refusing to grant them some com-  
mon civility.

Ver. 19—22. *Let us pass through thy land unto my place*  
—That is, unto the land of Canaan, which the Lord hath  
given me. *But Sihon—fought against Israel*—He not only  
refused, after the example of his neighbours, to grant the  
Israelites a passage through his country, which they could  
not insist upon as their absolute right, but raised all his forces,  
and proudly marched to drive them away from his borders.  
So that, as Jephthah intends to signify, Sihon was the ag-  
gressor, and the Israelites were compelled to fight in their  
own defence. *They possessed all the coasts*—Or borders,  
together with all the land included within those borders.  
*From the wilderness*—Namely, the desert of Arabia, *unto*  
*Jordan*.

Ver. 23. *So now the Lord, &c.*—God, the sovereign Lord  
of all lands, hath given us this land; this he adds, as a farther  
and convincing reason; because otherwise it might have been  
alleged against the former argument, that they could gain  
no more right to that land from Sihon, than Sihon himself  
had. *And shouldst thou possess it?*—It was absurd to  
think that they should take pains to conquer it, and God  
should give it to them, only that they might re-instate the  
Moabites or Ammonites in the possession of it with whom  
they had no alliance.

Ver. 24. *Wilt not thou possess, &c.*—He does not call  
Chemosh a god; but only argues from the opinion that they  
had of him, which was such as all nations entertained of their  
gods, viz. that they owed their conquests to them: to whom,  
therefore, they gave thanks for all their victories. The Am-  
monites and Moabites got their land by conquest of the old  
inhabitants, whom they cast out; and their success, though

given them by the true God, for Lot's sake, Deut. ii. 9, 10,  
they impiously ascribed to their god Chemosh, whose gift  
they owned to be a sufficient title. Jephthah, therefore,  
here appeals to themselves, whether they would not keep  
what they believed their god had given them, and consider  
it as lawfully possessed by them. *So whomsoever the Lord*  
*our God shall drive out, them will we possess*—By the very  
same title whereby the Moabites and Ammonites conceived  
that they possessed the country in which they now lived,  
and from whence they had driven out the ancient inhabitants.

Ver. 25. *Art thou any thing better than Balak?*—Art thou  
wiser than he? Or hast thou more right than he had? This  
is a third argument, that though Balak plotted against Israel,  
in defence of his own land, which he feared they would invade  
and conquer; yet he never contended with them about the  
restitution of those lands which Sihon took from him or his  
predecessors, laid no claim to them, nor ever demanded to  
have them restored.

Ver. 26. *Three hundred years*—Not precisely, but about  
that time, either from their coming out of Egypt, or from  
their first conquest of those lands. Here he pleads prescrip-  
tion, which by all men is reckoned a just title, and it is fit  
it should be so, for the good of the world; because other-  
wise a door would be opened both to kings and private per-  
sons for infinite contentions and confusions. And the pre-  
scription he pleads was for a long space of time, during  
which none of the kings of Moab or Ammon had pretended  
a right to this country, much less contested it with them.  
*Wherefore did ye not recover them within that time?*—No  
answer could be given to this question, why, in so long a  
time, they never asserted their claim till now?

A.M. 2261.  
B.C. 1144.

i Gen. 18.  
25.  
k Gen. 16.  
6.

27 Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the LORD <sup>i</sup>the Judge <sup>k</sup>be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.

28 Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.

i Ch. 3. 10.

|| Jephthah seems to have been judge only of North east Israel.

29 Then <sup>l</sup>the Spirit of the LORD came upon || Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon.

m Gen. 28.  
20.

30 ¶ And Jephthah <sup>m</sup>vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

† Heb. that which cometh forth which shall come forth.

31 Then it shall be, that † whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return

Ver. 27. *Wherefore I have not sinned*—I have done thee no wrong. *The Lord, the Judge, be judge*—Let him determine this controversy by the success of this day and war. The meaning is, that if they were not moved by these reasons, but the controversy must be decided by arms, he committed his cause to God, the righteous Judge of the whole world, who, he doubted not, would do him right. *Be judge this day*—He does not mean, that God would determine the right, by giving him the victory then, when he spake these words, (for he was not yet ready to give them battle) but that God would judge of the justice of his present plea, and accordingly give sentence when the matter came to be tried in battle. There cannot be a finer picture of justice, candour, fair reasoning, moderation, and unwillingness to proceed to the dreadful miseries of war, joined with a noble spirit to defend his country, in its just rights, than that which Jephthah shews in his messages to the Ammonites. It were to be wished that all kings would follow his steps, and not rush into the shocking inhumanities and miseries of war with too much precipitation, but first, try what good temper, moderation, fair reasoning, and a claim to no more than their just rights, will do with their enemies.

Ver. 29. *The Spirit of the Lord came on Jephthah*—The people had chosen him for their leader, and promised to continue him their chief governor, as they had already made him; and, now, God publicly declares his approbation of their choice: and appoints him their judge, as he had others before, Chap. iii. 10, by endowing him with an extraordinary measure of courage and wisdom, and all other qualities necessary to render him fit to be a ruler of his people. *He*

A.M. 2261.  
B.C. 1143.

<sup>n</sup> Lev. 21. 7.  
&c.  
Or, or I will offer it, &c.  
<sup>o</sup> Ps. 66. 13.  
See Lev. 27. 11.

in peace from the children of Ammon, <sup>n</sup>shall surely be the LORD'S, <sup>o</sup>and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.

32 ¶ So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

33 And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to <sup>p</sup>Minnith, <sup>p</sup>even twenty cities, and unto || the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

<sup>p</sup> Ezek. 27. 17.  
Or, Abet.

34 ¶ And Jephthah came to <sup>q</sup>Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, <sup>r</sup>his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she *was his only child*; || † beside her he had neither son nor daughter.

<sup>q</sup> Ch. 10. 17.  
<sup>r</sup> Exod. 15. 2. 1 Sam. 18. 6.

Or, he had not of his own cities son or daughter.  
Heb. of himself.

35 And it came to pass, when he

*passed over—Manasseh*—That is, Bashan, which the half tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan possessed. *Mizpeh of Gilead*—So called, to distinguish it from other cities of the same name. Having gathered what forces he could, he suddenly came hither to the borders of the Ammonites.

Ver. 31. *Shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering*—Dr. Waterland translates it, *shall be consecrated to the Lord, or I will offer it, &c.* "It is very evident," says Dr. Dodd, "that this translation of Dr. Waterland must be right, because it was impossible that Jephthah should mean to offer for a burnt-offering, whatever came forth of the doors of his house to meet him, since it was possible for him to have been met by several things which it would have been sacrilegious for him to have offered to the Lord; and indeed the event sufficiently proves the propriety of this interpretation, since he was met by that which, no vow, however solemn, could justify him in offering up. This is Mr. Lock's opinion, in his gloss upon the place." See the note on verses 39 and 40.

Ver. 33. *Till thou come to Minnith*—A place not far from Rabbah, the chief city of the Ammonites. *The children of Ammon were subdued before Israel*—It does not appear that Jephthah offered to take possession of their country. Though the attempt of others to wrong us will justify us in the defence of our own right, yet it will not authorize us to do them wrong.

Ver. 34, 35. *Behold his daughter came out to meet him*—In concert with other virgins, as the manner was. *Alas! my daughter, thou art one of them that trouble me*—Before this I was troubled by my brethren, and since by the Am-

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1143.  
Gen. 37.  
29, 34.

saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.

Eccles. 5.  
2.

Num. 30.  
2.

Ps. 15. 4.

36 And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.

Num. 30.  
2.

2 Sam. 18.  
19, 31.

37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the moun-

† Heb. go and go down.

tains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows.

B. C. 2961.  
A. M. 1143.

38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.

39 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel,

Ver. 31.  
1 Sam. 1.  
22.

Or. ordinance.

40 That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

† Heb. from year to year.  
Or. to talk with, Ch. 5. 11.

monites, and now most of all, though but occasionally, by thee. *I have opened my mouth*—That is, I have vowed. *I cannot go back*—That is, not retract my vow; I am indispensably obliged to perform it.

Ver. 36. *Do to me according*, &c.—Do not for my sake make thyself a transgressor; I freely give my consent to thy vow. *Forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance*, &c.—What a generous, noble, and pious answer is this of this virgin! It expresses such a noble love for her country, such true piety and filial obedience as can scarcely be exceeded.

Ver. 37. *That I may go up and down upon the mountains*—Which she chose as a solitary place, and therefore fittest for lamentation. *Bewail*—That I shall die childless, which was esteemed both a curse and a disgrace for the Israelites, because such were excluded from that great privilege of increasing the holy seed, and contributing to the birth of the Messiah.

Ver. 39. *Did with her*—That Jephthah's daughter was not sacrificed, but only devoted to perpetual virginity, appears, 1, From Ver. 37, 38, where we read that she bewailed not her death, which had been the chief cause of lamentation, if that had been vowed, but *her virginity*. 2, From this verse, where, after the sacred writer had said, that *he did with her according to his vow*, he adds, by way of declaration of the matter of that vow, *and she knew no man*.

Ver. 40. *The daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah*—The Hebrew word לרנות, *lethannoth*, here rendered to lament, occurs no where else in Scripture, but Judges v. 11, where it is rendered *rehearse*, or *celebrate*, viz. *There shall they rehearse*, says Deborah, *the righteous acts of the Lord*, surely not lament them. And the word might certainly be much more properly rendered to *celebrate*, or *talk with*, here, than to *lament*. Buxtorf interprets it thus, on the authority of the Jewish Rabbi, Kimchi, allowed to be the best Hebrew grammarian the Jews ever had, and famous as a commentator on the Old Testament. His words on the passage are,—“ Ad confabulandum juxta Kimchium,

ut amicis colloquiis eam de virginitate & statu vitæ solitario consolarentur.” *To converse with her, according to Kimchi, viz. that by friendly discourses they might comfort her concerning her virginity, and the solitary condition of her life.* Houbigant translates the words, *They went to the daughter of Jephthah to console her, four days in a year.* If we render the clause thus, the matter is put beyond dispute; for they could neither *converse with* nor *console her* after she was sacrificed: but if we translate the expression, *to celebrate*, or even to *lament*, its being repeated four times every year, plainly indicates that she was alive, because we no where find that the Israelites ever had any custom of celebrating or lamenting the dead after the funeral obsequies were performed. Their law rather tended to prohibit every thing of the kind, and inspire them with an abhorrence of it, by representing the dead as *unclean*, and those who came near and touched them as defiled thereby. So that there is not the least reason to conclude that the daughters of Judah went yearly, much less four times every year, either to lament or praise the daughter of Jephthah after she was dead; but rather that they went while she lived, to visit and converse with her, and comfort her with their company and discourses. All, therefore, that Jephthah did with his daughter, *according to his vow*, was to devote her to a single state, as a Nazarite, or consecrated person, to be employed in the service of God in the tabernacle, under the care of the high priests, probably in making the hangings and other ornaments of it, the habits of the priests, the show-bread, the cakes used in sacrifices, and other such like offices, and to continue in a virgin state till the day of her death. Thus Samuel was vowed to the Lord by his mother, 1 Sam. i. 11. That his daughter must live and die single was felt by Jephthah as the greater calamity, because *she was his only child*, Ver. 34, a circumstance which the sacred historian dwells upon, observing that *besides her he had neither son nor daughter*. But says Mr. Henry, “ We do not find any law, usage, or custom, in all the Old Testament, which doth in the least intimate that

A. M. 2261.  
B. C. 1143.

## CHAP. XII.

*Jephthah's encounter with, and slaughter of the Ephraimites, ver. 1—6. His death, ver. 7. A short account of three other judges, ver. 8—15.*

a Ch. 9. 1.  
† Heb. were called.

**A**ND <sup>a</sup>the men of Ephraim † gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire.

2 And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and

a single life was any branch or article of religion." "And, do we find," replies Mr. Wesley, "any law, usage, or custom there, which does in the least intimate that cutting the throat of an only child was any branch or article of religion?" If only a dog had met Jephthah, would he have offered up that for a burnt-offering? No, because God had expressly forbidden this. And had he not expressly forbidden murder? But Mr. Pool thinks the story of Agamemnon's offering up Iphigenia (put for Jephthah's daughter) took its rise from this. Probably it did, as the Greeks used, as he observes, "to steal sacred histories and turn them into fables." But then let it be observed Iphigenia was not murdered. Tradition says that Diana sent a hind in her stead, and took the maid to live in the woods with her. Upon the whole, this one single circumstance, mentioned above, that, when the sacred writer had informed us, *Jephthah did with his daughter according to his vow*, he adds, *and she knew no man*, renders it as "clear as the light," as Dr. Dodd observes, that her father's vow was thus fulfilled; "for if she had been slain as a burnt-offering, it would have been absurd enough to have told us that she afterwards *knew no man*. And indeed," adds he, "the passage is so plain, that one would wonder it could ever have come into the heads of writers to conceive that her father, who was a truly pious man, Ver. 11, could have thought of offering up his daughter as a sacrifice to that God who never allowed or admitted such horrid sacrifices, and whose great quarrel against the baneful idols of the heathens was, that they called for and accepted the sacrifices of sons and daughters." See Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2; Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 10.

CHAP. XII. Ver. 1. *The men of Ephraim—went northward*—Over Jordan where Jephthah was, in the northern part of the land beyond Jordan. *And said*—Through pride and envy, contending with him as they did before with Gideon. *Over to fight*—Not over Jordan, for there he was already; but over the borders of the Israelites' land beyond Jordan.

Ver. 2, 3. *When I called you, ye delivered me not*—He

when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. A. M. 2261.  
B. C. 1143.

3 And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I <sup>b</sup>put my life in thy hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me? b 1 Sam. 19.  
3.

4 Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites <sup>c</sup>are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites. c 1 Sam. 26.  
10.

answers them with great mildness, but denies their charge. He affirms that he had begged their assistance, but they had refused to grant it. *When I saw that ye delivered me not*—When I became sensible that there was no hope of your assistance to preserve us from ruin. *I put my life in my hand*—That is, I exposed myself to the utmost danger; as a man that carries a brittle and precious thing in his hand, which may easily either fall to the ground, or be snatched from him. He had but a small part of the people of Israel with him, to encounter their powerful oppressors. *And passed over against the children of Ammon*—With such forces only as I could raise on the east of Jordan, Chap. xi. 29, 30. *Wherefore are ye come up?*—Why do ye thus requite my kindness in running such hazards to defend and preserve you and yours? Jephthah here manifests an excellent spirit and great wisdom. He would have prevented the civil war had it been possible.

Ver. 4. *The men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, &c.*—That which provoked the army of Jephthah to kill so many of them was their insulting language, added to their threats, whereby they reproached the men of Gilead, (who were the chief managers of the late war) as if they were but the scum and dregs of the tribe of Ephraim. *Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim*—A contemptuous expression, designed to provoke and kindle wrath. The word *Ephraim* is here taken, largely as comprehending the other neighbouring tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief, and especially their brethren of Manasseh, who lived next to them, and were descended from the same father, Joseph. By *Gileadites*, they seem here principally to mean, those Manassites who inhabited Gilead, beyond Jordan. And although other Gileadites were joined with them, yet they vent their passion principally against these, because they envied them most, as having had a chief hand in the victory. These they opprobriously call *fugitives*, that is, such as had deserted their brethren of Ephraim and Manasseh, planted themselves beyond Jordan, at a distance from their brethren, and were alienated in affection from them.

A. M. 2861.  
B. C. 1143.  
d Josh. 22.  
11.

5 And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, *Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay;*

Which signifies a stream, or flood, Ps. 69. 2, 15.

6 Then said they unto him, Say now || Shibboleth: and he said, Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.

cir. 1137.

7 ¶ And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

He seems to have been only a civil Judge to do justice in North east Israel.

8 ¶ And after him || Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.

cir. 1130.

9 And he had thirty sons and thirty daughters, whom he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years.

Ver. 5, 6. *If he said, Nay*—To avoid the present danger. *Then said they unto him, say now Shibboleth*—To find out the truth they put him to this test; whether his pronunciation of some words was like that of the Gileadites; for people of the same nation, who speak the same language, generally differ very much in the pronunciation of it, according as they live in different parts of the country. As the word signifies a stream or river, and they desired to pass over one, it was a word proper for the occasion, and gave them no cause to suspect the design, because they were only desired to say, "Let me go over the *Shibboleth* or river." *And he said, Sibboleth*—If he was an Ephraimite he presently discovered himself, for he could not pronounce the Hebrew letter *w shin*; which probably proceeded from the long habit of that people, to express themselves in a different manner; so that they could not readily frame the organs of speech to pronounce as the Gileadites did. The Hebrew text, however, does not say that he *could not*, but that he *did not* frame to pronounce it right; because, not suspecting the design, he uttered hastily according to his usual manner of expression. *There fell—forty and two thousand*—Not in that place, but in that expedition, being slain either in the battle, or in the pursuit, or at Jordan. See the justice of God! They had gloried that they were Ephraimites: But how soon are they afraid to

10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem. A. M. 2874.  
B. C. 1130.

11 ¶ And after him || Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. A civil Judge in North east Israel.

12 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun. cir. 1130.

13 ¶ And after him || Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel. A civil Judge also in North east Israel.

14 And he had forty sons and thirty † nephews, that † rode on threescore and ten ass colts: and he judged Israel eight years. † Heb. sons' sons.  
cir. 1112.  
o Ch. 5. 10.

15 And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, † in the mount of the Amalekites. † Ch. 2. 15.

CHAP. XIII.

*Samson was an eminent believer, Heb. xi. 13. and a glorious type of him who with his own arm wrought salvation. The occasion of raising him up, ver. 1. His birth foretold by an angel, ver. 2—5. His mother relates this to his father, ver. 6, 7. The angel repeats it to them both, ver. 8—14. Manoah offers to entertain him and asks his name, ver. 15—18. He discovers himself at parting, ver. 19—23. Samson is born, ver. 24, 25.*

own their country! They had called the Gileadites, fugitives: And now they are in good earnest become fugitives themselves. It is the same word, Ver. 5, used of the Ephraimites that fled, which they had used in scorn of the Gileadites. He that rolls the stone, or reproach unjustly on another, it may justly return upon himself.

Ver. 9. *Took in thirty daughters*—That is, took them home for wives to his sons. What a difference between his and his predecessor's family! Ibzan had sixty children, and all married: Jephthah but one, and she dies unmarried. Some are increased, others diminished; all is the Lord's doing.

Ver. 15. *Mount of the Amalekites*—So called, from some remarkable exploit, done by, or upon the Amalekites in that place. It is strange, that in the history of all these judges, there is not so much as once mention of the high priest, or of any other priest or Levite, appearing either for counsel or action in any public affair, from Phinehas to Eli, which may well be computed two hundred and fifty years! Surely this intimates, that the institution was chiefly intended to be typical, and that the benefits which were promised by it, were to be chiefly looked for in its anti-type, the everlasting priesthood of Christ, in comparison of which that priesthood had no glory.

A. M. 2543.  
B. C. 1161.  
cir. 1161.  
Heb. ad-  
ded to coin-  
mit, &c.  
Ch. 2. 11.  
This  
seems a  
partial  
Captivity.  
1 Sam. 12.  
9.  
Josh. 19.  
41.

AND the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> did evil again in the sight of the LORD; || and the LORD delivered them <sup>b</sup> into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

2 ¶ And there was a certain man of <sup>c</sup> Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not.

3 And the <sup>d</sup> angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive and bear a son.

4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and <sup>e</sup> drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing:

a Ch. 6. 12.

e Ver. 14.

CHAP. XIII. Ver. 1. *The children of Israel did evil again*—That is, fell into idolatry, not; it seems after the death of Abdon, the last judge, but in the days of the former judges. *The Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines*—These were a very inconsiderable people. They had but five cities of any note. And yet, when God used them as a staff in his hand they were very oppressive and vexatious. *Forty years*—To be computed, not from Abdon's death, but before that time. This is the longest oppression which the Israelites ever sustained, but Sir John Marsham and others think it is not different from that mentioned Chap. x. 7, 8, but one and the same with it; the Philistines harrassing the Israelites in the west, while the Ammonites oppressed them in the east; and that, though the tyrannical treatment of them by the Philistines lasted longer, yet it began at the very same time with the other, and rendered their distress the greater. Others suppose, that it did not begin till after Jephthah's death, and that the great slaughter of the Ephraimites made by him, greatly encouraged the Philistines to rise against Israel, one of Israel's chief bulwarks being so much weakened.

Ver. 2, 3. *Of the family of the Danites*—That is, of that tribe or people. *His wife was barren, and bare not*—An emphatical repetition of the same thing in other words, which is an usual elegance both in Scripture, and other authors. *The angel*—The Son of God, yet distinguished from the Lord, because he appeared here in the form of a servant, as a messenger sent from God. The great Redeemer did in a particular manner concern himself about this typical redemption.

Ver. 4. *Now therefore beware*—She was to conform to the manner of life observed, by the Nazarites, while she carried her infant in her womb, and perhaps while she nursed him; because, as it follows in the next Verse, he was to be a perpetual Nazarite to God, from his conception to his death; which would have been impossible if she had drank wine or

5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be <sup>e</sup> a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall <sup>a</sup> begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his <sup>k</sup> countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I <sup>l</sup> asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name:

7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Na-

strong drink, because a child in the womb and its mother subsist by the same nourishment. *Drink not wine nor strong drink*—Under which are comprehended the other particulars mentioned, Numb. vi. 2—4. *And eat not any unclean thing*—Any of those meats forbidden, Lev. xi. These were forbidden to all, but especially to the Nazarites. In all probability the Israelites were negligent at that time in observing the precepts with relation to meats, otherwise there would have been no need to mention this.

Ver. 5. *The child shall be a Nazarite*—Consecrated to God's service in a peculiar manner. *He shall begin to deliver Israel*—He did not complete the deliverance of the Israelites from the servile yoke of the Philistines: but the work was carried on and perfected by others, viz. by Eli, Samuel, and Saul, and especially by David. Samson galled them severely, but they still continued to oppress Israel, as they did when he was born, and the oppression continued, more or less, till the memorable victory of Eben-ezer, recorded 1 Sam. vii. 13, when they were subdued, and their tyranny of forty years ended. Thus God chooses to carry on his work gradually, and by several hands. One lays the foundation of a good work, another builds, and perhaps a third brings forth the top-stone.

Ver. 6. *A man of God came unto me*—A prophet, or sacred person, sent with a message from God. *Like the countenance of an angel, very terrible*—Or venerable, awful, full of majesty. Though Manoah's wife had never seen an angel before, yet she might well say this, as it was a prevailing opinion among all people, that celestial beings were more excellent in their nature than mankind, and bore an extraordinary majesty in their countenances, which struck the human beholder with awe and admiration. *But I asked not whence he was, &c.*—The lustre of his aspect infused such an awe into her, as rendered her incapable of making such enquiry.

A. M. 2543.  
B. C. 1161.  
Num. 6.

Num. 6.  
1 Sam. 7.  
14.

Deut. 23.  
1.  
Matt. 23.  
3.

Ver. 17.  
19.



A.M. 2943.  
B.C. 1161.

zarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

8 ¶ Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my LORD, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

9 And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her.

10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day.

11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that speakest unto the woman? And he said, I am.

12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. † How shall we order the child, and † how shall

† Heb. What shall be the manner of the, &c.  
Or, what shall he do?  
† Heb. what shall be his work?

Ver. 8. *Then Manoah intreated the Lord, &c.*—Not hesitating or doubting, on account of his wife's long barrenness, he believed the heavenly message, and looked upon the thing as quite certain, only he desired that the man of God might appear to them again, to instruct them in what manner they should treat the child when it should be born. And God graciously answered his humble petition.

Ver. 12. *Now let thy words come to pass.*—Or thy words shall come to pass. I firmly believe thy promises shall be fulfilled. *How shall we order the child?*—Houbigant renders this, *What shall be the method of educating the child*—What rules shall we observe in bringing him up? *How shall we do unto him?*—What profession shall we prepare him for, or how shall we instruct him, so as to make him fit to be the deliverer of Israel?

Ver. 13, 14. *Of all that I said—let her beware*—While the child is in the womb, and after the child is born, let her observe the same orders. We may observe that the angel gives no answer to Manoah's question, how the child should be educated, &c. as willing that they should not be solicitous about that at the present, but leave it to the care of Providence, which, in proper time, would so direct matters in regard to the child, as that he should be fitted for the great purpose he was intended for. He therefore only repeats his injunctions to the woman how she should act during her pregnancy.

A.M. 2943.  
B.C. 1161.

we do unto him?

13 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware.

14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, <sup>m</sup> neither <sup>n</sup> let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 ¶ And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, <sup>n</sup> let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid <sup>†</sup> for thee.

16 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the LORD.

17 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?

18 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, <sup>o</sup> Why askest thou thus

<sup>n</sup> Gen. 18. 8.  
† Heb. before thee

<sup>o</sup> Gen. 32. 29.

Ver. 15, 16. *Until we shall have made ready a kid*—He supposed him to be a man and a prophet, to whom he would in this manner express his respect, as was usual to strangers. *I will not eat of thy bread*—That is, meat, as bread is commonly taken in Scripture. *If thou wilt offer a burnt-offering*—As Manoah had made no mention of a burnt-offering, but only desired the angel, whom he took for a prophet, to accept of a repast with them, Le Clerc's translation of this passage is to be preferred, *But (not and, as we render it) if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering to the Lord, do it: that is, if thou desirest to express thy thankfulness to the Lord, thou mayest do it by offering a burnt-offering.*

Ver. 17, 18. *That when thy sayings come to pass, we may do thee honour*—Either by making honourable mention of thee, or by shewing respect to thee by a present, such as they usually gave to prophets. *Seeing it is secret*—Meaning, not only, that it would be of no importance or service to him to know his name; but that his name was hidden from mortal men, and wonderful, as the word פלי peli signifies, and is translated, Isai. ix. 6; where it is applied to Christ, the wonderful child born, and son given, who has the government upon his shoulders, and is the mighty God. The angel means, My nature and essence, often signified by name in the Scriptures, is incomprehensible. This shews, that this was the Angel of the Covenant, the Son of God, that spoke to Manoah.

A. M. 2043.  
B. C. 1161.  
after my name, seeing it is  $\parallel$  secret?

19 So Manoah took a kid with a meat-offering, <sup>1</sup> and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the angel did wonderously; and Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and <sup>2</sup> fell on their faces to the ground.

21 But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. <sup>3</sup> Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the LORD.

22 And Manoah said unto his wife, <sup>4</sup> We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

23 But his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us,

A. M. 2043.  
B. C. 1161.  
he would not have received a burnt-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these.

24 ¶ And the woman bare a son, and called his name ' Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

25 \* And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in † the camp of Dan † between Zorah and Eshtaol.

## CHAP. XIV.

Samson's marriage with a Philistine, and killing a lion, ver. 1—7. He finds honey in the carcase, ver. 8, 9. His riddle, ver. 10—14. Unriddled by means of his wife, ver. 15—18. He kills thirty Philistines, and leaves her, ver. 19, 20.

AND Samson went down <sup>a</sup> to Timnath, and <sup>b</sup> saw a woman

Ver. 19, 20. *And offered it upon a rock*—The presence and command of the angel being a sufficient warrant for the offering of sacrifice by a person who was no priest, and in a place otherwise forbidden. Vitringa, however, supposes that "it was the angel, who, upon this occasion performed the principal functions of the priest; the most essential of which was to put the fire to the burnt-offering." Manoah, he observes, dared not to perform the offices of the priesthood in the presence of a personage, whom he took for an extraordinary prophet, commissioned from God. All that he did was done by order of the angel, or as his minister; just as the Israelites obeyed Elijah afterwards," 1 Kings xviii. 34. *The angel, or rather he,* (for there is nothing for angel in the original) *did wonderously*—Bringing fire out of the rock, as in the case of Gideon, Chap. vi. 21, to consume the burnt-offering, and then ascending in the midst of the flame, hereby manifesting his nature and essence to be spiritual. *Off the altar*—That is, from that part of the rock which served instead of an altar, upon which the sacrifice was laid. *Manoah and his wife—fell on their faces*—Partly out of reverence for so glorious a person manifested in so wonderful a manner, and partly out of a religious horror and fear of death; for the prevention whereof, they fell down in the way of supplication to God.

Ver. 23. *If the Lord were pleased to kill us*—The reasoning of Manoah's wife here is very just, and shews her to have been a woman of good understanding. Indeed, both of them seem to have been persons of eminent piety, who, amidst the prevailing corruption and idolatry of their people, retained their integrity, and adhered to the worship and service of the true God. And of such God is always mind-

ful, both bestowing peculiar favours upon them, and communicating blessings to his church, and to the world, through their means. *Nor would, as at this time, have told us such things*—This expression seems to have some emphasis in it, to enhance God's mercy to them, as being afforded them in a time of such grievous calamity; and in a time when the word of the Lord was precious, and there was no open vision.

Ver. 24, 25. *The Lord blessed him*—That is, endowed him with all those graces and gifts of mind and body which were necessary for the work he was designed for. *The Spirit of the Lord began to move him*—To excite him to heroic designs, and extraordinary actions, above the power of mere unassisted human abilities; to incline his heart to great attempts for the help and deliverance of God's people; to give some essay of it to his brethren, and to seek all opportunities for it. *At times*—Upon certain occasions, which might make known to the people that God intended to begin the work of their deliverance by this extraordinary person. *In the camp of Dan*—A place so called, either from the expedition of the Danites, Judges xviii. 11, 12, which, though recorded after this history took place before it, or from some other camp which the Danites had formed there to give some check to the incursions of the Philistines.

CHAP. XIV. Ver. 1, 2. *Samson went*—After he was come to mature age. *To Timnath*—A place not far from the sea. *Get her for me to wife*—Herein he is an example to all children, conformable to the fifth commandment. Children ought not to marry, nor to move toward it without the advice and consent of their parents. They that do, as Bishop Hall speaks, unchild themselves. Parents have a property

A. M. 2263.  
B. C. 1111.  
in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.

2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife.

3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well.

4 But his father and his mother knew not that it *was* of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

5 ¶ Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him.

6 And the Spirit of the LORD

A. M. 2263.  
B. C. 1111.  
came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.

7 And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

8 ¶ And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.

9 And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

10 ¶ So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

11 And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

12 ¶ And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto

in their children, as parts of themselves. In marriage this property is transferred. It is, therefore, not only unkind and ungrateful, but palpably unjust, to alienate this property, without their concurrence. Whoso thus robbeth his father or mother, stealing from them himself who is nearer and dearer to them than their goods, and yet saith, *It is no transgression, the same is the companion of a destroyer*, Prov. xviii. 24.

Ver. 3. *To take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines*—With whom the Israelites were forbidden to marry. For although the Philistines were not Canaanites in their original, yet they were so in their concurrence with them in wickedness, and therefore were liable to the same judgments with them. *Get her for me*—This action of Samson's, though against common rules, seems to be warranted by the direction of God, (mentioned in the following words) which was known to Samson, but not to his parents. *Pleaseth me*—Not so much for her beauty, as for the design mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 5, 6. *And his father and mother*—Who accompanied him, either because they were now acquainted with his design; or, to order the circumstances of that action which they saw he was set upon. *The Spirit of the Lord came mightily*

—Increased his courage and bodily strength. *As he would have rent a kid*—As soon and as safely. *Told not, &c.*—Lest by their means it should be publicly known; for he wisely considered, that it was not yet a fit time to awaken the jealousies and fears of the Philistines concerning him, as this would have done.

Ver. 8, 9. *After a time*—Heb. *after days*; that is, either after some days: or rather, after a year, as that word often signifies; when the flesh of the lion, (which, by its strong smell, is offensive to bees) was wholly consumed, and nothing was left but the bones. *Bees*—Settling themselves there, as they have sometimes done in a man's skull, or in a sepulchre. *Came to his father and mother*—From whom he had turned aside for a season, Ver. 8.

Ver. 11. *When they saw him*—Or, *observed him*, his stature and strength, and countenance, and carriage, which were extraordinary. *They brought thirty companions*—Partly in compliance with the custom of having bridemen; though they were not so numerous; but principally by way of caution, and as a guard put upon him under a pretence of respect and affection.

Ver. 12. *I will now put forth a riddle unto you*—The custom of those times, and which was transmitted to succeed—

A. M. 2863.  
B. C. 1141.  
k Gen. 29.  
27.

l Or, shirts.  
l Gen. 49.  
22.

you; if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find *it* out, then I will give you thirty || sheets and thirty <sup>1</sup> change of garments:

13 But if ye cannot declare *it* me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

14 And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, <sup>m</sup> Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, <sup>n</sup> lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us <sup>†</sup> to take that we have; *is it not so?*

† Heb. to possess  
us, or, to impoverish us.  
o Ch. 16. 12.

16 And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, ° Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told *it* me. And he said unto her, Be-

hold, I have not told *it* my father A. M. 2863.  
B. C. 1141.  
nor my mother, and shall I tell *it* thee?

17 And she wept before him || the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people.

l Or, the rest of the seven days, &c.

18 And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What *is* sweeter than honey? and what *is* stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

19 ¶ And <sup>p</sup> the Spirit of the LORD <sup>p</sup> Ch. 2. 10. came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their || spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

l Or, apparel.

20 ¶ But Samson's wife <sup>q</sup> was given <sup>q</sup> Ch. 15. 9. to his companion, whom he had used as <sup>r</sup> his friend.

l John 2. 29.

ing ages, was to propose some enigmatical questions to the guests, in order to render the feast more agreeable. *Within the seven days of the feast*—For so long marriage feasts lasted. *Sheets*—Vestments of linen, which were worn next the skin, Mark xiv. 51, or fine linen clothes, which were used for divers purposes, Matt. xxvii. 59. *Thirty changes of raiment*—Suits of clothes, which consisted of an upper and under garment.

Ver. 15. *On the seventh day—they said—Entice thy husband*—They had doubtless spoken to her before this time, but with some remissness, supposing that they should find it out; but now their time being nigh spent, they put her under a necessity of searching it out. *To take that we have*—That is, to strip us of our garments.

Ver. 17. *She wept before him the seven days*—Or rather, the rest of the seven days; that is, either after the third day, Ver. 14, or all the seventh day, from the time her countrymen came and threatened her, till she persuaded Samson to tell her the riddle.

Ver. 18, 19. *If ye had not, &c.*—If you had not employed my wife to find it out, as men plough up the ground with an heifer, thereby discovering its hidden parts; he calls her *heifer*, because she was joined with him in the same yoke. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon him*—Though he had con-

stant strength and courage; yet that was exceedingly increased upon special occasions, by the extraordinary influences of God's Spirit. *To Ashkelon*—Either to the territory, or to the city itself, where he had both strength and courage enough to attempt what follows; and upon the doing hereof they were doubtless struck with such terror, that every one sought only to preserve himself, and none durst pursue him. This action of Samson could neither be commended nor justified, had he not been actuated by a divine impulse, in order to punish the Philistines, according to God's intention. God made use of him, as the judge does of the executioner, to punish those that merit and are condemned to suffer punishment. *And took their spoil*—This plainly shews the thirty sheets, and thirty changes of raiment, mentioned Ver. 13, mean only thirty suits of apparel, such as men then commonly wore. *His anger was kindled*—For the treachery of his wife and companions. *And he went up to his father's house*—Without his wife. It would be well for us, if the unkindnesses we meet with from the world, and our disappointments therein, had this good effect upon us to oblige us to return by faith and prayer to our heavenly Father's house.

Ver. 20. *Samson's wife was given*, by her father, to his companion, &c.—That is, to the chief of the bride-men, to

A. M. 2564.  
B. C. 1140.

## CHAP. XV.

From the treachery of his wife and her father, Samson takes occasion to burn their corn, ver. 1—5. He smites the Philistines with a great slaughter, ver. 6—8. He slays a thousand of them with the jaw-bone of an ass, ver. 9—17. He is distressed, and supplied with water, ver. 18—20.

chr. 1140.

**B**UT it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in.

2 And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly

whom he had shewn most respect and kindness. This aggravated the insult that was offered to Samson, in proportion as this person had been more familiar with him, and had been treated by him in a more friendly manner than the rest that afforded him their company. This ungenerous friend might possibly be the man distinguished by the appellation of, the friend of the bridegroom,—See John iii. 29.

CHAP. XV. Ver. 1. *In the time of the wheat harvest*—Which was the proper season for what follows. *With a kid*—As a token of reconciliation. *Into the chamber*—Into her chamber, which the women had separate from the men's.

Ver. 2. *That thou hadst utterly hated her*—Because: thou didst desert her: but this was no sufficient cause; for he should have endeavoured to effect a reconciliation, and not have disposed of another man's wife without his consent. *Is not her younger sister fairer than she?*—The marrying of a sister while the other was alive, was expressly forbidden by the law of Moses: See Lev. xviii. 18. And therefore this offer might probably irritate Samson the more.

Ver. 3. *Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines*—Or rather, *blameless from the Philistines*—Because they have first provoked me by an irreparable injury. It seems probable from this, that the people of the place, in general, had approved of, and perhaps advised the giving of Samson's wife to another man. *Though I do them a displeasure*—Although this may look like an act of private revenge, yet it is plain, Samson acted as a judge (for such he was) and as an avenger of the public injuries which his people had suffered from the Philistines.

Ver. 4. *Samson went and caught three hundred foxes*—Foxes were extremely numerous in Canaan, and several places received their name from them, as *Hazar-shual*, or, the gate of the fox, in the tribe of Judah; and *Shaalbin*, or *Shaalabim* in the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix. 42; Judg. i. 35. They are accordingly frequently spoken of in Scripture as numerous; see Can. ii. 15; Psal. lxxiii. 10. Under this name *foxes*, likewise, as Bishop Patrick observes, may be comprehended a species of creatures called *thoes*, and by the Hebrews

hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than she? † take her, I pray thee, instead of her.

3 ¶ And Samson said concerning them, || Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure.

4 And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took || firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails.

5 And when he had set the brands on fire, he let *them* go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also

*ijim*, which go together in large herds, so that, as authors of undoubted veracity have asserted, two hundred have been seen in a company. The Hebrew word שׁוּאֵל, *shual*, a fox, will likewise comprehend other animals of the same size. It must be further observed, that it is not said that Samson caught all these foxes at one time, or by his own hands. There might be a week, or even a month's time allowed for the accomplishment of his design, in which his servants and friends may be supposed to have assisted him. Again, they were not caught, as some imagine, only by hunting, but in snares and nets, as Bochart has shewn in his Hierozoicon, in which he treats of the animals mentioned in the Scriptures.. See lib. iii. cap. xiii. Where, in answer to those who enquire, Why Samson chose foxes rather than dogs, or some other creatures, that learned man thinks it sufficient to say, that Samson accomplished two ends by this proceeding, both freeing the country from a large number of noxious animals, and making them instrumental in executing his revenge on the Philistines. *And took firebrands*—Made of such matter as would quickly take fire, and keep it for a long time. This he might easily procure. *And turned tail to tail, &c.*—It was an artful contrivance of Samson to fix the brands to the foxes in pairs, because their efforts to run different ways, or not directly in the same track, would lessen their speed, and keep them longer in the places where they were to do execution. It would also prevent the foxes from running into their holes and from expatiating farther than he intended: for his design was to consume only the corn of the Philistines, and not that of the Israelites, which was secured by this precaution.

Ver. 5. *He let them go, &c.*—Successively at several times; and in divers places, so that they might not hinder one another, nor all run into the same field; but being dispersed in all parts, might spread the plague farther. But it will be asked, Why did he not employ some of the Israelites to set their corn on fire? The answer is easy, Because he wished to preserve them from the hatred and mischief to which this would have exposed them, and also to mortify the pride of the Philistines by making brute creatures, and particularly

A. M. 2564.  
B. C. 1140.a Ch. 14.  
20.† Heb. let  
her be  
thine.| Or, Now  
shall I be  
blameless  
from the  
Philistines,  
though, &c.| Or, torch-  
es.

A.M. 2664.  
B.C. 1140.

the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

6 ¶ Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. <sup>b</sup> And the Philistines came up and burnt her and her father with fire.

Ch. 16.  
16.

7 ¶ And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease.

8 And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.

9 ¶ Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves <sup>c</sup>in Lehi.

Ver. 13.

10 And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? And

foxes, the instruments of bringing this calamity upon them.

Ver. 6. *The Philistines came up and burned her*—For the mischief which she had occasioned them; thus she brought upon herself that mischief which she studied to avoid. The Philistines had threatened to burn her and her father's house with fire. To avoid this, she betrayed her husband. And now the very thing she feared comes upon her! *And her father*—Whom they looked upon as one chief cause of the mischief done, by his giving his daughter, Samson's wife, to another man. Punishing or revenging by fire seems to have been an usual practice in those days: See Chap. xiv. 15.

Ver. 8. *He smote them hip and thigh*—This seems to be merely a proverbial expression to denote a desperate attack and total overthrow. *And he went down, or rather, went and dwelt*—For it is an idiom of the Hebrew language, to speak of going up or going down to a place without having any reference to the situation of it, whether it lay high or low. The place here spoken of, *The top of the rock Etam*, undoubtedly lay high, being, as Josephus informs us, a strong place in the tribe of Judah, to the summit of which only one man could ascend in front. Here Samson waited to see what steps the Philistines would take. It appears that Samson had no commission from God to raise an army and make open war, like Gideon, Jephthah, and others, for the deliverance of Israel from the yoke of the Philistines; but was only authorized to weaken them and keep them in awe, that their dread of him might cause them to lessen their cruelty.

Ver. 11, 12. *What hast thou done unto us?*—Thou hast

they answered, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us.

A.M. 2664.  
B.C. 1140.

11 Then three thousand men of Judah † went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines <sup>†</sup>are <sup>†</sup>rulers over us? what is this <sup>†</sup>that thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.

† Heb. went down.

Ch. 16. 4.

12 And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves.

13 And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

by these actions punished, not them only, but us, who are sure to smart for it. *We are come down to bind thee*—Why not rather to fight under thy banner? Because sin dispirits men, nay, infatuates them, and hides from their eyes the things that belong to their peace. *That we may deliver thee—to the Philistines*—This shews how dastardly the tribe of Judah was grown, and how much they stood in fear of the Philistines, that they should so readily give up a person of such extraordinary strength and courage, and who was so capable of annoying their enemies. But they seem not to have considered him as a judge or deliverer appointed for them, by God, but as a mere private man, who acted of his own will, and who had rashly stirred up the anger of the Philistines, with whom they were afraid to contend: And Samson, to make them easy, and that no damage might come upon them, consented that they should deliver him bound to the Philistines; knowing that his strength would be sufficient to break whatever cords they should bind him with. *Swear unto me*—Not that he feared them, or could not as easily have conquered them, as he did the host of the Philistines: but because he would be free from all temptation of doing them harm, though it were in his own defence.

Ver. 13. *And they bound him*—Thus was he a type of Christ, who yielded himself to be bound, yea and led as a lamb to the slaughter. Never were men so infatuated as these men of Judah, except those who thus treated our blessed Saviour. *Up from the rock*—That is, from the cave in the rock, in which he had secured himself, out of which he was first brought up, and then carried down from the rock to the plain.

A. M. 2466.  
B. C. 1140.  
e Ch. 2. 10.  
† Heb. were melted.  
† Heb. moist.  
14 *And* when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him : and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands † loosed from off his hands.

† Heb. an heap, two heaps.  
c Ch. 3. 31.  
15 *And* he found a † new jaw-bone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and † slew a thousand men therewith.

16 *And* Samson said, With the jaw-bone of an ass, † heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

17 *And* it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jaw-bone out of his

hand, and called that place || Ramath-lehi.

18 ¶ *And* he was sore athirst ; and called on the LORD, and said, † Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant : and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised ?

19 *But* God clave an hollow place that was in || the jaw, and there came water thereout ; and when he had drunk, <sup>b</sup> his spirit came again, and he revived : wherefore he called the name thereof || En-hak-kore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

20 || *And* he judged Israel <sup>i</sup> in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

A. M. 2466.  
B. C. 1140.  
† That is, the lifting up of the jaw-bone, or casting away of the jaw-bone.  
g Ps. 3. 7.

Or, Lehi.  
h Gen. 15. 27.  
† That is, the well of him that called, or, cried, Ps. 4. 6.  
He seems to have judged south west Israel during twenty years of their servitude of the Philistines.  
i Ch. 14. 1.

Ver. 14. *The Philistines shouted against him*—Because they had now, as they supposed, their enemy in their hands. *The cords became as flax, &c.*—As easily broken by him. *His bands loosed from off his hands*—Hebrew, *were melted*, that is, were dissolved as things which are melted in the fire. “This,” says Henry, “typified the resurrection of Christ, by the power of the Spirit of holiness. In this he loosed the bands of death, it being impossible he should be holden of them. And thus he triumphed over the powers of darkness, which had shouted against him.”

Ver. 15. *He found a new jaw-bone of an ass*—New, and therefore more tough and strong. *And slew a thousand men therewith*—Some, to account partly for this wonderful achievement, have observed that these Philistines were, probably, unarmed, and that they were struck with a great panic, thinking that the 3000 men of Judah would aid Samson. But doubtless it is chiefly to be ascribed to the power and providence of God, who thus fulfilled his promise to his people, that one of them should chase a thousand, and that no one should be able to stand before them, Lev. xxvi. 8; Josh. xxiii. 10.

Ver. 16. *Heaps upon heaps, &c.*—Heb. *An heap, two heaps*. As much as to say, I have not only slain enow to make one heap, but two or more. *I have slain a thousand men*—What could be too hard for him to do, on whom the Spirit of the Lord came mightily? This seems like a short hymn or song of triumph, which Samson uttered after he had routed the Philistines. It is strange that the men of Judah did not now, at least, come to his assistance. But he was to be a type of him who trod the wine-press alone.

Ver. 17, 18. *He called that place Ramath-lehi*—That is, *The lifting up, or casting away of the jaw-bone*. He gave it this name in order to perpetuate the memory of this action. *And he was sore athirst*—A natural effect of the great labour he had used. And perhaps there was the hand of God therein, to chastise him for not making mention of God in his song, and to keep him from being proud of his

strength. One would have thought that the men of Judah would have met him *with bread and wine*; but they so little regarded him, that he is fainting for want of a draught of water! Thus are the greatest slights often put upon those that do the greatest services! *Shall I die*—Wilt thou not finish what thou hast begun? Wilt thou undo what thou hast done?

Ver. 19. *God clave an hollow place in the jaw*—Or rather, *a cavity that was in Lehi*, as he had just named the place, Ver. 17, and as the same word is rendered in the latter part of this verse. “It is very evident,” says Dr. Dodd, “from what follows, that our translation,” (viz. in the former part of the verse) “is erroneous; since, if God had caused water to come from the jaw only for the present satisfying Samson’s necessities, is it reasonable to suppose that Samson would have given it the name of a well or fountain, or that the sacred historian would have told us that it remained in Lehi unto this day? The rendering, therefore, of the margin, which is followed by Dr. Waterland, is far the best. Houbigant observes, very properly, that the word rendered hollow place מִקְתֶּשׁ, *miktesh* signifies a rock; and he renders the verse thus: ‘Then God clave the rock which was in Lehi, and there came water from thence; which when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived; therefore, Samson called the fountain, the fountain of the implorer; which fountain is in Lehi unto this day.’ Modern travellers inform us, that in the suburbs of Eleutheropolis, (in all probability the ancient Lehi) the fountain which flowed upon this occasion is still remaining, and called to this day the fountain of the jaw; an observation which abundantly confirms the interpretation we have given.” *He called the name thereof En-hak-kore*—That is, *the fountain of him that cried for thirst*; or, that called on God for deliverance; or, the fountain that was given in answer to prayer. *Which is in Lehi*—So that our translators take Lehi here to be the name of a place.

Ver. 20. *He judged Israel*—That is, he pleaded their cause, and avenged them against the Philistines. *In the days of the*



A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1120.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Samson is greatly endangered by his intercourse with an harlot, ver. 1---3. Betrayed by Delilah to the Philistines thrice, ver. 4---14. Weakened and effectually betrayed, ver. 15---20. Seized, blinded, bound, imprisoned, and made sport of, ver. 21---25. Avenged of the Philistines, ver. 26---31.*

cir. 1120.

† Heb. a woman, an harlot.

**T**HEN went Samson to Gaza, and saw there † an harlot, and went in unto her.

a 1 Sam. 23. 26.

† Heb. silent.

2 And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they <sup>a</sup> compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were † quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him.

*Philistines*---That is, whilst the Philistines had the power and dominion, from which he was not able fully to deliver, but only to begin to deliver them. From this place it is manifest, that in the computation of the times of the judges, the years of servitude or oppression are not to be separated from the years of the judges, but are comprehended within them; which proposition is of great importance for clearing this difficult part of Scripture-chronology.

CHAP. XVI. Ver. 1. *And saw there an harlot*---Although the Hebrew word *zonah*, here rendered *harlot*, also means a woman that keeps an inn, it seems evident, on the face of the story, that this woman really was, what our translators have taken her to have been, an harlot. Samson, it seems, going into a house of public entertainment to refresh himself, saw there this woman, and by giving way to look upon her was ensnared.

Ver. 2. *It was told the Gazites,--Samson is come hither*---The arrival of so extraordinary a man could not be long concealed. And his enemies were willing to improve so favourable an opportunity to destroy him. *They compassed him in, &c.*---They either beset the house, or lay in wait at the gate of the city. *Saying, In the morning we will kill him*---This, it is probable, they chose to do, rather than to seize upon him in his bed by night; either, because they knew not certainly in what house he was; or, because they thought to do that might cause great terror, and confusion, and mischief among their own people; whereas in the day-time they might more fully discover him; and more certainly use their weapons against him. O that all who indulge any unholy desire, might see themselves thus surrounded, and marked for destruction by their spiritual enemies! The more secure they are, the greater is their danger.

Ver. 3. *Samson arose at midnight*---Perhaps warned by God in a dream, or rather by the checks of his own conscience. *And took the doors of the gate, &c.*---The watchmen not expecting him till the morning, and therefore being now retired

3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, † bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

A. M. 2554.  
B. C. 1120.

† Heb. with the bar.

4 ¶ And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman || in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

1 Or, by the brook.

5 And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, <sup>b</sup> Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to || afflict him: and we will give thee every

b Ch. 14. 15. Prov. 2. 16---19.

1 Or, Asm-Mc.

into the sides or upper part of the gate-house to get some rest. *And went away with them, bar and all*---Nor durst they pursue him, whom they now again perceived to have such prodigious strength and courage, and to be so much above the fear of them, that he did not run away with all speed, but went leisurely. *And carried them to the top of the hill*---It is uncertain how far he carried them; but it seems to have been to great distance, as it is said, this hill was before Hebron, which was above twenty miles from Gaza. And Samson did this, not out of vain ostentation, but as an evidence of his great strength, for the encouragement of his people to join with him vigorously; and for the greater terror and contempt of the Philistines. It may seem strange that Samson immediately after so foul a sin should have courage and strength from God, for so great a work. But first, it is probable, that Samson had, in some measure, repented of his sin, and begged of God pardon and assistance. 2, This singular strength and courage was not in itself a grace, but a gift, and it was such a gift as did not so much depend on the disposition of his mind, as on the right ordering of his body, by the rules given to him, and others of that order.

Ver. 4. *He loved a woman in the valley of Sorek*---Through which passed the river of the same name. This place, famous for its vines, was about a mile and a half from Eshcol, whence the spies brought their bunch of grapes. Here Samson met with Delilah, who, whether she was a Jewess, or a Philistine, was probably an harlot, and not as Chrysostom and some others have asserted, a woman of reputation married by Samson; because the dreadful punishment now inflicted upon him for his intercourse with her, after God had spared him for the first offence, certainly manifests that this sin was not inferior to the former.

Ver. 5. *The lords of the Philistines came unto her*---The lords of their five principal cities, which were leagued together against him as their common enemy. *See wherein his great strength lieth*---They probably imagined that Samson attained his great strength by the use of some magic art.

A. M. 2884.  
B. C. 1120. one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

6 ¶ And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength *lieth*, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

† Ur. new cords.  
† Heb. moist.  
† Heb. one. 7 And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven || † green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as † another man.

8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

† Heb. smelleth. 9 Now *there were* men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it † toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold thou hast mocked me, and

A. M. 2884.  
B. C. 1120. told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound?

11 And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes † that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. † Heb. wherewith work hath not been done.

12 Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And *there were* liers in wait, abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

14 And she fastened *it* with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.

*That we may bind him to afflict him*—To chastise him for his injuries to us. They meant to punish him severely, but they expressed it in mild words, lest it might move her to pity him. *Every one eleven hundred pieces of silver*—That is, shekels, as that phrase commonly signifies.

Ver. 6, 7. *Wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee*—This seems rather to express the sum of what Delilah aimed at than her very words. For it is scarcely credible, that she put this question so openly to Samson, which would have discovered that she had some design against him. But, rather, she wormed it out of him by degrees, and in such an artful manner, as gave him no cause of suspicion. *Samson said, &c.*—Samson was guilty both of the sin of lying, and of great folly, in encouraging her enquiries, which he should at first have checked: but as he had forsaken God, so God had now forsaken him, otherwise the frequent repetition and vehement urging of this question might easily have raised suspicion in him. *With seven green withs*—Probably osiers. *The lords of the Philistines brought*—Or rather *sent*; for it is not to be supposed they came themselves with these things.

Ver. 9. *There were men—abiding with her in the chamber*—In some closet, probably, or adjoining room; for it cannot be well imagined, that they could be in the very same chamber without being discovered by Samson. It appears,

the Philistines were rather desirous of taking him alive than killing him. Probably they thought to employ him in some laborious works for the public, wherein his great strength might be of use to them, if they could but take him alive. Otherwise the *liers in wait* might have taken the opportunity of killing him, while he was asleep, if their orders had not been to take him alive.

Ver. 13. *If thou weavest the seven locks of my head*—If my hair, which is all divided into seven locks, be fastened about a weaver's beam; or interwoven with weavers' threads; then I shall be weak as another man. It is probable there was some loom or instrument of weaving in the room where Samson now was, which put him upon saying this to Delilah, to get rid of her importunity.

Ver. 14. *She fastened it with a pin*—She took the first opportunity when he was asleep of trying the experiment, and the weaving instrument being near the head of the bed where he lay, she interwove the locks of his hair with the web or woof, and fastened it with some pin or peg that belonged to the loom. She then alarmed him with the cry of the Philistines being upon him, when Samson, awaking and raising up his head, plucked out the pin that his hair was fastened with, and tore out, together with it, the web from the loom.

A. M. 2854.  
B. C. 1120.  
c Ch. 14. 16.

15 ¶ And she said unto him, <sup>c</sup> How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart *is* not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength *lieth*.

16 And it came to pass when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, *so* that his soul was † vexed unto death;

† Heb. *shortened*.

d Mic. 7. 5.

c Num. 6. 5.

17 That he <sup>d</sup> told her all his heart, and said unto her, <sup>e</sup> There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I *have been* a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.

18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent, and called for the lords of the

Ver. 15, 16. *Thine heart is not with me*—Not open to me. *His soul was vexed unto death*—Being tormented by two contrary passions, desire to gratify her, and fear of betraying himself. So that he had no pleasure of his life.

Ver. 17. *There hath not come a razor upon mine head*—Though we have no account of it before, yet it seems from this, that it had been revealed by God to Samson, either by a dream or in some other manner, that his supernatural strength should continue as long as he continued in a Nazarite state, and did not suffer a razor to come upon his head to take off his hair. *If I be shaven*—Not that his hair was in itself the cause of his strength, but because it was the chief condition of that covenant, whereby God was pleased to engage to fit him for and assist him in that great work to which he had called him. But upon his violation of the condition, God justly withdraws his help.

Ver. 18. *When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart*—From the seriousness and solemnity with which he spoke, she concluded that she was at length mistress of the important secret. *The lords of the Philistines brought money in their hands*—See one of the bravest men then in the world bought and sold as a sheep for the slaughter! How does this instance sully all the glory of man, and forbid the strong man ever to boast of his strength!

Ver. 19, 20. *She made him sleep*—By some sleepy potion. *Upon her knees*—Resting his head upon her knees. *She began to afflict him*—To humble and bring him low, in which sense the original word is often used. For, it seems, as soon as the razor touched his head, his strength began to be diminished, which she perceived by some means or other. *He awoke and said*, within himself, *I will go out as at other times*—Samson probably did not find, immediately after he was awake, that his hair was shaven, which made him speak

Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.

f Prov. 7. 26.

19 † And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.

20 And she said, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD <sup>e</sup> was departed from <sup>f</sup> him.

g Num. 14. 9, 42, 43.

21 ¶ But the Philistines took him, and † put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. and bound him

† Heb. *bores out*.

in this manner. *He wist not that the Lord was departed*—That he was not present with him as he had formerly been; that he no longer supplied him with that extraordinary and supernatural strength with which he had before endowed him. And justly, indeed, did God depart and withdraw his presence and gifts from a man who put it into the power of an harlot to rob him of that which he knew had been appointed the tenure whereby he was to hold them. For he hereby plainly shewed that he regarded the caresses of an harlot more than the divine favour, and the preservation of such extraordinary endowments. Alas! how many have lost the favourable presence of God, and are not aware of it! They have provoked him to withdraw from them, but are not sensible of their loss!

Ver. 21. *The Philistines—put out his eyes*—Which was done both out of revenge and policy, to disable him from doing them harm, in case he should recover his strength; but not without God's providence, punishing him in that part which had been instrumental to his sinful lusts. *Brought him to Gaza*—Because this was a great and strong city, where he could be kept safely; and upon the sea-coast, at a sufficient distance from Samson's people; and to repair the honour of that place, upon which he had fastened so great a scorn. God also ordered things thus, that where he first sinned, Judg. xvi. 1, there he should receive his punishment. *Grind*—As slaves used to do. He made himself a slave to harlots, and now God suffers men to use him like a slave. Poor Samson, how art thou fallen! How is thine honour laid in the dust! *Wo unto him for he hath sinned!*—Let all take warning by him, carefully to preserve their purity. For all our glory is gone, when the covenant of our separation to God, as spiritual Nazarites, is profaned.

A. M. 2851.  
B. C. 1120. with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

22 ¶ Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again || after he was shaven.

23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they <sup>b Dan. 5. 4.</sup> praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, † which slew many of us.

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were <sup>1 Ch. 2. 27.</sup> merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may

make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made † them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the <sup>k</sup> roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord God, <sup>1 Jer. 16. 15.</sup> remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once

Ver. 22. *The hair of his head began to grow*—This circumstance, though in itself inconsiderable, is noted as a sign of the recovery of God's favour, and his former strength, in some degree, upon his repentance, and renewing his vow with God, which was allowed for Nazarites to do.

Ver. 23. *To offer a great sacrifice*—They assembled to render honour to their idol, for their triumph over a man, who as much detested their idolatry as he did their barbarous oppression of his countrymen. *Unto Dagon their god*—Whose image is supposed to have been, in the upper part, of the human form, and in the lower part like a fish; probably one of the sea-gods of the heathen. The Philistines foolishly attributed to this idol what had come to pass by the will of the God of Israel, to punish Samson for his sins.

Ver. 25. *Call for Samson that he may make us sport*—May be the subject of our mirth and derision. Thus Christ was made the subject of the sport and derision of the chief-priests and elders, Matt. xxvi. 67, 68, and of the Roman soldiers, xviii. 29. No doubt they loaded him with bitter scoffs and indignities, and perhaps required of him some proofs of the more than ordinary strength yet remaining in him, like the ruins of a great and goodly building. By this, it seems, he lulled them asleep, until, through this complaisance, he prepared the way for that which he designed.

Ver. 26. *The pillars whereon the house standeth*—It is probable that this house, whether it were a temple or theatre, was no more than a wooden building, raised for the present occasion, much in the form of an amphitheatre, in the midst of which were two large wooden pillars, on which the main beams of the roof rested, so that if these should be pulled away the building must necessarily fall. Pliny, in the fifteenth chapter of the thirty-sixth book of his Natural History, speaks of two theatres built by C. Curio, in Julius Cæsar's time, each of which was supported only by one pil-

lar, though many thousands of people sat together in it; and mentions the fall of an amphitheatre, by which 50,000 people were killed, or wounded.

Ver. 27. *There were upon the roof, &c.*—The roof was flat, and had windows through which they might see what was done in the lower parts of the house.

Ver. 28. *Samson called unto the Lord*—This prayer proceeded not from malice and revenge, but from faith in, and zeal for, God, who was there publicly dishonoured, and from a concern to vindicate the whole commonwealth of Israel, which it was his duty to do to the uttermost of his power, as he was judge. And God, who heareth not sinners, and would never exert his omnipotence to gratify any man's malice, manifested by the effect, that he accepted and owned Samson's prayer as the dictate of his own Spirit. And although, in this prayer, he mentions only the personal injuries done by the Philistines to himself, and not the indignities which they had offered to God and his people, yet that may be ascribed to the prudent care which he had manifested upon former occasions, to derive the rage of the Philistines upon himself alone, and divert it from the people. For which end, it is supposed that this prayer was made by him with an audible voice, though he knew the Philistines would entertain it only with scorn and laughter. "We must always consider Samson," says Dr. Dodd, "in the light of an extraordinary person, immediately raised up by God for the chastisement of the Philistines. In this view, his death was heroic, as he voluntarily sacrificed himself, by the only means in his power, to the service of his country, in the destruction of those who had, in a base manner, insulted him and his God, and who, holding Israel in bondage, vainly imagined their Dagon superior to the eternal *Jehovah*." Indeed, as the same author observes farther, "Samson was unquestionably a very singular type of the Messiah; called and

A.M. 2583.  
B.C. 1120.

avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

† Or, he  
leaned  
on them.

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and || on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

† Heb. my  
soul.

30 And Samson said, Let † me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than *they* which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren and all the

sanctified in and from the womb; set apart to deliver his people out of the hands of all their enemies; performing all by his own personal strength alone, without assistant, and almost without weapons, (Isai. lxiii. 1, 3; Hos. i. 7.) and in his death evidently doing more than in his life, thereby destroying the power of the devil, and triumphing over all his enemies," Heb. ii. 14.

Ver. 30. *Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines*—That is, I am content to die, so I can but contribute to the vindication of God's glory, and the deliverance of God's people. This is no encouragement to those who wickedly murder themselves: for Samson did not desire, or procure his own death voluntarily, but by mere necessity; he was by his office obliged to seek the destruction of these enemies and blasphemers of God, and oppressors of his people; which in these circumstances he could not effect without his own death. Moreover, Samson did this by Divine direction, as God's answer to his prayer manifests, and that he might be a type of Christ, who, by voluntarily undergoing death, destroyed the enemies of God, and of his people. They died, just when they were insulting over an Israelite, persecuting him whom God had smitten. Nothing fills up the measure of the iniquity of any person or people faster, than mocking or misusing the servants of God; yea, though it is by their own folly, that they are brought low. Those know not what they do, nor whom they affront, that make sport with the Lord's servants.

Ver. 31. *His brethren, &c.—came down—and took, and buried him*—While the Philistines were so reduced by the great destruction he had wrought amongst them, and so oppressed with grief and consternation, that they had neither heart nor leisure to hinder them. Or, as some think, they were so terrified by this awful catastrophe, as to be afraid of keeping even his dead body in their land, and therefore made no opposition to his friends taking it away for burial.

We may observe upon the whole of Samson's character, of what little value great bodily strength, and even great mental ability is, if not under the direction of a prudent and pious mind; and of how little avail it is to conquer our foreign enemies, if, in the mean time, we be slaves to our worst

house of his father came down, and took him, and brought *him* up, and <sup>m</sup> buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying-place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

A.M. 2599.  
B. C. 1106.

m Ch. 13. 22.

cir. 1120.

## CHAP. XVII.

*Micah setteth up an image in his house in Ephraim, and makes an ephod, ver. 1—6. He gets a Levite to be his priest, ver. 7—13.*

**A**ND there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

cir. 1106.

2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver

enemies, our own lusts and vices. Samson was, probably, intended by Providence for a much nobler character in life, and to have been a far greater blessing to his country. But his vicious inclinations, being yielded to, instead of being resisted and mortified, grieved the Holy Spirit of God, and quenched his motions and influences, and brought the most shameful disgrace, and heaviest calamities upon him. His being ranked, therefore, by the Apostle to the Hebrews, Chap. xi. 23, among the faithful, must chiefly refer to those particular acts of faith in God, whereby he attacked the Philistines, with his own single arm against thousands, and not to the general tenor of his life; many parts of which, without doubt, were highly criminal and shameful.

CHAP. XVII. Ver. 1. Here begins what may be called a supplement to the Book of Judges; which gives an account of several memorable transactions, in or about the time of the Judges: Whose history the author would not interrupt, by intermixing these matters with it, but reserved them to be related apart by themselves, in the five following chapters. In these he first gives an account how idolatry came into the tribe of Ephraim; which he doth in this Chapter: Secondly, How it came to be introduced in the tribe of Dan, Chap. xviii. And then he relates, in Chap. xix, a most barbarous and shameful act done by some Benjamites, and the entire destruction of that tribe, except 600 men, for countenancing it, Chap. xx. And, lastly, in Chap. xxi. he relates how the tribe of Benjamin was kept from being extinguished. *Whose name was Micah*—When Micah lived, and did what is related in this Chapter, we may with some certainty gather from Verse 6, which tells us, there was no king in Israel at that time; that is, no supreme governor, with a power to keep the people to their duty: which is supposed by learned men, to have been between the death of those elders who survived Joshua, and the first oppression of Israel by Cushan. In which space of time, it is manifest, the Israelites first fell from the worship of God, and polluted themselves with idolatry, Chap. ii. 13, and iii. 7. The beginning of which defection from God is described briefly in this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *About which thou cursedst*—That is, didst curse

<sup>A. M. 2598.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1406.</sup> that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, <sup>a</sup> Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 14.  
19.

3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to

<sup>b</sup> See Exod.  
30. 4, 23.

make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee.

<sup>c</sup> Isai. 46. 6.

4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother <sup>c</sup> took two hundred *shekels* of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

5 ¶ And the man Micah had an <sup>A. M. 2598.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 1406.</sup> house of gods, and made an <sup>d</sup> ephod, and <sup>e</sup> teraphim, and <sup>f</sup> consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. 8. 27.  
<sup>e</sup> Gen. 31.  
19, 30.  
<sup>f</sup> Heb. filled the hand,  
Exod. 29.  
9.

6 <sup>f</sup> In those days *there was no king in Israel*, <sup>g</sup> but every man did *that which was right in his own eyes*.

<sup>f</sup> Ch. 18. 1.  
<sup>g</sup> Deut. 16.  
8.

7 ¶ And there was a young man out of <sup>h</sup> Beth-lehem-judah of the family of Judah, who *was* a Levite, and he sojourned there.

<sup>h</sup> Josh. 19.  
15.

8 And the man departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah to sojourn where he could find a *place*: and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, <sup>†</sup> as he jour-

<sup>†</sup> Heb. in making his way.

ned. 9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I *am* a Levite of Beth-

the person who had taken it away. The mother seems to have uttered this curse in the hearing of her son; who being struck therewith, confessed that he had taken the money; upon which his mother wishes that her curses may be turned into blessings upon him.

Ver. 3. *I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the Lord*—The meaning seems to be, that when she had lost the money, she vowed, that if she recovered it, she would dedicate it to the Lord, and her superstitious ignorance made her conceive, that she could do this in no better way than in laying it out in images of some kind to be made use of in his worship. In the Hebrew here, the word for *Lord* is *Jehovah*, the incommunicable name of the true God, whereby it is apparent that neither she nor her son intended to forsake the true God, but only to worship him by an image, which also the Israelites designed to do when they made the calf in the wilderness, Exod. xxxii. 1, and Jeroboam afterwards. Hence this Micah rejoiced when he had got a priest of the Lord's appointment. Their error lay in worshipping God according to their own fancies, and not as he had commanded. But this Chapter and the following shew, that the Israelites were at this time fallen into a most deplorable and shameful ignorance of God, and his law. *For my son*—For the benefit of thyself and family; that you need not be continually going to Shiloh to worship, but may do it at home. *Therefore, I will restore it unto thee*—To dispose of it, as I say, in making an image.

Ver. 4. *Yet he restored the money to his mother*—Though she allowed him to keep it, he persisted in his resolution to restore it, that she might dispose of it as she pleased. *His mother took two hundred shekels*—Reserving nine hundred either for the ephod, or teraphim, or other things relating to this worship.

Ver. 5. *The man Micah had an house of gods*—The

Hebrew בית אלהים, *Beth Elohim*, may more properly be translated *an house of God*.—That is, he had made, or at least intended to make, in his own dwelling, an imitation of the house of God in Shiloh. *And teraphim*—A sort of images so called. *And consecrated one of his sons*—Because the Levites in that corrupt state of the Church, neglected the exercise of their office, and therefore they were neglected by the people, and others put into their employments.

Ver. 6. *There was no king in Israel*—No judge to govern and control them; the word *king* being used largely for a supreme magistrate. God raised up judges to rule and deliver the people, when he saw fit; and at other times for their sins he suffered them to be without them, and such a time this was; and therefore they ran into that idolatry, from which the judges usually kept them; as appears by that solemn and oft-repeated declaration in this book, that after the death of such or such a judge, the people forsook the Lord, and turned to idols. *His own eyes*—That is, not what pleased God, but what best suited his own fancy.

Ver. 7. *Bethlehem-judah*—So called here, as Matt. ii. 1, 5, to distinguish it from Bethlehem in Zebulun. There he was born and bred. *Of Judah*—That is, of or belonging to the tribe of Judah; not by birth, for he was a Levite; but by his habitation and ministration. For the Levites were dispersed among all the tribes: and this man's lot fell into the tribe of Judah. *Sojourned*—So he expresseth it, because this was not the proper place of his abode, this being no Levitical city.

Ver. 8. *To sojourn where he could find a place*—For employment and a livelihood; for the tithes and offerings, which were their maintenance, not being brought unto the house of God, the Levites and priests were reduced to difficulties.

A. M. 2594  
B. C. 1406. lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place.

10 And Micah said unto him, <sup>f Ch. 18. 19.</sup> Dwell with me, <sup>i</sup> and be unto me a <sup>k Gen. 45. 8.</sup> father and a priest, and I will give thee ten *shekels* of silver by the year, and <sup>l Or, a double suit, &c.</sup> † a suit of apparel, and thy <sup>† Heb. an order of garments.</sup> victuals. So the Levite went in.

11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons.

<sup>l Ver. 5.</sup> 12 And Micah <sup>m Ch. 18. 30.</sup> consecrated the Levite; and the young man <sup>m</sup> became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.

13 Then said Micah, Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

#### CHAP. XVIII.

*The Danish spies call at Micah's house, ver. 1—6. The report they bring back, ver. 7—10. The Danites send forces, who by the way plunder Micah of his gods, ver. 11—26. They take Laish, and set up idolatry there, ver. 27—31.*

cir. 1406.

a Ch. 17. 6.

b Josh. 19. 47.

**I**N <sup>a</sup> those days *there was no king* in Israel: and in those days <sup>b</sup> the

Ver. 10. *Be unto me a father*—That is, a priest, a spiritual father, a teacher or instructor. He pretends reverence and submission to him; and what is wanting in his wages, he pays him in titles.

Ver. 11, 12. *The Levite was content*—Being infected with the common superstition and idolatry of the times. *As one of his sons*—That is, treated with the same degree of kindness and affection. *Micah consecrated the Levite*—To be a priest, for which he thought a consecration necessary, as knowing the Levites were no less excluded from the priest's office, than the people. *The young man*—Instead of his son, whom he had consecrated, but now it seems, restrained from the exercise of that office, devolving it wholly upon the Levite, who was nearer akin to it.

Ver. 13. *Do me good*—I am assured God will bless me. So blind and grossly partial he was in his judgment, to think that one right circumstance would answer for all his substantial errors, in making and worshipping images against God's express command, in worshipping God in a forbidden place, by a priest illegally appointed. "He persuades himself," says Calmet, "that the people seeing his Chapel served by a man of the family of Levi, will come thither with greater confidence, and that this concourse, together with the offerings to be brought, will procure him considerable gain. It is evidently this gain which he here calls the blessing of God. How just a representation is this, of those superstitiously

A. M. 2594  
B. C. 1406. tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day *all their inheritance* had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

2 And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, † men of valour, from <sup>c Heb. sons.</sup> <sup>c Ch. 13. 25.</sup> Zorah, and from Eshtaol, <sup>d</sup> to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who when they came to mount Ephraim, to the <sup>e</sup> house of Micah, <sup>e Ch. 17. 1.</sup> they lodged there.

3 ¶ When they *were* by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this *place*? and what hast thou here?

4 And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath <sup>f</sup> hired me, and I am his <sup>f Ch. 17. 10.</sup> priest.

5 And they said unto him, <sup>g</sup> Ask <sup>g Kings 22. 6.</sup>

covetous persons, who would connect religion with the love of riches, and who, as St. Paul expresses it, fancy that piety should serve as a mean of enriching themselves."

CHAP. XVIII. Ver. 1, 2. *In those days there was no king in Israel*—These words seem to be repeated in order to assign the reason of such enormous practices as are recorded in this and the preceding chapter. They appear to have taken place not long after Joshua's death, probably between his death and that of the elders who survived him, and the time of Othniel, who was the first judge raised up for them by God. *The tribe of the Danites*—A part of that tribe, consisting only of 600 men of war, with their families, Ver. 21. *Sought them an inheritance*—An inheritance had been allotted them as well as the rest of the tribes, Josh. xix. 40, &c. but partly by their indolence, and partly for want of that brotherly assistance, which ought to have been afforded them by other tribes, a considerable portion of this inheritance could not be acquired by them. Wanting room, therefore, for all their people and cattle, and being unable to contend with the Amorites, they sent some, as it here follows, to search out a new dwelling elsewhere.

Ver. 2—5. *They lodged there*—Not in the same house, but near it. *They knew the voice of the young man*—Having been acquainted with him before he came to live with Micah. *Ask counsel, we pray thee of God*—By thine Ephod, and



A. M. 2599.  
B. C. 1406. counsel, we pray thee, <sup>b</sup> of God, b Ch. 11. 5,  
14. that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.

6 And the priest said unto them, 1 Kings  
22. 6. <sup>i</sup> Go in peace: before the LORD is your way wherein ye go.

7 ¶ Then the five men departed, and came to <sup>k</sup> Laish, and saw the people that *were* therein, <sup>l</sup> how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and *there was* no <sup>†</sup> magistrate in the land, that might put *them* to shame in *any* thing; and they *were* far from the Zidonians, and had no business with *any* man. k Josh. 19.  
47.  
called Le-  
shem.  
1 Ver. 27,  
28.  
† Heb. pot-  
essor, or,  
heir of  
restraint.

8 And they came unto their brethren to <sup>m</sup> Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them, What *say* ye? m Ver. 2.

9 And they said, <sup>n</sup> Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and *are* ye <sup>o</sup> still? be not slothful to go, *and* to enter to possess the land. n Num. 19.  
30.  
o 1 Kings  
20. 2.

10 When ye go, ye shall come

Teraphim, or image which they knew he had. This and the following verse shew that this sanctuary of Micah was dedicated to the true God, and not to idols. But how ignorant were these Danites to suppose God would be consulted here as well as in his house at Shiloh!

Ver. 6. *The priest said, Before the Lord is your way*---Your design is under the eye of God; that is, under his direction, protection, and care. The priest undoubtedly feigned this answer; for it is not to be imagined that he could, in such a case, have any answer from God, either through his ephod and teraphim, or in any other way. From hence, however, we may infer, Micah and his priest gave out, that God might be inquired of by their means as well as at his oracle at Shiloh.

Ver. 7. *After the manner of the Zidonians*---Who, dwelling in a very strong place, and abounding in wealth, lived securely in peace and luxury, and were imitated therein by the people of Laish, who were grown secure and careless, because they perceived that the Israelites never attempted any thing against them. *There was no magistrate that might put them to shame*---That is, rebuke or punish them for any thing they did. *Putting to shame*, seems to be used for inflicting civil punishment, because shame is generally the effect

unto a people <sup>p</sup> secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; <sup>q</sup> a place where *there is* no want of any thing that *is* in the earth. A. M. 2599.  
B. C. 1406.  
p Ver. 1. 97.  
q Deut. 2.  
9.

11 ¶ And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men <sup>†</sup> appointed with weapons of war. † Heb.  
girded.

12 And they went up, and pitched in <sup>r</sup> Kirjath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place <sup>s</sup> Mahaneh-dan unto this day: behold, *it is* behind Kirjath-jearim. r Josh. 15.  
61.  
s Ch. 13. 25.

13 And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto <sup>t</sup> the house of Micah. t Ver. 2.

14 ¶ <sup>u</sup> Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that <sup>x</sup> there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. u 1 Sam. 14.  
28.  
x Ch. 17. 6.

15 And they turned thitherward,

of it. *They were far from the Zidonians*---Who otherwise could have succoured them, and would have been ready to do it. *Had no business with any man*---No commercial connexion, or any alliance with the neighbouring nations, nor much intercourse or converse with other cities, the place being in a pleasant and plentiful soil, between the two rivulets of Jor and Dan; not needing supplies from others, and therefore minding only their own ease and pleasure.

Ver. 10. *God hath given it into your hands*---This they gather partly from God's promises, which they supposed they had from the Levite's mouth, and partly from his providence, which had so disposed them that they would be an easy prey.

Ver. 12---14. *Mahaneh-dan*---That is, the camp of Dan. *They came unto the house of Micah*---That is, to the town in which his house was, for they had not yet entered into it. *Then answered the five men*---That is, they spake; the word *answering* being often used in Scripture of the first speaker. *There is in these houses*---That is, in one of these houses. *Consider what ye have to do*---Whether it be not expedient to take them for your further use. Perhaps the remembrance of the ark being carried before their ancestors in former times, in all their expeditions, as a mark of God's presence

A.M. 2599.  
B.C. 1416.

and came to the house of the young man the Levite, *even* unto the house of Micah, and † saluted him.

† Heb. and asked him of peace, Gen. 31. 27.  
y Ver. 11.

16 And the <sup>y</sup> six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which *were* of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.

z Ver. 2, 14.

17 And <sup>z</sup> the five men that went to spy out the land went up, *and* came in thither, *and* took <sup>a</sup> the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men *that were* appointed with weapons of war.

a Ch. 17. 4.

18 And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?

b Job 31. 5. & 29. 9.  
c Ch. 17. 10.

19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, <sup>b</sup> lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, <sup>c</sup> and be to us a father and a priest: *is it* better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

.20 And the priest's heart was glad,

being among them, might incline them to the foolish and impious thought of taking with them Micah's ephod and teraphim.

Ver. 17. *The five men—came in thither*—Into the house, and that part of it where the things were. *The priest stood—in the gate*—Whither they had drawn him forth, that they might without noise or hindrance, take the things away. *And these went into Micah's house*—Viz. the five men, to whom, when they were fetching out the image, &c. the priest said, *What do ye?* *And they said—Lay thy hand upon thy mouth*—That is, be silent. *A priest unto a tribe and a family*—A tribe or family.

Ver. 20, 21. *The priest's heart was glad*—As he was promised promotion, he not only consented to the fact, but assisted them in it, being wholly governed by a regard to his own secular interest. *He went in the midst of the people*—Both for the greater security of such precious things, and that Micah might not be able to come near him to injure or upbraid him; and, perhaps, also, because that was the place where the ark used to be carried. *They—put the little ones, and the cattle, &c. before them*—For their greater security, if Micah should pursue them.

and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people.

A.M. 2599.  
B.C. 1416.

21. So they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the carriage before them.

22 *And* when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that *were* in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan.

23 And they cried unto the children of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, † that thou comest with such a company?

† Heb. that thou art gathered together.

24 And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away: and what have I more? and what *is* this *that* ye say unto me, What aileth thee?

25 And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest † angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household.

† Heb. sister of soul, 2 Sam. 17. 8.

26 And the children of Dan went

Ver. 24. *My gods which I made*—Or, rather, *my god*, as the Hebrew word generally signifies, meaning the image, which he considered as a symbol of God's presence with him; for he could not be so stupid as to think it to be the great *Jehovah*, who made heaven and earth, and whom he professed to worship, but merely as a medium through which he offered up his worship to him, as many of the heathen did. *What have I more?*—I value nothing I have in comparison of what you have taken away. Which zeal for idolatrous trash may shame multitudes that call themselves Christians, and yet value their worldly conveniences more than all the concerns of their own salvation. Is Micah thus fond of his false gods? And how ought we to be affected toward the true God? Let us reckon our communion with God our greatest gain; and the loss of God the sorest loss. Wo unto us, if He depart! For *what have we more?*

Ver. 25. *Let not thy voice be heard*—Thy complaints and reproaches. *Lest angry fellows run upon thee*—The soldiers, who are sharp and fierce, and will soon be inflamed by thy provoking words. *And thou lose thy life*—Which, notwithstanding all thy pretences, thou valuest more than thy image, teraphim, and ephod.

A. M. 2509.  
B. C. 1406. their way, and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house.

27 ¶ And they took *the things* which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and <sup>d</sup> came unto Laish, unto a people *that were* at quiet and secure: <sup>e</sup> and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.

28 And *there was* no deliverer, because it was <sup>f</sup> far from Zidon, and they had no business with *any* man; and it was in the valley that *lieth* <sup>g</sup> by Beth-rehob. And they built a city, and dwelt therein.

29 And <sup>h</sup> they called the name of the city <sup>i</sup> Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.

30 ¶ And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jona-

than, the son of Gershom, the son of Manassch, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan <sup>k</sup> until the <sup>l</sup> day of the captivity of the land. A. M. 2514.  
B. C. 1406.  
Ch. 18. 1.

31 And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, <sup>m</sup> all <sup>n</sup> the time that the house of God was in Shiloh. 1 Josh. 18. 1.

## CHAP. XIX:

*The adultery of the Levite's concubine, ver. 1, 2. His reconciliation to her, and entertainment at her father's, ver. 3—9. His journey homeward as far as Gibeah, ver. 10—15. An Ephraimite takes him in, ver. 16—21. The men of Gibeah assault the house, ver. 22—24. They force his concubine to death, ver. 25—28. He sends notice of it to all the tribes of Israel, ver. 29, 30.*

AND it came to pass in those days, <sup>a</sup> when *there was* no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him <sup>b</sup> a concubine out of <sup>c</sup> Beth-lehem-judah. Ch. 17. 6.  
& 19. 1. &  
21. 25.  
Heb. a woman a concubine, or, a wife a concubine.  
Ch. 17. 7.

Ver. 27—29. *And burned the city with fire*—Not wholly, but in a great measure, to make their conquest more easy. *They built a city*—Or rather, repaired and enlarged that which they found there. *After the name of Dan*—That it might be manifest they belonged to the tribe of Dan, though they were settled at a great distance from them in the most northerly part of the land; whereas, the lot of their tribe was in the southern part of Canaan.

Ver. 30. *The children of Dan set up the graven image*—Having succeeded in their expedition, according to the prediction they supposed they had through the image, they had a great veneration for it. And as soon as they had completed their city, they set it up, and chose a minister to officiate for them, probably the Levite who had acted as priest for Micah, and is, at length, named here, Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh: not of that Manasseh who was the head of the tribe so called, for he had no son named Gershom, but as is generally thought, of some other Manasseh of the tribe of Levi; Gershom and Manasseh being names common in Israel. *Until the day of the captivity*—When the whole land of the ten tribes, whereof Dan was one, was conquered, and the people carried captive by the Assyrians, 2 Kings xvii. 6, 23, which is called by way of eminency *the captivity*. The Jewish Rabbis, however, Kimchi and Ralbag, argue, that it is altogether unlikely this image should be suffered to continue in the days of David, who was sedulous to destroy idolatry, and advance true religion to the utmost of his power, all the country over from Dan to Beersheba, and who is therefore said to be a man after God's own heart.

Hence, they conclude, that by the *captivity of the land* here is meant, the taking of the ark by the Philistines, and carrying it captive into the temple of Dagon. The later Jews in general approve of understanding the words in this sense; and “it is surprising,” says Houbigant, “that they have not seen that ארון הארון *haaron, the ark*, should have been read here for ארצו הארצו *haarets, the land*.” But it ought to be observed, that it is not said here, the *graven image* was there till the *captivity of the land*, but only, that Jonathan's posterity were priests till that time, to this tribe or family of Dan. This they might be under all the changes which took place, even till the Assyrian captivity, sometimes more openly, sometimes more secretly, sometimes in one way of idolatry, and sometimes in another. In the mean time, it is only affirmed, that the Danites had the graven image with them while the house of God was in Shiloh, which was removed thence when the ark of God was taken, 1 Sam. iv. So that the *captivity of the land*, here spoken of, may be that by Shalmaneser, as stated above, and yet David, during his reign, may have destroyed all idols out of the land.

CHAP. XIX. Ver. 1. *Who took him a concubine*—Heb. *a wife, a concubine*, that is, such a concubine as was also his wife: called a concubine only because she was not endowed. Perhaps he had nothing to endow her with, being himself only a sojourner. “Women of this sort differed little from the wife, except in some outward ceremonies and stipulations, but agreed with her in all the true essentials of marriage, and gave themselves up to the husband, (for so he

A. M. 2508.  
B. C. 1406.

2 And his concubine played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there || † four whole months.

† Or, a year and four months.  
† Heb. days  
Four months.  
† Heb. to her heart, Gen. 34, 3.

3 And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak † friendly unto her, *and* to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses: and she brought him into her father's house: and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

4 And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there.

5 And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law, †<sup>c</sup> Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way.

† Heb. strengthen.  
c Gen. 18, 8.

6 And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and let thine heart be merry.

7 And when the man rose up to depart, his father-in-law urged him: therefore he lodged there again.

8 And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried † until afternoon, and they did eat both of them.

† Heb. till the day declined.

is called in the next Chapter, Ver. 4.) with faith plighted, and with affection." Dr. Dodd, who refers to Sterne's Sermons, Vol. iii. Ser. iii. and Selden de Jure, Nat. lib. v. c. 7.

Ver. 2, 3. *Played the whore against him*—Against her faith given to him. *Went away*—Either for fear of punishment; or, because her heart was alienated from him; wherein not only she sinned, but her father by connivance at her sin, and neglect of just endeavours for her reconciliation to her husband. *Her husband went*—to speak friendly unto her—To offer her pardon and reconciliation.

A. M. 2508.  
B. C. 1406.

9 And when the man rose up to depart, he; and his concubine, and his servant, his father-in-law, the damsel's father said unto him, Behold, now the day † draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, † the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and to-morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go † home.

† Heb. to weak.

† Heb. it is the pitching time of the day.

† Heb. to thy tent.

10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came † over against<sup>d</sup> Jebus, which *is* Jerusalem; and *there were* with him two asses saddled, his concubine also *was* with him.

† Heb. to over against.  
d Josh. 18, 28.

11 *And* when they *were* by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this city<sup>e</sup> of the Jebusites, and lodge in it.

e Josh. 18, 8, 63.

12 And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that *is* not of the children of Israel; we will pass over<sup>f</sup> to Gibeah.

f Josh. 19, 96.

13 And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in Gibeah, or in<sup>g</sup> Ramah.

g Josh. 18, 25.

14 And they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down upon them *when they were* by Gibeah, which *belongeth* to Benjamin.

15 And they turned aside thither, to go in *and* to lodge in Gibeah:

Ver. 12. *The city of a stranger*—That is, of a strange nation; a city which the Canaanites possess. For though Jerusalem had been taken by Caleb, Chap. 1; yet the strong fort of Zion was still in their hands, whence it is likely they did much molest, and afterwards, by God's permission drive out the Israelites who dwelt there.

Ver. 15. *He sat down in the street of the city*—There being no public inns in that country in those days, this was the general custom. Travellers sat down in the streets till some person invited them into his house. And this was gene-

<sup>A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1406.</sup> and when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city: for *there* <sup>h Matt. 23.  
63.</sup> was no man that <sup>h</sup> took them into his house to lodging.

<sup>i Ps. 104.  
36.</sup> 16 And, behold, there came an old man from <sup>i</sup> his work out of the field at even, which *was* also of mount Ephraim; and he sojourned in Gibeah: but the men of the place *were* Benjamites.

17 And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a wayfaring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou?

18 And he said unto him, *We are* passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward the side of mount Ephraim; from thence *am* I: and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I *am now* going to <sup>k</sup> the house of the LORD; and there *is* no man that <sup>†</sup> receiveth me to house.

19 Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy hand-maid, and for the young man *which is* with thy ser-

vants: *there is* no want of any thing. <sup>A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1406.</sup>

20 And the old man said, <sup>1</sup> Peace <sup>1 Gen. 48.  
33.</sup> be with thee; howsoever *let* all thy wants *lie* upon me; <sup>m</sup> only lodge not <sup>m Gen. 19.  
2.</sup> in the street.

21 <sup>n</sup> So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: <sup>o</sup> and they washed their feet, <sup>o Gen. 18.  
4.</sup> and did eat and drink.

22 ¶ *Now* as they were making their hearts merry, behold, <sup>p</sup> the men <sup>p Gen. 19.  
4.</sup> of the city, certain <sup>q</sup> sons of Belial, <sup>q Deut. 12.  
13.</sup> beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, <sup>r</sup> Bring forth the man that <sup>r Gen. 19. 8.</sup> came into thine house, that we may know him.

23 And <sup>s</sup> the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, *nay*, I pray you, do not *so* wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, <sup>t</sup> do not this folly. <sup>t 2 Sam. 13.  
12.</sup>

24 <sup>u</sup> Behold, *here is* my daughter, <sup>u Gen. 19. 8.</sup> a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and <sup>x</sup> humble <sup>x Gen. 24. 9.</sup>

rally readily done by one or other, except in places where there was a great degeneracy of manners. Here, although they were soft and effeminate in other respects, yet they were hard-hearted to strangers, for there was *no man that took them into his house to lodging*, till a poor labouring man performed that office of hospitality towards them.

Ver. 16. *Also of mount Ephraim*—Whence likewise the Levite was, which inclined him to shew the more kindness to his countryman. *But the men of the place were Benjamites*—This was indeed one of the cities belonging to the priests; but the cities which were given to the priests, and whereof they were owners, were not inhabited by the priests or Levites only, especially at this time when they were but few in number, but by many other persons of different professions.

Ver. 18. *House of the Lord*—Which was in Shiloh. Thither he went, either because he lived there, for that was in the tribe of Ephraim; or, rather, because he would there offer prayers and praises, and sacrifices to God, for his mercy in reconciling him and his wife.

Ver. 19. *Yet there is both straw, &c.*—The Levite here acquaints the man that he had with him all things necessary both for himself and his concubine, his servant and his asses; so that he should not burden any man who should

receive him, as he only wanted some place to lodge in. *For thy handmaid*—Or we should speak now, for the woman that is with me. *The young man that is with thy servant*—Or along with us. It was a form of expression in those days to entitle themselves the servants of those they spoke to with any degree of respect.

Ver. 20, 21. *Let all thy wants lie upon me*—It matters not whether thou wantest nothing or every thing; I will take care to supply all thy wants. *They washed their feet*—As they used to do to travellers in those hot countries.

Ver. 22, 23. *As they were making their hearts merry*—That is, refreshing themselves with the provisions set before them. *Behold—certain sons of Belial*—Children of the devil, wicked and licentious men. *Bring forth the man, &c.*—They wanted the Levite brought forth, that they might satisfy their unnatural lusts. *This man is come into mine house*—And therefore I am obliged to protect him by the laws of hospitality. As several circumstances of this horrid wickedness resemble those of the affair recorded Gen. xix. we refer the reader to the notes on that Chapter.

Ver. 24, 25. *Behold, here is my daughter, &c.*—The master of the house came at last to a resolution, that it was less wickedness to prostitute the women to their lusts than

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ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not † so vile a thing.

† Heb. the mother of his folly.

25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they <sup>v</sup> knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.

7 Gen. 4. 1.

26 Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her lord *was*, till it was light.

27 And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down *at* the door of the house, and her hands *were* upon the threshold.

2 Ch. 20. 5.

28 And he said unto her, Up, and let us be going. But <sup>z</sup> none answered. Then the man took her *up* upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.

the Levite. The dilemma to which he was reduced was indeed dreadful, nevertheless he is not to be justified in the proposal which he makes, no more than Lot was to be justified in a similar case, in offering his two daughters to satisfy the lusts of the men of Sodom. Although of two evils we must choose the less, yet, as we have there observed, "of two sins we must choose neither, nor ever do evil that good may come."

Ver. 26. *Then came the woman, and fell down, &c.*—Namely, dead; killed partly with grief of heart, and partly with excessive abuse. Thus the sin she formerly chose, ver. 2, is now her destruction; and though her husband pardoned her, God would punish her, at least as to this life.

Ver. 27, 28. *Went out to go his way*—Concluding, without doubt, that the Gibeathites had conveyed away his concubine, and would keep her, and therefore he hasted home to take proper measures for the recovery of her; as we find he did afterwards to revenge her death. *He said unto her, Up, and let us be going*—He thought she was only asleep, and the unexpected surprize of seeing her, and his haste to get out of this inhospitable place, might make him express himself in this manner.

Ver. 29. *He took a knife, &c.*—As the Levite expected no justice from the elders of Gibeah, and there was no supreme head over all the tribes at that time, he had recourse to the elders of each respective tribe; and to move them the more,

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29 ¶ And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and <sup>a</sup> divided her, *together* with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel.

Ch. 20. 6.

30 And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, <sup>b</sup> take advice, and speak *your* <sup>b</sup> minds.

Ch. 20. 7.

CHAP. XX.

*The Levite's cause heard in a general convention of the tribes, ver. 1—7. They resolve to avenge his quarrel, ver. 8—11. The Benjamites assemble in defence of the criminals, ver. 12—17. The defeat of Israel in the two first battles, ver. 18—25. They humble themselves before God, ver. 26—28. The total rout of the Benjamites, ver. 29—48.*

**T**HEN <sup>a</sup> all the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from <sup>b</sup> Dan even to Beer-sheba, <sup>b</sup>

Deut. 13. 17.

Chap. 18. 20.

and stir them up to punish the offender, he sent a part of the body to each of them, preserved undoubtedly by some means from putrefaction. And, undoubtedly he instructed those he sent with it to relate particularly the circumstances of the unparalleled and barbarous fact.

Ver. 30. *All—said, there was no such deed done or seen, &c.*—All who saw it, and heard the relation, were so moved with horror at it, that they called upon each other to consult and give their opinion, in what manner justice should be done upon the lewd and inhuman Gibeathites: as follows in the next Chapter.

CHAP. XX. Ver. 1. *All the children of Israel went out*—Viz. the principal persons out of their respective cities, who were appointed to represent the rest. *As one man*—That is, with one consent. *Dan, &c.*—Dan was the northern border of the land, near Lebanon; and Beersheba the southern border. *Gilead*—Beyond Jordan, where Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh were. *To the Lord*—As to the Lord's tribunal: for God was not only present in the place where the ark and tabernacle were, but also in the assemblies of the gods, or judges, Psal. lxxxii. 1, and in all places where God's name is recorded, Exod. xx. 24, and where two or three are met together in his name. *Mizpeh*—A place on the borders of Judah and Benjamin. This they chose, as a place they used to meet in upon solemn occasions, for its

A. M. 2596.  
B. C. 1406. with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD<sup>e</sup> in Mizpeh.

c Judg. 10.  
17. 2 And the chief of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen<sup>d</sup> that drew sword.

a Ch. 9. 10. 3 (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.) Then said the children of Israel, Tell us, how was this wickedness?

† Heb. the man the Levite. 4 And † the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, <sup>e</sup> I came into Gibeah that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge.

† Ch. 19. 97. 5 † And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about upon me by night, and thought to have slain me: <sup>g</sup> and my concubine have they † forced, that she is dead.

† Heb. humbled. a Ch. 19. 99. 6 And <sup>h</sup> I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the

A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1406.  
i Josh. 7. 19. inheritance of Israel: for they<sup>i</sup> have committed lewdness and folly in Israel.

7 Behold, ye *are* all children of Israel; <sup>k</sup> give here your advice and counsel. k Ch. 19. 99.

8 ¶ And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn into his house.

9 But now this *shall be* the thing which we will do to Gibeah; *we will go up* by lot against it;

10 And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel.

11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, † knit together as one man. † Heb. fellows.

12 ¶ <sup>l</sup> And the tribes of Israel l Deut. 13. 14.

convenient situation for all the tribes within and without Jordan; and as being near the place where the fact was done, that it might be more thoroughly examined; and not far from Shiloh, where the tabernacle was, whither they might go or send.

Ver. 2. *Four hundred thousand*—The number is here set down, to shew their zeal and forwardness in punishing such a villainy; the strange blindness of the Benjamites that durst oppose so great and united a body; and that the success of battles depends not upon great numbers, seeing this great host was twice defeated by the Benjamites.

Ver. 3. *The children of Benjamin heard*—Like persons unconcerned and resolved, they neither went nor sent thither: partly through their own pride, and stubbornness; partly because, as they were loath to give up any of their brethren to justice, so they presumed the other tribes would never proceed to war against them; and partly, from a Divine infatuation hardening that wicked tribe to their own destruction. *Tell us*—They speak to the Levite, and his servant, and his host, who doubtless were present upon this occasion.

Ver. 5, 6. *Slain me*—Except I would either submit to their unnatural lust, which I was resolved to withstand even unto death: or deliver up my concubine to them, which I was forced to do. *Lewdness and folly*—That is, a lewd folly; most ignominious and impudent wickedness.

Ver. 7, 8. *Ye are*—The sons of that holy man, who, for one filthy action left an eternal brand upon one of his own

sons: a people in covenant with the holy God, whose honour you are obliged to vindicate, and who hath expressly commanded you to punish all such notorious enormities. *We will not any of us go to his tent*—That is, his habitation, until we have revenged this injury.

Ver. 9, 10. *We will go up by lot against it*—They probably cast lots who should go, and who should stay at home to provide the necessary supplies. *According to all the folly that they have wrought*—That we may punish them as such wickedness deserves. *In Israel*—This is added as an aggravation, that they should do that in Israel; or among God's peculiar people, which was esteemed abominable even among the heathen. "The abhorrence of the crime" of the Gibeathites "here expressed, and the determination of the Israelites to punish the criminals, were very proper, but they seem to have acted with too much precipitation and resentment. There were with them also sins against the Lord: the abomination of Gibeah was both an evidence and effect of national degeneracy; and it called for deep humiliation and lamentation, that such wickedness had been wrought in Israel, as well as for indignation against the criminals. They ought to have begun with personal and national repentance, and reformation; with solemn sacrifices, and earnest supplications. This was required in other wars, Deut. xxiii. 9, much more in such a war as this."—Scott.

Ver. 12. *The tribes of Israel sent men, &c.*—Before they marched forward they sent an embassy to the Benjamites to



A. M. 2598.  
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sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness is this that is done among you?

m Deut. 13.  
13.

13 Now therefore deliver *us* the men, <sup>m</sup> the children of Belial, which *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and <sup>n</sup> put away evil from Israel. But the children of Benjamin would not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel:

n Deut. 17.  
12.

14 But the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the children of Israel.

15 And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time out of the cities twenty and six thousand men that drew sword, beside the

complain of the wickedness that had been committed, and the injury that had been done by some of their tribe, and to demand that the offenders might be delivered up to justice. This was a wise and just course that the innocent might be separated from the guilty, and a fair opportunity given them of preventing their own ruin by doing what their duty, honour, and interest laid them under an indispensable obligation to do; by delivering up those vile malefactors, whom they could not keep without bringing the curse of God upon themselves. But why did not these tribes of Israel shew equal zeal against the conduct of the idolatrous Danites, which, as the last mentioned author observes, "though less destructive to the peace of society, more immediately struck at the honour of God, and the interests of religion?" Could this be owing to any thing else than the very low state of religion among them, and their indifference and unconcern about the honour of God? And yet idolatry was the only crime on account of which they were commanded to levy war against their brethren.

Ver. 13. *That we may put away evil from Israel*—Both the guilt and punishment wherein all Israel will be involved if they do not punish it. *The children of Benjamin would not hearken*—From the pride of their hearts, which made them scorn to submit to their brethren; from a conceit of their own valour; and from God's just judgment. Certainly the degeneracy among them must have been very great, and it is probable the offenders might be men of considerable rank and power, which made the Benjamites refuse to deliver them up.

Ver. 15. *Twenty and six thousand men*—"How does this agree with the following numbers? For all that were slain of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand and one hundred men, Ver. 35, and there were only six hundred that survived, Ver. 47. which make only twenty-five thousand and seven

inhabitants of Gibeah, which were <sup>A. M. 2598</sup> <sup>B. C. 1406</sup> numbered seven hundred chosen men.

16 Among all this people *there were* seven hundred chosen men <sup>o</sup> left-handed; every one could sling <sup>o Ch. s. 15.</sup> stones at an hair *breadth*, and not miss.

17 And the men of Israel, beside Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thousand men that drew sword: all these *were* men of war.

18 ¶ And the children of Israel arose, and <sup>p</sup> went up to the house <sup>p Ver. 23.</sup> of God, and <sup>q</sup> asked counsel of God, <sup>q Num. 27.</sup> and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, *Judah shall go up first.*

hundred?" We answer, The other thousand men were either left in some of their cities, where they were slain, Ver. 48, or were cut off in the two first battles, wherein it is unreasonable to think they had an unbloody victory: and as for these twenty-five thousand and one hundred men, they were all slain in the third battle.

Ver. 16. *Could sling stones at an hair's breadth and not miss*—An hyperbolical expression, signifying that they could do this with great exactness. This extraordinary skill in their arms (for it is likely they handled other weapons with the like dexterity) and their natural courage, emboldened the Benjamites with such a small number to undertake a war against such a vast multitude of their brethren the other Israelites. Which warlike disposition of theirs was foretold by Jacob, for he said of them, when he spake of the character and fortune of each tribe, Gen. xlix. 27, *Benjamin shall raven as a wolf*, which is an undaunted, fearless creature.

Ver. 17. *The men of Israel were—four hundred thousand*—That is, those that were here present, for it is probable they had a far greater number of men, being 600,000 before their entrance into Canaan.

Ver. 18. *The children of Israel arose*—Some sent in the name of all. *And went up to the house of God*—To Shiloh, which was not far from Mizpeh. *And asked counsel of God*—By Urim and Thummim, as they did Chap. i. 1. The Targum has it, *They asked counsel by the word of the Lord. Which of us shall go up first?*—This was asked to prevent emulations and contentions: but they do not ask whether they should go against them or not; nor yet do they seek to God for his help by prayer, and fasting, and sacrifice, as in all reason they ought to have done; but were confident of success, because of their great numbers and righteous cause.

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19 And the children of Israel rose up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah.

20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel put themselves in array to fight against them at Gibeah.

r Gen. 48.  
27.

21 And the children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and destroyed down to the ground out of the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand men.

22 ¶ And the people the men of Israel encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array in the place where they put themselves in array the first day.

v Ver. 22, 23.

23 (And the children of Israel

went up and wept before the LORD until even, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up again to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother? And the LORD said, Go up against him.)

24 And the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day.

25 And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed down to the ground of the children of Israel again eighteen thousand men; all these drew the sword.

26 ¶ Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the

A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1406.

v Ver. 22.

v Ver. 22.

Ver. 19, 20. *The children of Israel—encamped against Gibeah*—It seems from these words that Judah only led the van, as we now speak, and stood in the front of the battle, to make the first assault; but that all the rest went up with them. *Israel went out to battle against Benjamin*—When the Benjamites heard that Israel were encamped against Gibeah, they came to the relief of it; and the Israelites marched out of their camp to engage them.

Ver. 21. *The children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah*—Those forces which were left in Gibeah for its defence, issued out upon the Israelites in their rear, while the other Benjamites fought against them in front. *And destroyed that day twenty and two thousand*—Since they were engaged in so good a cause, and God himself bid them go up, it may seem strange that they should receive such a defeat. But it is to be observed, he only bid them go, but did not promise them success. And undoubtedly they were highly blamable that they did not ask counsel of him in such an important matter as going to war with their brethren. For we find they absolutely determined upon it without doing so, and only enquired who should be in the van of their army. The Benjamites certainly deserved punishment. But to engage with them in a civil war was certainly what they ought not to have done without consulting God. It may be, if they had done so, God would have directed them to have sent another message, and that in his name, to the Benjamites, which might have had the desired effect, without proceeding to shed the blood of brethren, and exposing their own to be shed by brethren in such an awful manner. Add to this, that these tribes had many and great sins reigning among themselves, and they should not have proceeded to so great a work, with polluted hands; but should have pulled the beam out of their own eye, before they attempted to take that out of their brother Benjamin's eye: which, be-

cause they did not, God doth it for them, bringing them through the fire, that they might be purged from their dross. And God would hereby shew, that *the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong*. We must never lay that weight on an arm of flesh, which only the Rock of ages will bear.

Ver. 22, 23. *The men of Israel encouraged*—Heb. *strengthened themselves*, supporting themselves with the consciousness of the justice of their cause, and putting themselves in better order for defending themselves, and annoying their enemies. *The children of Israel wept*—Not so much for their sins, as for their defeat and loss. *My brother*—They impute their ill success, not to their own sins, but to their taking up arms against their brethren. But still they persist in their former neglect of seeking God's assistance in the way which he had appointed, as they themselves acknowledged presently, by doing those very things which now they neglected.

Ver. 26. *All the people went up*—Not only all the warriors, but other people. *And wept and sat before the Lord*—Sensible of their not having been before truly humbled for their sins, which they seem now to discover to have been the cause of their ill success. *And fasted that day until even*—That they might afflict their souls, and become truly penitent. This they had not done before, at least not with such seriousness as they now did. *And offered burnt-offerings*—To make atonement to God for their own sins, and to offer to him solemn supplications for the pardon of them. Which things also they had neglected before. *And peace-offerings*—To bless God for sparing so many of them, whereas he might justly have cut them all off when their brethren were slain: to implore his assistance, yea, and to give thanks for the victory which now they were confident he would give them.

A. M. 2506.  
B. C. 1406.

LORD, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD.

<sup>x</sup> Josh. 15. 1. 27 And the children of Israel enquired of the LORD, (for <sup>\*</sup> the ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days,

<sup>y</sup> Josh. 24. 3. <sup>z</sup> Deut. 10. 3. 28 <sup>y</sup> And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, <sup>z</sup> stood before it in those days,) saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the LORD said, Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver them into thine hand.

<sup>a</sup> Josh. 8. 4. 29 ¶ And Israel <sup>a</sup> set liers in wait round about Gibeah.

30 And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times.

31 And the children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* were drawn away from the city; and they began <sup>†</sup> to smite of the people, *and* kill, as at other times, in the highways, of which one goeth up to

† Heb. to smite of the people wounded as at: &c.

|| the house of God, and the other to Gibeah in the field, about thirty men of Israel. <sup>A. M. 2509.  
B. C. 1406.  
Or, Bethel.</sup>

32 And the children of Benjamin said, They *are* smitten down before us, as at the first. But the children of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them from the city unto the high-ways.

33 And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place, and put themselves in array at Baal-tamar: and the liers in wait of Israel came forth out of their places, *even* out of the meadows of Gibeah.

34 And there came against Gibeah ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore: <sup>b</sup> but they knew not that evil *was* near them. <sup>b</sup> Josh. 8. 14. Isai. 47. 11.

35 And the LORD smote Benjamin before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed of the Benjamites that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred men: all these drew the sword.

36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten: <sup>c</sup> for the <sup>c</sup> Josh. 8. 19.

Ver. 27. *The children of Israel enquired of the Lord*—They had enquired of the Lord before, but not as they ought to have done. For confiding in the justice of their cause, and their vast forces, they seem to have made but slight and languid addresses to God before they undertook the war.

Ver. 28. *Phinehas the son of Eleazar*—This is added to give us light respecting the time of this history, and to shew, that this war did not take place in the order in which it is here recorded, after the death of Samson, but long before; probably not long after the death of Joshua. *Stood before it*—Viz. the ark: that is, ministered as high priest. *Against the children of Benjamin my brother*—This is a more humble enquiry than either of the former. At first they only asked what tribe should first go up, presuming that the war ought to be made, and the second time, only whether God would have them renew the fight. But now they ask whether they should proceed in the war or desist altogether. That is, they leave the matter wholly to God's will and pleasure, desiring to take no further step, if he did not see fit to accompany them with his blessing. Accordingly, as they now sought God after the due order, truly humbled themselves for their sins, and resigned themselves and the whole business up to his direction and disposal, he condescended to

give them a gracious answer, assuring them of a speedy victory.

Ver. 29, 30. *Israel set liers in wait*—Though they were assured of the success, by a particular promise, yet they did not neglect the use of means; as well knowing that the certainty of God's promises doth not excuse, but rather require man's diligent use of all fit means for the accomplishment of them. *The children of Israel*—That is, a considerable part of them, who were ordered to make the first attack, and then to counterfeit flight, to draw the Benjamites forth from their strong hold. See Verse 32.

Ver. 34. *Ten thousand chosen men*—These seem to have been a detachment from the main body which was at Baal-tamar, and marched to attack Gibeah on one side, while the liers in wait assaulted it on the other and while the great body of the army laboured to intercept the Benjamites, who having pursued the Israelites that pretended to flee, now endeavoured to retreat to Gibeah. *The battle was sore; but they knew not, &c.*—The Benjamites fought stoutly; but were not sensible of the danger they were in to be destroyed.

Ver. 36, 37. *The children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten*—Viz. when they saw the flame in Gibeah, as men-

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men of Israel gave place to the Benjamites, because they trusted unto the liers in wait which they had set beside Gibeah.

d Josh. 8.  
19.

37 <sup>d</sup> And the liers in wait hasted, and rushed upon Gibeah; and the liers in wait || drew *themselves* along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword.

† Or, made a long sound with the trumpets, Josh. 6.5.

38 Now there was an appointed sign between the men of Israel † and the liers in wait, that they should make a great † flame with smoke to rise up out of the city.

† Or, time.

† Heb. with.

† Heb. elevation.

39 And when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began † to smite *and* kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons: for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as *in* the first battle.

† Heb. to smite the wounded.

40 But when the flame began to arise up out of the city with a pillar of smoke, the Benjamites <sup>e</sup> looked behind them, and, behold, † the flame of the city ascended up to heaven.

e Josh. 8.  
20.

† Heb. the whole consumed.

41 And when the men of Israel turned again, the men of Benjamin were amazed: for they saw that evil † was come upon them.

† Heb. touched them.

tioned Ver. 40. But after these words, in the following part of the Verse, begins a relation of the whole day's action, the particulars of which are related in the following Verses. *The liers in wait drew themselves along*—Or extended themselves; whereas before they lay close and contracted into a narrow compass, now they spread themselves, and marched in rank and file as armies do.

Ver. 40. *The Benjamites looked behind them*—It is likely the Israelites shouted when they turned about to fall upon the Benjamites, which made them look back to see what unexpected supplies they had received. Then they saw their city on fire, which, with the sudden turning of the Israelites from flight to attack them, quite put them in confusion.

Ver. 44, 45. *There fell eighteen thousand*—Namely, in the field of battle. *They gleaned of them—five thousand*—A metaphor from those who gather grapes or corn so cleanly and fully, that they leave no reliicks for those who come after them. The Benjamites could not flee in a body, but scattered up and down the highways, where the Israelites picked up five thousand more and slew them.

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42 Therefore they turned *their backs* before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them; and them which *came* out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them.

43 Thus they inclosed the Benjamites round about, *and* chased them, *and* trode them down || with ease † over against Gibeah toward the sunrising.

† Or, from Menechah &c.  
† Heb. unto over against.

44 And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men; all these *were* men of valour.

45 And they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men; and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand men of them.

† Josh. 15.  
22.

46 So that all which fell that day of Benjamin were twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword; all these *were* men of valour.

47 <sup>e</sup> But six hundred men turned <sup>f</sup> and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

† Ch. 21. 12.

48 And the men of Israel turned

Ver. 46. *Twenty and five thousand*—Besides the odd hundred expressed Ver. 35, but here only the great number is mentioned; the less being omitted, as inconsiderable. Here are also a thousand more omitted, because he speaks only of them who fell *in that third day of battle*.

Ver. 48. *The men of Israel turned again, &c.*—Left their pursuit of the Benjamites in the wilderness, and turned towards the country of Benjamin. Those that came to Gibeah and into the field, whom the Israelites had already destroyed, were men that drew the sword, that is soldiers. But there were a great many husbandmen, shepherds, and others, whom, in their fury, they now slew. *And all that came to hand*—Even women and children. For they had devoted to destruction all that came not up to Mizpeh, when they were summoned, Chap. xxi. 5, which none of the Benjamites did; for which reason they slew also the men, women, and children of Jabesh-Gilead, Chap. xxi. 10. But this was certainly a most inhumane barbarity, expressly contrary to the laws of God, which had forbidden the innocent to be punished with the guilty, Deut. xxiv. 16.

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B. C. 1406.

again upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of every city, as the beast, and all that † came to hand: also they set on fire all the cities that † they came to.

† Heb. *was found.*† Heb. *were found.*

## CHAP. XXI.

*The lamentation of Israel over Benjamin, ver. 1—7. They procure wives for the remaining Benjamites of the virgins of Jabesh-gilead, ver. 8—15. And of the daughters of Shiloh, ver. 16—25.*

a Ch. 20. 1.

**N**OW <sup>a</sup> the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife.

b Ch. 20. 15, 26.

2 And the people came <sup>b</sup> to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore;

3 And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?

4 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people rose early,

and <sup>c</sup> built there an altar, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.

A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1406.  
c 2 Sam. 24. 25.

5 And the children of Israel said, Who *is there* among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? <sup>d</sup> For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death.

d Judg. 8. 25.

6 And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day.

7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them of our daughters to wives?

8 ¶ And they said, What one *is there* of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? and, behold, there came none to the camp from <sup>e</sup> Jabesh-gilead to the assembly.

e 1 Sam. 11. 1.

9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, *there were* none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there.

CHAP. XXI. Ver. 1. *The men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh*—When they first assembled there in the beginning of this war, after the whole tribe had espoused the quarrel of the men of Gibeah. *Saying*—They do not here swear the utter extirpation of the tribe, which fell out beyond their expectation, but only not to give their daughters to those men who should survive; justly esteeming them for their villainy, to be as bad as heathens, with whom they were forbidden to marry.

Ver. 2. *And lift up their voices and wept sore*—Some days after their fury was over, and they coolly considered what they had done in the heat of war, their joy and triumph for their victory was turned into mourning and lamentation, for the loss of so many of their brethren.

Ver. 3. *Why is this come to pass?*—They had no reason to ask the cause, or by what means it came to pass, which they knew too well; but this is a common expression of grief or complaint. Strange! when they uttered this for the loss of the tribe which they imagined must be extinct, because there were no women left to match with the six hundred men who had saved themselves in the rock Rimmon, that they did not pour forth the deepest expressions of sorrow and contrition for their own wickedness, in having been guilty of such inhumanity towards the innocent among the Benjamites, particularly the women and children, who could not be culpable

in any degree. Alas! what crimes is the human nature capable of! and what need is there of the divine grace to renew and influence the heart of man!

Ver. 4. *The people rose early and built there an altar*—It is likely that they erected a new altar, upon this present occasion, when such a multitude of sacrifices were to be offered by all the people of Israel, that the ordinary altar was not sufficient to receive them. Thus Solomon did when he dedicated the temple, 1 Kings viii. 64. And by the direction of God, it was frequently done in other places besides at the house of God.

Ver. 5. *That came not up with the congregation*—When summoned to come together under a great penalty upon those who absented themselves. *For they had made a great oath*—That is a solemn oath, joined with some terrible execration against the offenders herein. This oath probably was made by the great assembly of their rulers (called the whole congregation) when they summoned the people to Mizpeh, as the other oath (mentioned Ver. 1,) was made after the people were come thither, upon the Benjamites refusal to do justice. *He shall surely be put to death*—Because by refusing to execute the vengeance due to such malefactors, they were presumed to be guilty of the crime, and therefore liable to the same punishment; as was the case of that city that would not deliver up an idolater, dwelling among them, to justice.

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10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, 'Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children.

11 And this *is* the thing that ye shall do, 'Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that † hath lain by man.

12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred † young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to <sup>h</sup> Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan.

13 And the whole congregation sent *some* † to speak to the children of Benjamin <sup>i</sup> that *were* in the rock Rimmon, and to || call peaceably unto them.

14 And Benjamin came again at

that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they sufficed them not.

15 And the people <sup>k</sup> repented them <sup>k</sup> for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

16 ¶ Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?

17 And they said, *There must be* an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin; that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel.

18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: <sup>l</sup> for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed *be* he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.

19 Then they said, Behold, *there is* a feast of the LORD in Shiloh

Ver. 11. *Ye shall utterly destroy every male, &c.*—Strange infatuation of the human mind! That they should imagine the divine majesty would be more honoured and pleased by an action quite contrary to, and abhorrent from, his essential nature and attributes, than if they had implored his pardon for a rash oath, and honoured him by *not* keeping it! Would to God that this had been the only time that the human race have thought to honour God by acts which are the most hateful to him! The cruel havocks made by religious persecution in different ages and countries have, alas! too fully witnessed how far the mind of man is capable of erring in this respect! O shocking blindness and infatuation! that men should think that the God of love, he who is love itself, can be pleased or honoured by acts of the most barbarous cruelty!

As Jabesh-Gilead was beyond Jordan, and at a great distance, it is probable the inhabitants thereof had not heard of the vow which the Israelites had made. "But if they had been guilty of neglect and disaffection to the common cause," as Mr. Scott argues, "they had not assisted the Benjamites: and yet when the people were lamenting the desolations of that tribe, they proceeded to treat those who were far less criminal, with equal rigour!"

Ver. 12. *They brought them into the camp*—If the vow they had made would admit of their sparing the virgins, why could they not also, in consistency with that oath, have spared the other women and children, and innocent persons, and only punished the guilty? But it is evident "that convenience, rather than justice or piety, induced them to spare the virgins, that they might extricate themselves from the d-

sculties, in which their rash oath had involved them."—Scott.

Ver. 15. *The Lord had made a breach, &c.*—The Benjamites were the only authors of the sin, but God was the author of the punishment, who employed the Israelites as his executioners to inflict it. They, however, had greatly exceeded their commission, and exercised a severity not enjoined.

Ver. 17. *There must be an inheritance for Benjamin*—The words, *There must be*, are not in the Hebrew, which runs thus, *The inheritance of them that are escaped is for Benjamin*—That is, the 600 remaining Benjamites must have that part of the country which was given to the whole tribe by the divine lot for their inheritance; or, the inheritance promised by Jacob and Moses, and given by Joshua to the tribe of Benjamin, doth all of it belong to those few who remain of that tribe, and cannot be possessed by any other tribe; and therefore we are obliged to procure wives for them all, that they may make up this breach, and be capable of possessing and managing all their land: that this tribe, and their inheritance may not be confounded with, or swallowed up by any of the rest.

Ver. 19. *A feast*—Probably it was the feast of tabernacles, which they celebrated with more than ordinary joy. And that feast was the only season, at which the Jewish virgins were allowed to dance. But even this was not mixed dancing. No men danced with these daughters of Shiloh. Nor did the married women so forget their gravity, as to join with them. However, their dancing thus in public, made them an easy prey: whence Bishop Hall observes, "The ambushes of

A. M. 2598.  
B. C. 1406.

A. M. 2598.

B. C. 1406.

† Heb. from

year to

year.

| Or, to-

ward the

sunrising.

| Or, on.

† yearly in a place which is on the north side of Beth-el, || on the east side || of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.

20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards;

21 And see, and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out <sup>m</sup> to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.

22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, || Be ye favourable unto them for our sakes: because we re-

| Or, satisfy us in them.

evil spirits carry away many souls from dancing to a fearful desolation."

Ver. 21. *Daughters of Shiloh*—By whom we may understand not those only who were born or settled inhabitants there, but all those who were come thither upon this occasion, and for a time sojourned there: for although only the males were obliged to go up to the three solemn feasts; yet the women had liberty to go, and those who were most devout did usually go. *Vineyards*—Which were near to the green where they danced. *Catch*—Take them away by force, which they might the better do, because the women danced by themselves. Thus they thought they kept their oath, because they did not give them wives, but only suffered them to take them, and to keep them when they had taken them. But, alas! what better was this than a mere evasion of it, and at the same time an authorizing of fraud, violence, and the marriage of children without the consent of their parents? Which last particular, if it might have been dispensed with, there was no need of this scheme, for the Benjamites could easily have found themselves wives, without the Israelites giving them their daughters.

Ver. 23. *They took them wives according to their number*—That is, each man took his wife. By which we may see, they had no very favourable opinion of polygamy, because they did not allow it in this case, when it might seem most necessary for the reparation of a lost tribe. *And repaired the cities*—By degrees, increasing their buildings as their number increased.

Ver. 25. *In those days there was no king in Israel*—There were elders, ver. 16, who had some authority, and there was an high priest, Chap. xx. 28, but there was no supreme governor, such as Moses and Joshua were, and after them

served not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, *that* ye should be guilty.

23 And the children of Benjamin did so, and took *them* wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and <sup>n</sup> repaired the cities <sup>a</sup> and dwelt in them.

24 And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went from thence every man to his inheritance.

25 <sup>o</sup> In those days *there was no king in Israel*: <sup>p</sup> every man did *that which was right in his own eyes*.

A. M. 2598.

B. C. 1406.

a Ch. 20. 49.

o Ch. 17. 6.

p Deut. 12.

q

the judges, and none that had power sufficient to punish public wrongs, whoredoms and idolatries, and thereby check the progress of vice and profaneness, and keep the people in order. "The sacred writer," says Dr. Dodd, "no doubt, repeats this observation to account for the disorders and enormities mentioned in the four preceding Chapters; which exhibit a most depraved state of things; every man doing what was right in his own eyes—Or, following his own corrupt passions and inclinations. "It is a natural inference from hence, that men ought to be extremely thankful for lawful authority: and, if they would preserve their felicity, ought to be zealous to support that authority, as well as to discourage all licentious approaches towards its dissolution. The Persians have a custom which justifies this reflection. When any of their kings die, they suffer the people to do as they please for five days, that by the disorders then committed, they may see the necessity of legal government, and learn submission to it. In general, the four Chapters which finish this Book, shew us to what a degree the Israelites were degenerated in the short space, from the death of Caleb to the election of his younger brother to be their judge: we discover the true cause of the chastisements wherewith God punished them from time to time, though he delivered them from their enemies, under whose yoke they must infallibly have fallen, if God had not beheld them with compassion, and raised them up judges to save them from ruin. We just remark, in conclusion, that it would be unreasonable to draw any inference from the tumultuous and irregular actions of a tribe or people, to the lessening of the authority of the writer of any history. The writer of the present Book, ought rather to be admired for the impartiality with which he relates facts so little to the credit of his nation."



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THE

# BOOK OF RUTH.

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ARGUMENT.

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*This Book, which derives its title from the person whose history constitutes the principal part of it, is placed between the book of Judges and the two books of Samuel, as being the sequel of, or a kind of supplement to the former, and an introduction to the latter. It is very probable that the historian who compiled the book of Judges, likewise wrote this, namely, Samuel, who hath thus brought down the history to his own times. St. Jerom informs us that the Jews annexed it to the book of Judges, because the transactions of which it treats happened in the time of the Judges: and several of the ancient fathers comprised both these books in one. The principal design of this book seems evidently to be to inform us of the origin of the family of David, with a part of whose genealogy it concludes, and thereby to lead us to Christ, who descended from Ruth. But it also unfolds the Providence of God superintending the affairs of his people, and teaches us to acknowledge Him in all our ways, that he may direct our steps.*

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A. M. 2652.  
B. C. 1372.

CHAP. I.

*Naomi removes to Moab, ver. 1, 2. Her husband and sons die, ver. 3---5. Designing to return to Bethlehem, she addresses her daughters-in-law, ver. 6---13. Orpah stays, but Ruth returns with her, ver. 14---18. They come to Bethlehem, ver. 19---22.*

<sup>a</sup> Judg. 2.  
16.  
Heb.  
judged.

**N**OW it came to pass in the days when <sup>a</sup> the judges † ruled, that

CHAP. I. Ver. 1. *There was a famine in the land—* This makes it probable, that the things here recorded came to pass in the days of Gideon, for that is the only time when we read of a famine in the days of the judges; viz. when the Midianites, Amalekites, &c. came and *destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for Israel, nor for their cattle, Judges vi. 3, 4.*

Ver. 2. *Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah—*Bethlehem was

there was <sup>b</sup> a famine in the land. And <sup>a</sup> a certain man of <sup>c</sup> Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

2 And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, <sup>d</sup> Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came

otherwise called Ephratha. *Naomi signifies my amiable or pleasant one: Mahlon and Chilion signify sickness and consumption. Probably they were sickly children, and not likely to be long-lived. Such are the products of our pleasant things, weak and infirm, fading and dying. They came into the country of Moab, and continued there—* Settled their habitation in that country, which it would not have been lawful for them to have done, unless it had been in a time of great

A. M. 2692.  
B. C. 1313.  
e Judg. 5.  
31.  
† Heb.  
were.

into the country of Moab, and † continued there.

3 And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.

cir. 1313.

4 ¶ And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

f Exod. 4.  
31.  
g Ps. 132.  
12.

6 ¶ Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had <sup>f</sup> visited his people in <sup>g</sup> giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

h Josh. 24.  
15.  
i 2 Tim. 1.  
26, 15.

8 ¶ And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, <sup>h</sup> Go, return each to her mother's house: <sup>i</sup> the LORD

public calamity, or great private necessity, as Maimonides observes.

Ver. 4. *They took them wives of the daughters of Moab*—Either these women were proselytes when they married them, which, what is afterwards recorded of Ruth, Ver. 16, renders very probable, or they sinned in marrying them, and therefore might be punished with short lives and want of issue. The Chaldee Paraphrast declares for the latter opinion. "Their days were cut short," says he, "because they married strange women."

Ver. 5, 6. *The woman was left of her two sons, and her husband*—Loss of children and widowhood are both come upon her. By whom shall she be comforted? It is God alone who is able to comfort those who are thus cast down. *The Lord had visited his people in giving them bread*—That is food: so she stayed no longer than necessity forced her.

Ver. 8. *Return each to her mother's house*—She desires them to accompany her no further, but to go back to their own home. And it seems it was usual in Moab, as well as in Israel, for widows to dwell with their parents. But she says, *mother's*, rather than *father's* house, because daughters used to converse more frequently with their mothers, and to dwell in the same apartments with them, which then

deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with <sup>k</sup> the dead, and with me. A. M. 2692.  
B. C. 1313.  
k Ver. 5.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find <sup>l</sup> rest, each of *you* in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. l Ch. 2. 1.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? *are there yet any more sons in my womb,* <sup>m</sup> that they may be your husbands? m Gen. 28.  
11.

12 Turn again, my daughters, *go your way*: for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, <sup>n</sup> if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons; n Or, if I were with an husband.

13 Would ye † tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for † it grieveth me much for your sakes that <sup>n</sup> the hand of the LORD is gone out against me. † Heb. I hope.  
† Heb. I have much bitterness.  
n Judg. 2.  
16.

14 ¶ And they lifted up their

were distinct from those parts of the house where the men dwelt. *The dead*—With my sons, your husbands, while they lived.

Ver. 9—11. *That ye may find rest, &c.*—That ye may be happily settled in houses of your own with good husbands. *That they may be your husbands*—According to the ancient custom, Gen. xxxviii. 8, and the express law of God, Deut. xxv. 5, which doubtless she had acquainted them with before, among other branches of the Jewish religion.

Ver. 13. *It grieveth me*—That you are left without the comfort of husbands or children; that I must part with such affectionate daughters; and that my circumstances are such, that I cannot invite you to go along with me. For her condition was so mean at this time, that Ruth, when she came to her mother's city, was forced to glean for a living. It is with me, that God has a controversy. This language becomes us, when we are under affliction; though many others share in the trouble, yet we are to hear the voice of the rod, as if it spake only to us. But did not she wish to bring them to the worship of the God of Israel? Undoubtedly she did. But she would have them first consider upon what terms, lest having set their hand to the plough, they should look back.

Ver. 14. *Kissed*—Departed from her with a kiss. Bade her

A. M. 3892.  
B. C. 1512. voice, and wept again: and Orpah  
o Ecclus. 19. <sup>9.</sup> kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth  
p Prov. 17. <sup>17.</sup> clave unto her.

q Judg. 11. <sup>24.</sup> And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto <sup>q</sup> her gods: <sup>r</sup> return thou after thy sister-in-law.

r Josh. 24. <sup>15, 19.</sup> J Or, Be not against me. o 2 Kings 2. <sup>2, 6.</sup> 16 And Ruth said, || <sup>s</sup> Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: <sup>t</sup> thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God:

u 1 Sam. 3. <sup>17.</sup> 17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: <sup>u</sup> the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me.

x Acts 21. <sup>16.</sup> 18 <sup>x</sup> When she saw that she † was

† Heb. strength-ened her-self.

farewell for ever. She loved Naomi; but she did not love her so well as to quit her country for her sake. Thus many have a value for Christ, and yet come short of salvation by him, because they cannot find in their hearts to forsake other things for him. They love him, and yet leave him, because they do not love him enough, but love other things better.

Ver. 15. *Is gone back to her people and to her gods*—By this it appears if Orpah had been a proselyte to the Jewish religion, she afterwards apostatised. Those that forsake the communion of saints will certainly break off their communion with God. *Return thou after thy sister-in-law*—This she said to try Ruth's sincerity and constancy, and in order that she might intimate to her that if she went with her she must be firm in her attachment to the true religion.

Ver. 16, 17. *Intreat me not to leave thee*—For all thy intreaties cannot shake that resolution which thy instructions, formerly given, have wrought in me. *Whither thou goest, I will go*—Though to a country I never saw, which I have been taught to despise, and far distant from my own country. *Where thou lodgest, I will lodge*—Though it be in a cottage; nay, though it be no better a lodging than Jacob had when he put the stones for his pillow. *Thy people shall be my people*—For, judging from what I have seen in thee, I conclude they must be a wise and understanding people, and I shall think myself happy if I may be reckoned one of them, may be associated with them, and conformed to them. *And thy God shall be my God*—Farewell to Chemosh and all the gods of Moab, which are vanities and lies. I will adore the God of Israel, the only living and true God; will trust in him alone, will love and serve him alone, and in every thing be commanded and ruled by him. *Where thou diest, will I die*—In the same place, in token of my dying in the same spirit. Let me die the death of righteous Naomi, and let my last end be like her's! *And there will I be buried*—Not desiring to have so much as my dead body carried back to the

A. M. 3892.  
B. C. 1512. steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 ¶ So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that <sup>y</sup> all the city was moved about them, and they said, <sup>z</sup> Is this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not || Naomi, call me || Mara: for <sup>1</sup> the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly <sup>1</sup> with me. That is, pleasant. That is, bitter.

21 I went out full, <sup>a</sup> and the LORD <sup>a</sup> hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law,

country of Moab, in token of any remaining regard for it. But I will be buried in the same grave with thee, and my bones shall lie by thine, that, as we have joined souls, our dust may be mingled, and we may rise together, and remain together for ever. Happy Naomi, though deprived of her husband and her sons, that has such a daughter-in-law to comfort her in her widowhood and amidst her bereavements! And happy Ruth, who has profited so much by the instructions of her mother-in-law, and who has so fully imbibed the genuine principles and spirit of the true religion! Surely she was a glorious instance of the grace of God inclining the soul to a resolute choice of the good part. *The Lord do so to me, and more also*—An ancient form this of imprecation, by which Ruth confirms, with a solemn oath, her resolution to adhere to Naomi till death. She knew that death would part them for a time, but was resolved that nothing else should; not any kindness from her own family and people, nor any hope of preferment among them; nor any unkindness from Israel, nor the fear of poverty and disgrace among them. No: *I will never leave thee.*

Ver. 18. *That she was steadfastly minded to go with her, &c.*—Was not this the very thing that Naomi aimed at in all she said, viz. to bring Ruth to be of this steadfast mind? *Then she left off speaking*—Having gained her point. For she could desire no further confirmation of it, than that solemn protestation which Ruth had just now made. See the power of resolution, how it puts temptation to silence! Those that are but half resolved, and go on in the ways of religion without a steadfast mind, stand like a door a jar, which invites a thief. But resolution shuts and bolts the door, and then the devil flees from us.

Ver. 19—21. *Is this Naomi?*—Is this she that formerly lived in so much plenty and honour? How marvellously is her condition changed! *Call me not Naomi*—Which signifies pleasant, and cheerful. *Call me Mara*—Which signifies bitter,

A. M. 2692.  
B. C. 1312.b Exod. 9.  
31.

with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem <sup>b</sup> in the beginning of barley harvest.

## CHAP. II.

*Providence directs Ruth to glean in Boaz's field, ver. 1---3. The favour which Boaz shewed her, ver. 4---16. Her return to Naomi, ver. 17---23.*

a Ch. 1. 2.  
12.b Ch. 4. 21.  
Called  
Boaz,  
Matt. 1.  
b.c Lev. 19.  
9.

**A**ND Naomi had a <sup>a</sup> kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was <sup>b</sup> Boaz.

**2** And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and <sup>c</sup> glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

† Heb. hap,  
happened.

**3** And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her <sup>†</sup>hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

or sorrowful—I went out full—With my husband and sons, and a plentiful estate for our support. *Testified*—That is, hath borne witness, as it were, in judgment, and given sentence against me. Thus she acknowledges that the affliction came from God, and that God was contending with and correcting her; and she is willing to accommodate herself to the afflictive and bitter dispensation; and as a token thereof, to have her name changed from Naomi to Mara. “It well becomes us,” says Henry, “to have our hearts humbled under humbling providences. When our condition is brought down, our spirits should be brought down with it. And then our troubles are sanctified to us, when we thus comport with them: for it is not an affliction in itself, but an affliction rightly borne that doth us good.”

CHAP. II. Ver. 2. *Let me go to the field and glean*—Which was permitted to the poor and the stranger, Lev. xix. 9; Deut. xxiv. 19. And Ruth was neither ashamed to confess her poverty, nor would she eat the bread of idleness. *After him in whose sight I shall find grace*—Perhaps she did not know that poor strangers had a right to glean as well as the poor of Israel; or rather, out of her great modesty, she would not claim it as a right, but as a favour which she would humbly and thankfully acknowledge. *And she said, Go, my daughter*—This shews, that Naomi was in a very poor and low condition as to temporal things; for had she been otherwise, it is not likely that she would have suffered

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d Ps. 137. 7.

**4** ¶ And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, <sup>d</sup> The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

**5** Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

**6** And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel <sup>e</sup> that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

e Ch. 1. 22.

**7** And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

**8** ¶ Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearst thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

**9** *Let thine eyes be on the field*

her daughter-in-law to go and glean among the lowest of the people.

Ver. 3. *Her hap was, &c.*—It was a chance in appearance and in reference to second causes, but ordered by God's providence. God wisely orders small events, even those that seem altogether contingent. Many a great affair is brought about by a little turn, fortuitous as to men, but designed by God.

Ver. 4. *And said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you, &c.*—Such was the piety of ancient times, that it manifested itself even in men's civil conversation and worldly transactions, and induced them to pray to God for a blessing on the labours of those whom they saw to be honestly and usefully employed, who were wont in return to pray in a similar manner for them. *The Lord be with you; and the Lord bless you*—This was the beautiful language of religion in those days; too little known, alas! in ours!

Ver. 7. *She said, I pray you, &c.*—She did not boldly intrude herself, but modestly ask leave of us. *Till now*—She is not retired through idleness, for she hath been diligent and constant in her labours. *The house*—In the little house or tent, which was set up in the fields at these times, and was necessary in those hot countries, where the labourers might retire for a little repose or repast. Being weary with her continued labours, she comes hither to take a little rest.

Ver. 8, 9. *Abide here by my maidens*—Not by the young men, to avoid both occasion of sin, and matter of scandal.

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that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn.

11 Sam. 25.  
23.

10 Then she <sup>f</sup>fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger?

2 Ch. 1. 14,  
17.

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, <sup>e</sup>all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and *how* thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore.

11 Sam. 24.  
19.

12 <sup>h</sup>The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel,

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B. C. 1312.  
1 Ch. 1. 16.

<sup>i</sup>under whose wings thou art come to trust.

13 Then she said, || <sup>k</sup>Let me find <sup>l</sup>favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken <sup>†</sup>friendly unto thine hand-maid, <sup>1</sup>though I be not like unto one of thine hand-maidens.

Or, I find favour.  
k Gen. 32. 15.  
† Heb. to the heart.  
Gen. 34. 5.  
11 Sam. 45. 41.

14 And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and <sup>m</sup>was <sup>n</sup>sufficed, and left.

Ver. 14.

15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and <sup>†</sup>reproach her not:

† Heb. shame her not.

16 And let fall also *some* of the handfuls on purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*,

Herein he shews his piety and prudence. *That they shall not touch thee*—So as to offer any incivility or injury to thee.

Ver. 10. *Then she fell on her face*—This was the humblest posture of reverence, either civil when performed to men, or religious when to God. And thus she shews both the lowliness of her mind and her gratitude. *That thou shouldst take knowledge of me*—That is, shouldst so much as notice me, and especially shew me any respect or kindness.

Ver. 12. *The Lord recompense thy work, &c.*—Thy dutiful kindness to thy mother-in-law, and thy leaving thy country and kindred, and all things, to embrace the true religion. This implied such a work of divine grace wrought in her, and such a work of righteousness wrought by her, as was sure to be crowned with a *full reward*. *Under whose wings thou art come to trust*—That is, under whose protection and care. An allusion either to hens, which protect and cherish their young ones under their wings; or to the wings of the Cherubim, between which God dwelt.

Ver. 13. *She said, Let me find favour*—Or, *I find favour, &c.*—For it is evidently an acknowledgment of the kindness she had already received, and not a petition for a further kindness. *Though I be not like, &c.*—That is, though I have not deserved it, being a person more mean, obscure, and necessitous, than *one of thine hand-maidens*; a stranger, and one born of heathen parents, and not of the holy and honourable people of Israel, as they are.

Ver. 14. *Eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the*

*vinegar*—In the term *bread* is comprehended all the provision which was made for the reapers, with which they had vinegar for sauce, it being very cooling and refreshing in hot seasons, as the time of harvest there was. *He reached her parched corn*—Which was an usual and no mean food in those countries, as appears from 2 Sam. xvii. 28. Either Boaz, or the servant set over the reapers, gave her this. It is no disparagement to the finest hand to be reached out to the needy. *And she sat by the reapers*—Not with or among them, but at some little distance, as one inferior to them.

Ver. 16. *Let fall also some of the handfuls*—What an amiable picture of piety and virtue in private life have we here in Boaz! In the midst of riches he is laborious, diligent in husbandry, plain without luxury, delicacy, sloth, or pride. How affable, obliging, and kind to his servants! *The Lord be with you*—Says he, even to his reapers. What an obliging humanity, as well as generosity, does he shew when he desires Ruth not to go into any other field to glean, but to abide fast by his maidens, to eat and drink with them; and in the order he gives his reapers to let her glean even among the sheaves, and to let fall some of the handfuls on purpose for her, that she might gather them without being ashamed! What a noble pattern have we here to instruct us in what manner to bestow benefits, viz. so as to spare those, whom we oblige, the confusion of receiving, and ourselves the temptation of vain-glory in giving.

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and rebuke her not.

17 So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 14.

18 ¶ And she took *it* up, and went into the city: and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her <sup>b</sup> that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

<sup>c</sup> Ver. 10.

19 And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did <sup>d</sup> take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 3. 10.

<sup>f</sup> Prov. 17. 17.

20 And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, <sup>g</sup> Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who <sup>h</sup> hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, <sup>i</sup> ¶ one of our next kinsmen.

<sup>j</sup> Ch. 3. 9.  
Or, one that hath right to redeem: Lev. 25. 26.

21 And Ruth the Moabitess said,

Ver. 17, 18. *An ephah*—About a bushel of our measure. *Gave to her what she had reserved*—At dinner, after she had eaten and was *sufficed*, or satisfied. This shews Ruth's care of her mother-in-law, whom she had in her mind when she was feasted with the reapers with more than she could eat, and therefore brought, what she left, home for her refreshment.

Ver. 19. *Where hast thou gleaned to-day?*—It is a good question to ask ourselves in the evening, "Where have I gleaned to-day?" What improvements have I made in grace or knowledge? What have I learned or done, which will turn to account?

Ver. 20. *His kindness to the living and to the dead*—That is, the kindness which he formerly shewed to my husband and his sons while they were living, he now continues to us their relicts.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt keep fast by my young men*—Or, young people, as the word *נערים* *negarim*, although of the masculine gender, here signifies, and particularly the maidens, to whom he bid her keep close, Ver. 8. And, thus, both the Seventy and the Chaldee expound it; and so Naomi, as appears by the next verse, understood it. *Until they have ended all my harvest*—Both barley-harvest, and wheat-harvest. She

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He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, *It is good*, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they ¶ meet thee not <sup>k</sup> in any other field.

Or, fall upon thee

23 So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of the barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

CHAP. III.

*The directions Naomi gives to Ruth, ver. 1...5. Her punctual observance of them, ver. 6, 7. The honourable treatment which Boaz gave her, ver. 8...15. Her return to Naomi, ver. 16...18.*

**T**HEN Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, <sup>l</sup> shall I not seek <sup>m</sup> rest for thee, that <sup>n</sup> it may be well with thee?

<sup>o</sup> 1 Cor. 7. 36.  
<sup>p</sup> Ch. 1. 9.

2 And now *is* not Boaz of our kindred, <sup>q</sup> with whose maidens thou <sup>r</sup> wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing floor.

<sup>s</sup> Ch. 2. 3.

3 Wash thyself therefore, <sup>t</sup> and <sup>u</sup> and

<sup>v</sup> 2 Sam. 14. 9.

tells what kindness Boaz had shewed her; but not, how he had commended her. Humility teaches not only not to praise ourselves, but not to be forward in repeating the praise which others have given us.

Ver. 22. *That they meet thee not in any other field*—Whereby thou wilt both expose thyself to many inconveniences, which thou mayest expect from strangers; and incur his displeasure, as if thou didst despise his kindness.

CHAP. III. Ver. 1, 2. *Shall I not seek rest for thee?*—A settlement in an house of thy own, and thereby rest in comfort and safety, under the care of a good husband. *He winnoweth barley to-night*—This, it is probable, was commonly done in the evening, when the heat of the day was over, and cool breezes began to rise. *In the threshing floor*—Which was in a place covered at the top, but open elsewhere, whither Ruth might easily come. And this work of winnowing corn was usually ended with a feast.

Ver. 3. *Put on thy raiment*—Thy best raiment. *Make not thyself known*—In so familiar a way as thou mayest do hereafter. "It is not easy to tell," says Dr. Dodd, "at this distance of time, and amidst this difference of manners, why Naomi advised Ruth to this secret method of proceeding.

A. M. 3097.  
B. C. 1319. anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

Or, lift up the clothes that are on his feet. 4 ¶ And it shall be when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and || uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.

e Judg. 19.  
6, 9, 22. 7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and <sup>e</sup> his heart was merry, he

A. M. 3097.  
B. C. 1319. went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

8 ¶ And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and || turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet. Or, took hold on.

9 And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine hand-maid: <sup>f</sup>spread therefore thy skirt over thine hand-maid; for thou art || <sup>g</sup>a near kinsman. f Ezek. 16.  
8.

10 And he said, <sup>h</sup>Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: *for* thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than <sup>i</sup>at the beginning, in-asmuch as thou followedst not young h Or, one that hath right to redeem.  
i Ch. 2. 20.  
Ch. 2. 20.  
Ch. 1. 5.

One would have thought it better for her to have claimed publicly the right of redemption from Boaz: but, no doubt, Naomi, who was a pious woman, had sufficient reasons for her mode of proceeding; and being well satisfied of the honour of Boaz, as well as the modesty of Ruth, she had no apprehensions of any consequences which might impugn the reputation of either." Two circumstances must be kept in mind in judging of this conduct of Naomi: the one is, that in taking this method, she intended to induce Boaz to perform that duty which the law required from him, viz. to marry his kinswoman. For the precept enjoining a man, whose brother died childless, to take his widow to wife, that he might raise up seed to his deceased brother, had been extended by custom to other near relations when there were no brethren. The other circumstance to be observed is "the striking simplicity of the manners of those times, with a pleasing picture whereof every trait in this story presents us."

Ver. 4. *Uncover his feet*—Remove the clothes which are upon his feet; thereby to awake him. *And lay thee down*—She was not to lie down by his side, for that would have been immodest, but at his feet, in the posture of an humble supplicant. Had Ruth acted in any respect that in those days was judged indecent or immodest, it is most likely she would have highly displeased such a grave person as Boaz appears to have been. What she did, however, seems to us indecent, and would certainly be a very improper conduct in any woman in our days; but the general character of both Naomi and Ruth forbid us to suppose that they had any sinful intentions. And yet, as Mr. Scott observes, "when all allowances are made, perhaps neither party can be entirely exculpated. At least, though their plan was graciously rendered successful, it was not recorded for imitation in the present state of society."

Ver. 7. *And his heart was merry*—Heb. יִמְבּ לֵבּוֹ *Itab libbo, his heart was good*, that is, cheerful and thankful for the plenty which the Lord had sent. *He went to lie down*

*at the end of the heap of corn*—In his clothes, doubtless; not going as usual to his house and bed, but reposing himself here, for the sake of taking a little temporary rest, probably on the straw in the floor where his corn had been winnowed, to secure it from thieves till it could be laid up in his garner. For such was the plain way of living in those ancient times, that the most wealthy persons looked after their own business, both in the field and at home. *And she came softly*—So that none perceived her, and when he was asleep, lay down at his feet, in her clothes, which we have no reason to think, she put off, as her intention was only to put him in remembrance of what the law required of him.

Ver. 8, 9. *At midnight*—He did not discover her sooner. *The man was afraid*—Feeling something unusual at his feet. *Behold a woman lay at his feet*—He perceived by her clothes, and, when she spake, by her voice, that it was a woman. *Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid*—A kind of proverbial expression, signifying, Take me to be thy wife, and perform the duty of an husband to me. From this answer of Ruth, and from what Boaz says in the two following verses, it is plain that she had no design of any thing but what was honest and lawful.

Ver. 10. *More kindness in the latter end than in the beginning*—Both to thy deceased husband, the continuance of whose name and memory thou seekest, and to thy mother-in-law, whose commands thou hast punctually obeyed. The former kindness which Ruth had shewn to the family of Boaz was in her love and fidelity to her husband, and her affectionate regard to her mother-in-law. But Boaz here commends her willingness to marry him, who was advanced in years, in order to raise up seed to her departed husband, as the greatest instance of love that she had given; inasmuch as she had not followed young men, either among the Israelites or in her own country, as he intimates she would have done if she had not preferred obedience to God's command, before pleasing herself.



A. M. 2092.  
B. C. 1312. men, whether poor or rich.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the †city of my people doth know that thou art <sup>k</sup> a virtuous woman.

12 And now it is true that I *am* <sup>l</sup>thy <sup>m</sup>near kinsman: howbeit <sup>n</sup>there is a kinsman nearer than I.

13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, *that* if he will <sup>o</sup>perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, <sup>p</sup>as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

14 ¶ And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, <sup>q</sup>Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15 Also he said, Bring the <sup>r</sup>vail that *thou hast* upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six *measures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.

16 And when she came to her mo-

A. M. 2092.  
B. C. 1312. ther-in-law, she said, Who *art* thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.

18 Then said she, <sup>s</sup>Sit still my <sup>t</sup>daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

#### CHAP. IV.

*The next kinsman refuses to marry Ruth, ver. 1--8. Boaz marries her, ver. 9--12. Their issue, ver. 13--22.*

**T**HEN went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, <sup>u</sup>the kinsman of whom Boaz <sup>v</sup>spake came by: unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

2 And he took ten men of <sup>w</sup>the <sup>x</sup>elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

Ver. 11--13. *And now, my daughter, fear not*—No words can more evidently express any thing than this and the following verse do, that Ruth did nothing immodest. *Howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I*—He does not absolutely refuse to grant her petition, but, influenced by a strict regard to the law of Moses, informs her that, as there was a person nearer to her than himself, he could not properly take her to wife till that person had been consulted. *If he will perform unto thee the kinsman's part, &c.*—Will take thee to wife to raise up seed to his brother. Bishop Hall thus sums up this matter in his Contemplations:—"Boaz, instead of touching her as a wanton, blesseth her as a father, encourages her as a friend, promises her as a kinsman, rewards her as a patron, and sends her away laden with hopes and gifts, no less chaste, but more happy than she came. O admirable temperance, worthy the progenitor of him, in whose lips and heart there was no guile!"

Ver. 14. *She lay at his feet till the morning*—Having no other design but only to implore his justice and kindness unto her deceased husband. *He said, Let it not be known*—He takes care to preserve, not only his conscience towards God, but his reputation and her's also among men.

Ver. 16, 17. *Who art thou, my daughter?*—Or rather, *Is it thou, my daughter?* *He said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law*—There is no mention made before of Boaz thus speaking to her, but it is not unusual for the sacred writers, in the relation of a fact or event, to omit many little circumstances which they occasionally mention afterwards. It is likely that Boaz intended this corn chiefly for Naomi, as he was that day either about to marry Ruth himself, or to provide her another husband.

CHAP. IV. Ver. 1. *Then went Boaz up to the gate*—Where the elders sat. The Chaldee interprets it, "He went up to the gate of the house of judgment, where the Sanhedrim sat." *Behold, the kinsman came by*—Providence so ordering it that he should come by thus opportunely when the matter was ready to be proposed to him. Great affairs are frequently much furthered and expedited by small circumstances.

Ver. 2. *He took ten men*—To be witnesses: for though two or three witnesses were sufficient, yet in weightier matters they used more. And ten was the usual number among the Jews in causes of matrimony and divorce, and translation

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3 And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which *was* our brother Elimelech's;

† Heb. I said, I will reveal in thine ear  
c Jer. 21. 7.  
d Gen. 23. 18.  
e Lev. 25. 25.  
4 And † I thought to advertise thee, saying, <sup>c</sup> Buy *it* <sup>d</sup> before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*: but if thou wilt not redeem *it*, then tell me, that I may know; <sup>e</sup> for *there is* none to redeem *it* beside thee; and I *am* after thee. And he said, I will redeem *it*.

f Gen. 22. 8.  
g Ch. 3. 12.  
5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy *it* also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, <sup>f</sup> to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

6 ¶ <sup>g</sup> And the kinsman said, I

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cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem *it*.

7 <sup>h</sup> Now this *was the manner* in <sup>h</sup> Deut. 25. 7, 9. former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave *it* to his neighbour: and this *was* a testimony in Israel.

8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

9 ¶ And Boaz said unto the elders, and *unto* all the people, Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess,

of inheritances; who were both judges of the causes, and witnesses of the fact.

Ver. 3. *Naomi*—Both Naomi and Ruth had an interest in this land during their lives, but he mentions only Naomi, because all was done by her direction; lest the mention of Ruth should raise a suspicion of the necessity of his marrying Ruth, before he had given his answer to the first proposition. *Which was our brother Elimelech's*—He calls him their brother because he was near of kin to them. And he mentions Naomi's return out of the country of Moab, to intimate that her poverty constrained her to sell her estate which her husband left her.

Ver. 4, 5. *I thought to advertise thee*—I have had it in my mind to speak to thee about it. *There is none to redeem it besides thee*—That is, thou hast the first right to do so; for it is plain Boaz had a right, but it was in the second place; and if he had refused, the next kinsman would have had the right, and so on. *Thou must buy it also of Ruth*—According to the law, Deut. xxv. 5. *To raise up seed*—To revive his name, which was buried with his body, by raising up a seed to him to be called by his name.

Ver. 6. *Lest I mar mine own inheritance*—It seems he had a wife and children already, which made him afraid to marry a poor woman with a small parcel of land, which would not provide for the children he might have by her, lest he should thereby diminish the inheritance of which he was already possessed. The Chaldee paraphrase on the passage is, "I cannot redeem it on this condition," viz. the condition of marrying Ruth; "because I have a wife already, and do not choose to bring another into my house, lest quarrels and divisions arise in it, and I hurt my own inheritance."

Ver. 7. *Now this was the manner—in Israel;* &c.—We do

not know that there was any law of God enjoining any such ceremony as is here mentioned; but only it was a long established custom to act thus in transferring one man's right in any land to another. *To confirm all things*—That is, in all alienation of lands. So that it is no wonder if this ceremony differ a little from that mentioned Deut. xxv. 9, because that concerned only one case, but this is more general. Besides he alleges, not the command of God, but only ancient custom for this practice. *A man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour*—That is, he who relinquished his right to another did this. The reason of the custom, as Bishop Patrick observes, is plain enough, "it being a natural signification that the man resigned his interest in the land by giving, to the person redeeming, his shoe wherewith he used to walk in it, to the end that he might enter into it, and take possession of it himself." Or it might signify that as he pulled off, and divested himself of his shoe, so he divested himself of that which he was about to surrender. "It is now the custom with us," says Rabbi Jarchi, "that a handkerchief or veil be given, instead of a shoe, when we purchase any thing." *This was a testimony in Israel*—This was admitted for sufficient evidence in all such cases.

Ver. 10. *Ruth the Moabitess have I purchased to be my wife*—He had her by the right of the same purchase, and did not succeed into the right of a brother, as mentioned, Deut. xxv.; for he was not a brother to Elimelech, but only a remote kinsman of the same family, who could not enjoy the land while she lived, unless he would take her with it; to whom it belonged while she lived, and was to go to her issue when she died. *From the gate of his place*—That is, from among the inhabitants dwelling within the gate of his city, which was Bethlehem-judah.

A. M. 2692. B. C. 1312. the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, <sup>i</sup> that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye *are* witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are* witnesses. <sup>k</sup> The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did <sup>l</sup> build the house of Israel: and <sup>m</sup> do thou worthily in Ephratah, and <sup>n</sup> be famous in Bethlehem:

12 And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, <sup>o</sup> whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of <sup>p</sup> the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

13 ¶ So Boaz <sup>q</sup> took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, <sup>r</sup> the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14 And <sup>s</sup> the women said unto Naomi, Blessed *be* the LORD, which

hath not <sup>t</sup> left thee this day without a <sup>u</sup> kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of *thy* life, and <sup>v</sup> a nourisher of <sup>w</sup> thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which <sup>x</sup> is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it

17 <sup>y</sup> And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 ¶ Now these *are* the generations of Pharez: <sup>z</sup> Pharez begat Hezron,

19 And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

20 And Amminadab begat <sup>aa</sup> Nahshon, and Nahshon begat <sup>ab</sup> Salmon,

21 And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

22 And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat <sup>ac</sup> David.

Ver. 11. *Rachel and Leah*—Amiable and fruitful. These two are singled out, because they were of a foreign original, and yet ingrafted into God's people, as Ruth was; and because of that fertility which God vouchsafed unto them above their predecessors, Sarah and Rebecca. Rachel is placed before Leah, because she was his most lawful, and best-beloved wife. *Which two did build the house of Israel*—Were blessed with a numerous posterity. They do not mention the two handmaids, because the former were Jacob's principal wives, whose servants bare children, not for themselves but their mistresses.

Ver. 12. *Like the house of Pharez*—As honourable and numerous as his family was; whom, though he also was born of a stranger, God so blessed, that his family was one of the five families to which all the tribe of Judah belonged, and the progenitor of the inhabitants of this city.

Ver. 13. *Took Ruth*—Which he might do, though she was a Moabitess, because the prohibition against marrying such, is to be restrained to those who continued heathens; whereas Ruth was a sincere proselyte and convert to the God of Israel. Thus he that forsakes all for Christ, shall find more than all with him.

Ver. 14. *The women said unto Naomi*—After Ruth's delivery. *Which hath not left thee without a kinsman*—The words may be rendered, *who hath not made, or suffered, thy kinsman to fail thee*; that is, to refuse to perform his duty to thee and thine as the other kinsman did. The Hebrew *בן גויל*, which we translate kinsman, properly belonged to Boaz,

and not to his son who was now born; and yet the women seem to speak this with a reference to the child, which probably induced the Arabic translator to render it, *Hath not left thee without an heir*—That his name may—Heb. *and his name shall be famous in Israel*, on account of this noble and worthy action.

Ver. 15. *A restorer of thy life*—Of the comfort of thy life, such a comfort as to make thee in some sort, young again. For they hoped the child would inherit his mother's virtues, and particularly, her affection to Naomi, which was so surpassing, that it made her a greater blessing to her than a great many children of her own body would have been. *Better than seven sons*—See how God sometimes makes up the want of those relations from whom we expected most comfort, in those from whom we expected least! The bonds of love prove stronger than those of nature.

Ver. 17. *Her neighbours gave it a name*—That is, gave her advice about his name; for it did not belong to them, but to the father or mother to name the child. *They called his name Obed*—That is, a servant, meaning to express their hopes that he would nourish, comfort, and assist her, duties which children owe to their progenitors. *He is the father of Jesse, the father of David*—For whose sake chiefly this whole book seems to have been written, that it might be certainly known from whom he was descended, the Messiah being to spring from him; which is the reason why the following genealogy is annexed for the conclusion of this book.

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# THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL,

## OTHERWISE CALLED, THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

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### ARGUMENT.

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*In this Book is contained the history of the Israelites under the two last judges, Eli and Samuel, and under Saul the first king in Israel; for their form of government was now changed, God, at the people's desire, appointing Saul to be a king over them, instead of raising them up judges as formerly. We have likewise in this Book, an account of God's rejection of Saul from the throne, for his disobedience, and of his choosing David in his stead. This, and the following Book, are styled the Books of Samuel, because the first contains his story, and, in both of them are related the transactions of two kings anointed by him. Samuel himself, probably, wrote the first twenty-four Chapters of this Book, and, the rest, with the second Book, might be written by Nathan, or Gad, or some other prophet of those times. See 1 Chron. xxix. 29. A few passages seem to have been inserted by Ezra, when he collected and revised the Books of Sacred Scripture. This first Book of Samuel contains the history of about eighty years; of which forty passed under the government of Eli, as High-priest and Judge, Chap. iv. 18; and the other forty under the government of Samuel and Saul, as may be seen, Acts xiii. 21.*

A. M. 2833.  
B. C. 1171.

#### CHAP. I.

*The affliction of Hannah, ver. 1—8. Her prayer to God, with Eli's blessing, ver. 9—18. The birth and nursing of Samuel, ver. 19—23. The presenting of him to God, ver. 24—28.*

**N**OW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount

CHAP. I. Ver. 1. *Ramathaim-zophim*—The latter word means *watchers*, or *watchmen*, and the former *the Ramahs*. The place is called Ramah, Ver. 19, and seems to have been a village situated on two hills, which, on account of their elevation, commanded extensive prospects, and were proper places from which to make observations. Probably there might be a watch-tower and centinels placed in each. *Of*

VOL. I. N<sup>o</sup>. XXIII.

Ephraim, and his name was <sup>a</sup>Elkannah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, <sup>b</sup>an Ephrathite:

2 And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

*Mount Ephraim*—This is added to distinguish this from other places, which had the name of Ramah in other tribes, particularly in that of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25. *An Ephrathite*—That is, one of Bethlem-judah, by his birth and habitation, though by his origin a Levite.

Ver. 2. *He had two wives*—As many had in those days, though it was a transgression of the original institution of

4 z

A. M. 2833.  
B. C. 1171.  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Chron.  
c. 27, 28.

<sup>b</sup> Ruth 1. 2.

A. M. 2843.  
B. C. 1171.c Exod. 29.  
14.† Heb.  
from year  
to year.d Deut. 12.  
5, 7.e Josh. 19.  
1.

3 And this man went up out of his

city † yearly <sup>d</sup> to worship and to sac-

rifice unto the LORD of hosts in

Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli,

Hophni, and Phinehas, the priests of

the LORD, were there.

4 ¶ And when the time was that

Elkanah <sup>f</sup> offered, he gave to Penin-

nah his wife, and to all her sons and

her daughters, portions :

5 But unto Hannah he gave || a

worthy portion ; for he loved Han-

nah : <sup>g</sup> but the LORD had shut up her

womb.

6 And her adversary also † <sup>h</sup> pro-

voked her sore, for to make her fret,

because the LORD had shut up her

womb.

7 And as he did so year by year,

|| † when she went up to the house of

the LORD, so she provoked her ;

therefore she wept, and did not eat

8 Then said Elkanah her husband

to her, Hannah, why weepest thou ?

and why eatest thou not ? and why

is thy heart grieved ? am not <sup>i</sup> I

better to thee than ten sons ?

9 ¶ So Hannah rose up after they

had eaten in Shiloh, and after they

had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat

upon a seat by a post of <sup>k</sup> the temple <sup>l</sup> of

the LORD.

set herself against her, though so nearly related to her, and

strove to vex her by upbraiding her with her barrenness.

Ver. 7. *As he did so year by year when he went, &c.*—

This circumstance is noted as the occasion of the contention,

because at such times they were forced to more society with

one another, by the way, and in their lodgings ; whereas at

home they had distinct apartments, where they might be

asunder ; and then her husband's extraordinary love and

kindness was shewed to Hannah, whereby Peninnah was the

more exasperated ; then also Hannah prayed earnestly for a

child, which hitherto she had done in vain ; and this possibly

she reproached her with. *So she provoked her*—She con-

stantly took this occasion to upbraid her with her barrenness

when Elkanah expressed such extraordinary kindness to her.

*Therefore she wept, and did not eat*—Being overwhelmed

with grief, she had no inclination to eat on this festival oc-

casion, nor did she consider herself as fit to partake of the

sacred food, which they were forbid to eat in their mourning.

Ver. 8. *Am not I better to thee than ten sons*—Oughtest

thou not to value my love to thee more than the having as

many sons as Peninnah hath ; who would willingly change

conditions with thee ? In Elkanah here we have an example of

a most excellent husband ; who patiently bore with the insol-

ent humour of Peninnah, and comforted dejected Hannah

with words full of tender affection.

Ver. 9. *So Hannah rose up*—The kind words of her hus-

band in a great measure removed her sorrow, and induced her

to eat and drink cheerfully. In her we have an example of a

dutiful wife ; who, sensible of her husband's kindness, endea-

voured to please him, by complying with his desires, and

avoiding what she perceived would give pain to his mind. *Eli**sat upon a seat*—Heb. חִישֵׁי חַסְדֵּי *hachissee*, a throne, it being a

seat raised up to some height, to make him conspicuous to all

that entered into the house of God ; at the door of which he

sat, either as judge, or as high priest, to hear and answer such

as came to him for advice, and to inspect and direct the wor-

ship of God. *By a post of the temple*—That is, of the taber-

nacle, which is frequently so called ; as the temple, when it

was built, is called a tabernacle. See Jer. x. 20 ; Lam. ii. 6.

marriage. Hannah seems to have been his first wife ; and as she proved barren, he was induced, it is probable, through his earnest desire of children, to take another, as Abraham had done, by Sarah's consent.

Ver. 3. *To worship—in Shiloh*—Where the tabernacle now was, and where all sacrifices were to be offered. Hither all the males were bound to resort at the three great annual feasts, Deut. xvi. 16, and not to appear before the Lord empty. Accordingly Elkanah not only worshipped God with prayers and thanksgivings, but offered such sacrifices as were suitable to the festival. Not that he sacrificed in his own person, which the Levites were not permitted to do, but by the priests. *Hophni and Phinehas were there*—Or, were the priests of the Lord there, under their father Eli, who is generally conceived to have been the high-priest, but being very old and infirm, his sons ministered in his stead. This is the first time in Scripture that God is called the Lord of hosts or armies. Probably Samuel was the first who used this title of God, for the comfort of Israel, at the time when their armies were few and feeble, and those of their enemies many and mighty.Ver. 4. *Portions*—Of those parts of the peace-offerings which belonged to the offerer. These were the whole, except the fat, which belonged to the Lord, and the breast and right shoulder, which were due to the priest, Lev. vii. 34 ; with the rest the sacrificer made a feast for himself, his family, and friends, giving to every one a portion of the sacrifice, as the master of the feast used to do to the guests. And they eat all before the Lord, and hereby were supposed to have communion with him, by partaking with him of his sacrifices, which had been offered to him at his altar.Ver. 5, 6. *Unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion*—Or, a double portion ; in token of his extraordinary respect and kindness to her. *For he loved Hannah : but the Lord*—Or, though the Lord had shut her womb—Her barrenness did not cause him to love her less, but rather more ; because he would comfort her under her affliction. To abate our just love to any relations for the sake of any infirmity which they cannot help, is to add affliction to the afflicted. *Her adversary also provoked her sore*—Peninnah, through envy or jealousy,A. M. 2846.  
B. C. 1174.Or, from  
the time  
that she,  
&c.† Heb.  
from her  
going up.

1 Ruth 4. 15.

c. s. s.

† Heb. an-  
gred her.  
h Job 24. 21.† Or, a  
double  
portion.g Gen. 30.  
2.

A.M. 2933.  
B. C. 1171.  
1 Job 7. 11.  
† Heb. bit-  
ter of  
soul,  
9 Sam. 17.  
9.  
m Gen. 28.  
30.  
Num. 30.  
3.  
u Gen. 29.  
3.  
e Gen. 2. 1.  
† Heb. seed  
of men.  
p Num. 6. 5.  
Judg. 14.  
4.

10 <sup>1</sup> And she *was* † in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

11 And she <sup>m</sup> vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed <sup>n</sup> look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and <sup>o</sup> remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid † a man-child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

† Heb. multiplied to pray.  
12 ¶ And it came to pass, as she † continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.

A.M. 2812.  
B. C. 1171.  
† Heb. hard of spirit.  
q Ps. 62. 2.  
r Deut. 19. 13.  
Or. meditation.  
s Judg. 19. 6.  
t Ps. 20. 4.

15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I *am* a woman † of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have <sup>q</sup> poured out my soul before the LORD.

16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of <sup>r</sup> Belial: for out of the abundance of my <sup>||</sup> complaint and <sup>s</sup> grief have I spoken hitherto.

17 Then Eli answered and said, <sup>u</sup> Go in peace: and <sup>t</sup> the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

18 And she said, <sup>u</sup> Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman <sup>x</sup> went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more *sad*.

19 ¶ And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elka-

Ver. 10. *She was in bitterness of soul*—Oppressed with grief, which returned when she was alone, and thought of her barrenness, which made her pray, with many tears, for a child. They had newly offered their peace-offerings, to obtain the favour of God; and in token of their communion with him, they had feasted upon the sacrifice: and now it was proper to put up her prayer, in virtue of the sacrifice. For the peace-offerings typified Christ's mediation, as well as the sin-offerings: since by this not only atonement is made for sin, but an answer to our prayers obtained.

Ver. 11. *But wilt give unto thine handmaid*—She thrice calls herself God's handmaid, out of a profound sense of her meanness, and his majesty. And she desires a man-child, because only such could wait upon the Lord in the service of the tabernacle, as she intended her son should do, if God bestowed one upon her. *Then will I give him unto the Lord*—That is, consecrate him to his service in his house. *No razor shall come upon his head*—He shall be a perpetual Nazarite, part of whose description this is, Numb. vi. 5.

Ver. 12, 13. *She continued praying*—Heb. *multiplied to pray*. By which it appears, that she said much more than is here expressed. And in the same light we must view most of the prayers and sermons of other holy persons recorded in the Scriptures, which give us only the sum and substance of what they expressed. This consideration may assist us much in interpreting many passages of Holy Writ. *Eli marked her mouth*—The inward anguish of her soul probably made the motions of her mouth and countenance very different from what is usual. *Therefore Eli thought she had been drunken*—Hearing her say nothing, but only seeing her lips move a long

time; with such gestures, it is likely, of her body, hands, and eyes, as argued very great commotion of mind, being occasioned by the vehemency of her desire and grief, and her fervency in prayer; he took her to be disordered with the wine she had drunk at the forementioned feast.

Ver. 16. *Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial, &c.*—A scripture phrase for a wicked person. Thus, when we are unjustly censured, we should endeavour not only to clear ourselves, but to satisfy our brethren, by giving them a just and true account of what they misapprehended.

Ver. 17, 18. *Eli said, Go in peace, &c.*—Her modest and respectful answer fully satisfied him, and he prayed that God would grant her petition, or, as the Chaldee interprets his words, assured her, that the God of Israel would grant it her. *Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight*—That favourable opinion and gracious prayer which thou hast expressed on my behalf, be pleased to continue towards me. *Her countenance was no more sad*—Her heart being cheered by the priest's comfortable words, and especially by the Spirit of God applying them to her mind, and inspiring her with confidence, that both his and her prayers would be heard, she departed from the tabernacle with such satisfaction and assurance, that there no longer remained any token of sorrow or grief in her countenance.

Ver. 19, 20. *The Lord remembered her*—Manifested his remembrance of her by the effect. *She called his name Samuel*—That is, *asked of God*. *Saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord*—This was the reason of the name; and she gave it him, that he, as well as she, might keep in mind, that he was solemnly dedicated to the Lord, from whom he had been

A. M. 2343.  
B. C. 1171.  
cir. 1171.  
y Gen. 4. 1.  
z Gen. 30.  
29.  
† Heb. in  
revolution  
of days.  
That is,  
asked of  
God.  
nah <sup>y</sup> knew Hannah his wife; and  
|| the LORD remembered her.

20 Wherefore it came to pass,  
† when the time was come about  
after Hannah had conceived, that  
she bare a son, and called his name  
|| Samuel, saying, Because I have  
asked him of the LORD.

21 And the man Elkanah, and all  
his house, <sup>a</sup> went up to offer unto the  
LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his  
vow.

22 But Hannah went not up; for  
she said unto her husband, *I will not  
go up* until the child be weaned,  
and then I will <sup>b</sup> bring him, that he  
may appear before the LORD, and  
there <sup>c</sup> abide <sup>d</sup> for ever.

23 And <sup>e</sup> Elkanah her husband  
said unto her, Do what seemeth thee  
good; tarry until thou have weaned  
him; <sup>f</sup> only the LORD establish his  
word. So the woman abode, and

A. M. 2343.  
B. C. 1163.  
g Deut. 19.  
h 11.  
i Josh. 19.  
1.  
gave her son suck until she weaned  
him.

24 ¶ And when she had weaned  
him, she <sup>s</sup> took him up with her,  
with three bullocks, and one ephah  
of flour, and a bottle of wine, and  
brought him unto <sup>b</sup> the house of the  
LORD in Shiloh: and the child was  
young.

25 And they slew a bullock, and  
brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, Oh my lord, <sup>k</sup> as  
thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the  
woman that stood by thee here, pray-  
ing unto the LORD.

27 <sup>l</sup> For this child I prayed; and  
the LORD hath given me my petition  
which I asked of him:

28 <sup>m</sup> Therefore also I have || lent  
him to the LORD; as long as he  
liveth || he shall be lent to the LORD.  
And he <sup>n</sup> worshipped the LORD there.

obtained by prayer, and that, remembering, how God had  
evidently heard prayer in this instance, they might the more  
readily and confidently have recourse to him in all trials and  
troubles, and put their trust in him.

Ver. 21. *Elkanah and all his house went up*—Hannah only  
and her child excepted. *And his vow*—By which it appears,  
though it was not expressed before, that he heard and consented  
to her vow; and that he added a vow of his own; probably  
when he saw his wife was with child; or before, when she told  
him what hope she had that her prayers would be heard;  
and when *he worshipped God*, as mentioned Ver. 19.

Ver. 22. *I will not go up till the child be weaned*—Not  
only from the breast, but from the mother's knee and care,  
and childish food. She was not bound by the law to go up  
with her husband; and therefore, though she had been wont  
to go, she resolved, as became a prudent woman, to stay at  
home, till the child was so far grown up, as not only to be  
strong enough to accompany her, but capable of being in-  
structed in the service of the tabernacle, and of being useful  
therein. For, it seems, as soon as he was brought thither he  
worshipped God, Ver. 28, and, soon after, ministered to Eli,  
Chap. ii. 11.

Ver. 23. *Only the Lord establish his word*—We do not  
read of any thing the Lord had spoken about this child: but,  
perhaps Elkanah looked upon what Eli had said, as spoken  
by God, because he was God's high priest. The Hebrew,  
however, may be rendered with equal propriety, *The Lord  
establish his work*—That is, May he perfect what he hath be-  
gun, by making the child grow up, and become fit for God's  
service, that he may be employed therein and accepted of

God. For the word דָּבָר *dabar*, signifies any matter or thing,  
as well as word.

Ver. 24. *With three bullocks, &c.*—As they were not to  
appear before the Lord empty, so upon this occasion they  
brought an ample offering to him, to testify their gratitude.  
And it is highly probable that one of these bullocks was wholly  
offered to God as a burnt-offering, and the other two were  
peace-offerings; or, as some rather think, one a sin-offering,  
and the other a peace-offering. *One ephah of flour*—For the  
*meat or meal-offerings*, which to each bullock were three  
*tenth-deals*, or three tenth parts of an ephah; and so nine  
parts of the ephah were spent, and the tenth part was given  
to the priest. *Wine*—For drink-offerings.

Ver. 25—27. *They slew a bullock*—The three bullocks  
mentioned Ver. 22, the singular number being put for the  
plural, which is frequent. *As thy soul liveth*—As surely as  
thou livest. Which asseveration she thought necessary, be-  
cause this was some years after the fact which she here men-  
tions. *For this child I prayed*—She had told him nothing  
of what she prayed for when he reproved her; but only, in  
general, that she was extremely afflicted for want of some-  
thing, which she then earnestly begged of God. But now  
she acquaints him with it, and with the vow she had made if  
God would grant her desire, which vow she was now come to  
fulfil.

Ver. 28. *Therefore I have lent him to the Lord*—But not  
with a purpose to require him again. Whatever we give to  
the Lord may, upon this account, be said to be lent to him,  
because, though we may not recal it, yet he will certainly  
repay it to our unspeakable advantage. *As long as he liveth*



A. M. 959.  
B. C. 1165.

## CHAP. II.

*Hannah's song of thanksgiving, ver. 1—10. Eli-kanah leaves Samuel to minister before the Lord, ver. 11. The wickedness of Eli's sons, ver. 12—17. A farther account of Samuel and his parents, ver. 18—21. Eli's too mild reproof of his sons, ver. 22—25. Samuel's growth, ver. 26. God's dreadful message to Eli, ver. 27—36.*

a Psal. 4. 6.

b Luke 1. 46.

c Ps. 92. 10.

d Ps. 9. 16.

e Exod. 15. 11.

**A**ND Hannah <sup>a</sup> prayed, and said, <sup>b</sup> My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, <sup>c</sup> mine horn is exalted in the LORD; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I <sup>d</sup> rejoice in thy salvation.

<sup>e</sup> *2* <sup>c</sup> *There is none holy as the LORD:*

*he shall be lent to the Lord—Or, as the words may be properly translated, All the days that he shall be desired for the Lord—That is, as long as God shall think fit to employ him in his own house: which was till he made him a judge, Chap. vii. 15. Then he was no longer fixed at Shiloh, but went about the country, to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh; afterwards he settled at his own house in Ramah, as we read there, Ver. 17. Still, however, he was wholly the Lord's, and lived entirely to him, employing all his powers of body and mind in his service. And he worshipped the Lord there—Not Eli, but young Samuel, who is spoken of in this and the foregoing verse, and who was capable of worshipping the Lord in some sort, at least with external worship. The Vulgate, Syriack, and Arabick, however, translate the words, And they worshipped the Lord.*

CHAP. II. Ver. 1. *Hannah prayed*—That is, praised God. Hymns of praise are frequently comprehended under the name of *prayers*. To utter this hymn Hannah was raised by divine inspiration while she was engaged in devout meditation on the extraordinary goodness of God to her. *My heart rejoiceth*—Or leapeth for joy; for the words signify, not only inward joy, but also the outward demonstration of it. She was influenced by the same Spirit which moved St. James to say, *Is any afflicted? Let him pray*, as she did, Chap. i. 10. *Is any merry? Let him sing psalms*, as she now does. *In the Lord*—As the author of my joy, that he hath heard my prayer, and accepted my son for his service. *My horn is exalted*—My strength and glory (which are often signified by an horn) are advanced, and manifested to my vindication, and the confusion of my enemies. She who was bowed down and dejected, now lifts up her head and triumphs. *My mouth is enlarged, &c.*—That is, opened wide to pour forth abundant praises to God, and to give a full answer to all the reproaches of my adversaries. *Enemies*—So she manifests her prudence and modesty in not naming Peninnah, but only her enemies in general. *I rejoice in thy salvation*—The matter of my joy is no trivial thing, but that strange and glorious deliverance thou hast given me from my oppressing grief and care, and from the insolent reproaches of my enemies,

for *there is* <sup>f</sup> none beside thee: neither *is there* any rock like our God. <sup>g</sup> *Deut. 4. 46.*

<sup>3</sup> Talk no more so exceeding proudly; <sup>h</sup> let not <sup>i</sup> arrogance come out of your mouth: for the LORD *is* a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 91. 4. <sup>h</sup> Heb. hard.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>h</sup> The bows of the mighty men <sup>i</sup> are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. <sup>h</sup> Ps. 37. 15.

<sup>5</sup> <sup>i</sup> *They that were full have hired* <sup>j</sup> out themselves for bread; and *they that were hungry* ceased: so that <sup>k</sup> the barren hath born seven; and <sup>l</sup> she that hath many children is wax- <sup>k</sup> <sup>l</sup> ed feeble. <sup>j</sup> Ps. 34. 10. <sup>k</sup> Ps. 113. 9. <sup>l</sup> 1 Sam. 54. 1.

Ver. 2. *There is none holy as the Lord*—None so perfectly, unchangeably, and constantly holy. *None beside*—Not only none is so holy as thou art, but in truth there is *none besides thee*; namely, entirely, or independently, but only by participation from thee. *Any rock*—Thou only art a sure defence and refuge to all that flee to thee.

Ver. 3. *Talk no more*—Thou Peninnah, boast no more of thy numerous offspring, and speak no more insolently and scornfully of me. She speaks of her in the plural number, because she would not expose her name to censure. *A God of knowledge*—He knoweth thy heart, and all that pride, and envy, and contempt of me, which thy own conscience knows: and all thy perverse carriage towards me. *By his actions are weighed*—That is, he trieth all men's thoughts and actions, (for the Hebrew word signifies both) as a just judge, to give to every one according to his works.

Ver. 4. *The bows of the mighty are broken*—The strength of which they boasted. *They that stumbled*—Or were weak and feeble. The great sense she had of God's power, branches out itself into an humble acknowledgment of this glorious attribute, in divers instances. And, first, in vanquishing the most victorious; for bows were a principal part of warriors' weapons, Psal. xlv. 6; and their girdles being an important part of the military habit, are elegantly interpreted to signify strength and warlike prowess.

Ver. 5. *Have hired themselves out for bread*—They that formerly lived in affluence have been so reduced as to be obliged to labour hard for daily bread. *They that were hungry ceased*—That is, ceased to suffer hunger, or to complain of it. This vicissitude of human affairs, especially the sudden turns which often take place, from a great height of prosperity to a very low condition, and the contrary, are very wonderful, and ought seriously to be pondered; that no man may be self-confident and proud, nor any one be dejected and desponding. *So that the barren hath born seven*—That is, many children—She alludes to the great change God had made in her own condition. For though she had actually born but one; yet it is probable she had a confident persuasion that she should have more, grounded either upon some particular assurance from God; or, rather, upon the prayer

A. M. 2839.  
B. C. 1165.  
m Deut. 39.  
39.

6 <sup>m</sup> The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

n Job 1. 21. 7 The LORD <sup>n</sup> maketh poor, and maketh rich: <sup>o</sup> he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

p Ps. 113. 7. 8 <sup>p</sup> He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar q Job 36. 7. from the dunghill, <sup>q</sup> to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the

or prediction of Eli. *She that hath many children, &c.*—Those that have been fruitful grow barren when God pleaseth.

Ver. 6, 7. *The Lord killeth and maketh alive*—The power of life and death is in the hands of God; whom he pleaseth he takes out of the world, and whom he pleaseth, he preserves in it; raising men even from the brink of the grave, when they are ready to drop into it. *The Lord maketh poor, &c.*—Here she acknowledges the power of God, in frequently changing the conditions of men, reducing the rich to extreme poverty, and exalting the poor to great riches.

Ver. 8. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, &c.*—From the most mean estate and sordid place. *To set them among princes*—Instance Joseph, David, and Daniel. *To make them inherit the throne of glory*—That is, a glorious throne or kingdom; not only to possess it themselves, but to transmit it to their posterity, as the word *inherit* implies. *For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's*—The foundations which God created and upholds, and wherewith he sustains the earth and all its inhabitants, as a house is supported with pillars. These words signify the reason of all that is contained in the five preceding verses. For the very earth being founded, upheld and supported by the Lord, it is no wonder that all the inhabitants of it are in his power, so that he can dispose of them as he pleases.

Ver. 9. *He will keep the feet of his saints*—That is, will both uphold their steps or paths, and direct their counsels and actions, that they may not fall into ruin, nor wander into those fatal errors into which wicked men daily run. *The wicked shall be silent in darkness*—They who used to open their mouths wide in speaking against heaven and against the saints, shall be so confounded with the unexpected disappointment of all their hopes, and with God's glorious appearance and operations for his people, that they shall be put to silence, and have their mouths quite stopped: and this *in darkness*, both internal, in their own minds, not knowing what to do or say; and external, through outward troubles, distress, and calamities. *For by strength shall no man prevail*—Namely, against God, or against his saints, as the wicked are ready to think they shall do, because of their great power, wealth, and numbers.

Ver. 10. *The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces*—Here we have an instance of pious affections rising up, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, to the height of prophecy. Here Hannah begins to predict the deliverance of the Israelites from the hand of the Philistines, and their other enemies: and her prediction was fulfilled when, at the command of Samuel, they were gathered together, and fought

pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them. A. M. 2839.  
B. C. 1165.  
r Job 23. 4.  
6.

9 <sup>s</sup> He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. s Ps. 91. 11.

10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be <sup>t</sup> broken to pieces; <sup>u</sup> out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: <sup>v</sup> the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength t Ps. 2. 9.  
u Ch. 7. 10.  
v Job 26. 12.

with the Philistines at Mizpeh, Chap. vii. 10. At which time, as Hannah here foretells, the *Lord thundered out of heaven upon them*; and again when David slew Goliath, and the men of Israel and Judah routed and pursued them, Chap. xvii. 52, as well as on many other occasions, till at length they were finally subdued. *The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth*—That is, 1, the Philistines, who lived in the extremity of Canaan westward; and 2, the enemies of God's people in the remotest parts of the earth, who shall be converted or destroyed before the consummation of all things. *He shall give strength unto his king*—Here she predicts they should have a king. But, she is chiefly to be understood as speaking, either, 1, of David, who was most properly God's king, appointed and anointed at his express command, instead of Saul whom he rejected, on account of his disobedience: Or, 2, Of Christ, David's son, of whom David was but a type. "Who doth not perceive," saith St. Augustine, (De Civ. Dei, lib. 17. cap. 4.) "that the spirit which animated this woman, whose name, *Hannah*, signifies *grace*, prophesied of the Christian religion, the city of God, whose king and founder is Christ? Who does not see that she speaks of the grace of God, from which the proud are estranged that they may fall, but with which the humble are filled, that they may rise." Thus also the preceding clause, *The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth*—obtains a more sublime and important sense, and more exact accomplishment. David's victories and dominions reached far, but God will give to the Son of David *the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession*. And he will *give strength unto his king*, for the accomplishment of his great undertaking. And, as the next words express, will *exalt the horn*—The power and honour of his anointed, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. It is remarkable, that this is the first time that the name *Messiah* (or God's anointed) is found in the Scriptures, there being no such word in any of the preceding Books. This is an additional reason why we should consider this prophecy of Hannah as looking forward to Gospel days. "And when one considers," as Dr. Dodd observes, "the terms in which this beautiful song is expressed; when one considers the perfect resemblance there is between this and that of the blessed Virgin, Luke i. 46. When one considers the allusion which the father of John the Baptist makes to the latter part of it, Luke i. 69, 70, one cannot persuade oneself but that Hannah had a respect to something higher than Peninnah her rival, or the triumphs even of David himself. The expressions are too magnificent and sublime to be confined to such objects. Kimchi (the Jewish Rabbi) was so struck with them, that he ingenu-

A. M. 2439.  
B. C. 1165.  
y Ps. 69. 26. unto his king, and <sup>y</sup> exalt the horn of his anointed.

x Ver. 10. 11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. <sup>z</sup> And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.

a Deut. 15. 13.  
b Judg. 2. 10. 12 ¶ Now the sons of Eli *were* <sup>a</sup> sons of Belial; <sup>b</sup> they knew not the LORD.

13 And the priest's custom with the people *was, that*, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand;

c 1 E. dras  
1. 13. 14 And he struck *it* into <sup>c</sup> the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that

came thither.

15 Also before they <sup>d</sup> burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.

16 And *if* any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat <sup>+</sup> presently, and *then* take *as much* as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, *Nay*; but thou shalt give *it me* now: and if not, I will take *it* by force.

17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great <sup>e</sup> before the LORD: <sup>e</sup> for men <sup>f</sup> 'abhorred the offering of the LORD.

18 ¶ <sup>g</sup> But Samuel ministered before the LORD, *being* a child, <sup>h</sup> girded

A. M. 2439.  
B. C. 1165.  
d Lev. 3. 3  
16.

+ Heb. as  
on the  
day.

e Gen. 6.  
11.

f Mal. 2. 8.

g Ver. 11.

h Exod. 28.  
6.

ously acknowledges, that the king, of whom Hannah speaks here, is the Messiah; of whom she speaks either by prophecy or tradition. 'For,' continues he, 'there was a tradition among the Israelites, that a great king should arise in Israel; and she seals up her song with celebrating this king, who was to deliver them from all their enemies.' In short, all the particulars of the 9th and 10th verses especially, perfectly characterize the reign of the Messiah; his protection of his saints, the vain efforts of their enemies; their triumph over them; the extent of his kingdom, and the perpetual increase of his power."

Ver. 11, 12. *The child did minister to the Lord*—As soon as he was capable, and in a way agreeable to his tender years, as in lighting the lamps, or in singing and playing on instruments of music. *Before Eli the priest*—That is, under the inspection and by the direction of Eli. *The sons of Eli were sons of Belial*—Very wicked men, Deut. xiii. 13; being ungodly, profane, covetous, and guilty of violence and filthy lusts. *They knew not the Lord*—They had no experimental and practical knowledge of his justice or mercy, of his holiness or grace, of his power or love, or faithfulness; no saving acquaintance with his divine perfections, or with the relations in which he stands to his people; they neither honoured, loved, nor served him.

Ver. 13. *When any man offered sacrifice*—Brought his peace-offerings to be offered at the altar. *While the flesh was in seething*—Or boiling. As the Lord's part of the peace-offerings was burnt upon the altar, so the priests' and offerers' parts were to be boiled. And when the temple was built, there were certain rooms in the court of the people, wherein they had liberty to boil the flesh, in order that they might feast with God at his own house. And the like rooms, no doubt, there were in the outward court of the tabernacle.

Ver. 14, 15. *All that the flesh-hook brought up, &c.*—This

was a new custom, which they had profanely introduced. For, not content with the breast and right shoulder, allowed them by God, they took also part of the offerer's share; besides which, they snatched their part before it was heaved and waved, contrary to Lev. vii. 34. *Also before they burned the fat*—Which entirely belonged to God, with the other parts that were to be burnt with it. *The priest's servant came, &c.*—This was an high and profane contempt of God, and an additional injury; for they took such parts as they liked best whilst it was raw, and before that which belonged to God had been offered to him.

Ver. 16, 17. *Nay, but thou shalt give it me now, &c.*—This was the very height of haughty impiety. That such submissive language did not prevail with them to have so much respect for God, as to permit his portion to be presented to him in the first place, especially as they offered to the priest more than his share afterwards, manifested excessive profaneness and contempt of things sacred. To what pitch of wickedness may not a man arrive who has shaken off the fear of God, and all sense of his presence and power! *Men abhorred the offering of the Lord*—Nothing brings religion so much into contempt with the people as the open profaneness of those that are ministers of it. The validity, however, and efficacy of God's ordinances, does not depend altogether on the piety of those that minister in them. So that it was a sin in the people to neglect divine institutions because of the wickedness of the priests. But it was a still much greater sin in the priests to give them occasion so to do.

Ver. 18. *But Samuel ministered before the Lord*—Though he was very young, yet he carefully and faithfully performed such offices in God's tabernacle as he was capable of discharging, and did not follow the bad example of others. *Girded with a linen ephod*—A garment used in God's service, and allowed, not only to the inferior priests and Levites; but also

A. M. 2839.  
B. C. 1165. with a linen ephod.

19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

20 ¶ And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home.

21 And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the LORD.

22 ¶ Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the

to eminent persons of the people, and therefore to Samuel, who, though not a priest, was both a Levite and a Nazarite from his birth.

Ver. 19. *His mother made him a little coat*—The ephod being used only in the service of God, was no doubt provided at the public expense. But for his ordinary wearing apparel Hannah took care to provide, that she might still express her piety in contributing to his maintenance at the house of God.

Ver. 20, 21. *Eli blessed Elkanah, &c.*—This benediction given in his character of high priest, and that by a divine suggestion, was followed by the desired effect, and verified what Hannah had uttered in her prophetic song. *The Lord visited Hannah*—None are losers by what they dedicate to the Lord, or employ in such a manner as is pleasing in his sight. *The child Samuel grew*—Not only in age and stature, but especially in wisdom and goodness. *Before the Lord*—Not only before men, who might easily be deceived, but in the presence and judgment of the all-seeing God. This will generally be the case with those children whose parents dedicate them early to the Lord, and endeavour to instil into their minds the true and genuine principles of piety and virtue.

Ver. 22. *Now Eli was very old*—And therefore unfit either to manage his office himself, or to make a diligent inspection into the carriage of his sons, which gave them opportunity for their wickedness. *All that his sons did to Israel*—Whom they injured in their offerings. And alienated from the service of God. *At the door of the tabernacle*—The place where all the people, both men and women, waited when they came up to the service of God, because the altar on which their sacrifices were offered was by the door.

Ver. 23, 24. *And he said, Why do ye do such things*—He reproved them, but far too gently, as these and the following words manifest. This might proceed partly from the coldness of old age, but it arose chiefly from his too great indulgence to his children. *I hear of your evil dealings by all this people*—Their wickedness was so notorious that there

women that † assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for || I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.

24 Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to || transgress.

25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.

27 ¶ And there came a man of

was a general complaint of it, which should have moved him to much greater severity than merely to reprove and chide them. He ought to have restrained them, and if he could not otherwise have done it, to have inflicted those punishments upon them which such high crimes deserved, according to God's law, and which he, as high priest and judge, was in duty bound to inflict without respect of persons. *Nay, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear*—This is the language of a father, not of a zealous judge. *Ye make the Lord's people to transgress*—By causing them to neglect and despise the service of God, and tempting them to lowliness.

Ver. 25. *If one man sin against another, &c.*—If only man be wronged, man can set the matter right, and reconcile the persons. *If a man sin against the Lord*—As you have done, wilfully and presumptuously. *Who shall intreat for him?*—The offence is of so high a nature that few or none will dare to intercede for him, but will leave him to the just judgment of God. The words may be rendered, *Who shall judge for him? Who shall interpose as umpire between God and him? Who shall compound that difference? None can or dare do it.* And therefore he must be left to the dreadful but righteous displeasure of God. Eli reasoned well; but reasoning was not sufficient, nor any reproof he could have given in this case. It demanded a more serious interference; and he ought not to have referred their punishment unto God, when it was in his power to have punished them himself. *They hearkened not, &c.—because the Lord would slay them*—Or, as the Hebrew may be rendered, *Therefore the Lord would slay them.* The sense, however, according to the common translation, is Scriptural and good. They had disregarded many admonitions, which, no doubt, their father had given them; they had now hardened their hearts, and sinned away their day of grace, and therefore God had given them up to a reprobate mind, and determined to destroy them, 2 Chron. xxv. 16.

Ver. 27, 28. *There came a man of God unto Eli*—That is, a prophet, sent from God to deliver the following message

A. M. 2839.  
B. C. 1165. God unto Eli, and said unto him, u Exod. 4.  
11, 27. Thus saith the LORD, u Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?

x Exod. 28.  
1, 4. 28 And did I <sup>x</sup> choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and <sup>y</sup> did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?

y Lev. 2. 8-10. 29 Wherefore <sup>z</sup> kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my <sup>a</sup> habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?

30 Wherefore the LORD God of

Israel saith, <sup>b</sup> I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, <sup>c</sup> Be it far from me; for them that honour me <sup>d</sup> I will honour, and <sup>e</sup> they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. a M. 2839.  
B. C. 1165.  
b Exod. 29.  
9.  
c Jer. 13. 9.  
d Ps. 135. 19.  
e Mal. 2. 17.

31 Behold, <sup>f</sup> the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. f Kings 2.  
27

32 And thou shalt see || an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be <sup>g</sup> an old man in thine house for ever. Or, the affliction of the tabernacle, for all the wealth which God would have given Israel.  
g See Zech. 8. 4.

33 And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the

to him: *Did I plainly appear*—Heb. Manifestly reveal myself unto the house of thy father—Unto Aaron, who was the head of the family of the priests. It is the way of the prophets, when they call men to repentance for their sins, to shew them the aggravations of these sins, by enumerating God's many and great mercies to them. See Isai. i. 2, &c.; Mic. vi. 3—5, *All the offerings made by fire*—There were none of the sacrifices offered at the altar of which the priest had not some share, (See Numb. xviii. 8—10.) For even of the burnt-offerings, which were wholly consumed on the altar, the skin was, by an express law, given to the priest, Lev. vii. 8.

Ver. 29. *Wherefore kick ye, &c.*—Using my sacrifices irreverently and profanely; both by abusing them to your own luxury, and by causing the people to abhor them. He chargeth Eli with his sons' faults. *Honourest thy sons*—Permitting them to dishonour and injure me, by taking my part to themselves; choosing rather to offend me by thy connivance at their sin, than to displease them by severe rebukes, and just punishments. *To make yourselves fat*—To pamper yourselves. This you did, not out of necessity, but out of mere luxury. *Chiefest*—Not contented with those parts which I had allotted you, you invaded those which I reserved for myself.

Ver. 30. *I said*—Where, or when did God say this? To Eli himself, or to his father, when the priesthood was translated from Eleazar's to Ithamar's family. *Should walk before me*—That is, minister unto me as high priest. *Walking* is often put for discharging one's office; *before me*, may signify that he was the high priest, whose sole prerogative it was to minister before God, or before the ark, in the most holy place. *For ever*—As long as the Mosaical law and worship lasts. *Be it far from me*—To fulfil my promise, which I hereby retract.

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Ver. 31. *I will cut off thine arm*—I will take away thy strength, or all that in which thou placest thy confidence. This threatening was fulfilled, when the ark, which is called God's strength, Psal. lxxviii. 61; and was Eli's strength, was delivered into the hands of the Philistines; and more especially when God took away all power and authority from him and his family, both as he was a priest and as he was a judge. Or, *thine arm*, may mean, *thy children*, to whom the words following seem to confine the expression. *Of thy father's house*—That is, thy children's children, and all thy family; which was in a great measure accomplished, 1 Sam. xxii. 16.

Ver. 32. *Thou shalt see an enemy, &c.*—The words may be rendered, as in the margin, and seem evidently to mean, Thou shalt see, in thy own person, the affliction or calamity of my habitation; that is, either of the land of Israel, wherein I dwell; or of the sanctuary, called *God's habitation* by way of eminency, whose greatest glory the ark was, 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22, and consequently whose greatest calamity the loss of the ark was; *for, or instead of, all that good wherewith God would have blessed Israel*, having raised up a young prophet, Samuel, and thereby given good grounds of hope that he intended to bless Israel, if thou and thy sons had not hindered it by your sins. So this clause of the threatening concerns Eli's person, as the following concerns his posterity. And this best agrees with the most proper signification of that phrase, *Thou shalt see*.

Ver. 33. *The man of thine*—That is, of thy posterity. *Shall be to grieve thine heart*—Shall be so forlorn and miserable, that, if thou wast alive to see it, it would grieve thee at the heart, and thou wouldst consume thine eyes with weeping for their calamities. *The increase of thine house*—That is, thy children. *Flower of their age*—About the thirtieth year of their age, when they were to be admitted to the full administration of their office.

A. M. 2439.  
B. C. 1165. increase of thine house shall die † in  
† Heb. men. the flower of their age.

h 1 Kings  
13. 2. 34 And this shall be <sup>b</sup> a sign unto  
thee, that shall come upon thy two  
1 Ch. 4. 11. sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; <sup>i</sup> in  
one day they shall die both of them.

k 1 Kings 2.  
25. 35 And <sup>k</sup> I will raise me up a  
faithful priest, *that* shall do according  
*to that* which is in mine heart and in  
12 Sam. 7.  
11, 27. my mind: and <sup>l</sup> I will build him a  
sure house; and <sup>m</sup> he shall walk be-  
m Ps. 2. 2. fore <sup>m</sup> mine anointed for ever.

n 1 Kings 9:  
27. 36 <sup>n</sup> And it shall come to pass,  
*that* every one that is left in thine  
house shall come *and* crouch to him  
for a piece of silver and a morsel  
† Heb.  
Joia. of bread, and shall say, † Put me, I  
† Or, some-  
what about  
the priest-  
hood. pray thee, into || one of the priests'

Ver. 35. *I will raise me up a faithful priest*—Of another line, as is necessarily implied by the total removal of that office from Eli's line. The person designed is Zadok, one eminent for his faithfulness to God, and to the king, who, when Abiathar, the last of Eli's line, was deposed by Solomon, was made high priest in his stead. *Build a sure house*—That is, give him a numerous posterity, and confirm unto him and his children that sure covenant of an everlasting priesthood made to Phinehas, of Eleazar's line, Numb. xxv. 13, and interrupted for a little while by Eli, of the line of Ithamar. The high priesthood continued in his line till the captivity of Babylon, as appears from Ezek. xl. 16; and a long time after it, as Josephus shews, lib. iv. cap. 4. *He shall walk before mine anointed*—That is, Zadok and his descendants shall perform the office of high priest before that king whom God shall anoint, and before his successors. The high priest is said to *walk before God's anointed*, chiefly because he wore the breast-plate of judgment, which he was to consult, not in common cases, but for the king, in the affairs of state. *For ever*—A learned writer justly observes, that though this, according to the history, was intended of, and may properly be applied to Zadok, yet in the highest sense it belongs to none but our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself to the Father for us, and is our great High Priest for ever; who, in all things, did his Father's will, and for whom God will build a sure house, build it on a rock, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. For he is the main scope and design, not only of the New but of the Old Testament, which, in all types and ceremonies, represented him; and the high priest especially was an eminent type of him, represented his person, acted in his name and stead, and did mediately what John the Baptist did immediately, viz. *go before the face of the Lord Christ*; and when Christ came, that officer and the office he sustained were to cease.

Ver. 36. *Every one that is left in thine house*—That remains of thy family, not being cut off, shall crouch to him for a piece of silver, &c.—Shall humble himself to Zadok,

offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.

CHAP. III.

*God's first manifestation of himself to Samuel, ver. 1---10. God's message to Eli, ver. 11---14. His faithful delivery of that message, and Eli's submission to God, ver. 15---18. The establishment of Samuel to be a prophet, ver. 19---21.*

**A**ND <sup>a</sup> the child Samuel ministered <sup>a</sup> ca. 2. 11. unto the LORD before Eli. And <sup>b</sup> the word of the LORD was precious <sup>b</sup> Ps. 74. 9. in those days; *there was no open vision.*

2 And it came to pass at that cir. 1111. time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place, <sup>c</sup> and his eyes began to wax <sup>c</sup> Gen. 27. 1. dim *that* he could not see;

3 And cre <sup>d</sup> the lamp of God went <sup>d</sup> Exod. 27. 21.

or the high priests of his line, begging a small relief in the great poverty to which he shall be reduced. *Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices, &c.*—Or, *Put me into somewhat belonging to the priesthood*, as it is in the Hebrew; that is, Give me the meanest pension that is allowed to those priests who are prohibited from officiating, or some part of what belongs to the priests. See 2 Kings xxiii. 9; Ezekiel xlv. 13. This was fulfilled in the days of Abiathar, who, for treason, was not only put out of his office, but sent to live upon his own farm in the country; and not suffered to enjoy the portion given to the priests at the temple, 1 Kings ii. 26, 27. Through this, his posterity fell into extreme want, in which the just judgment of God may be observed; in that the children of those who were so wanton, that they would not be content unless they had the choicest parts of the sacrifices for their portion, should fall into so low a condition as to beg their bread!

CHAP. III. Ver. 1. *The child Samuel ministered—before Eli*—That is, under his inspection and direction. *The word of the Lord was precious*—That is, the word of prophecy, or the revelation of God's will to, and by the prophets, was rare or scarce, such things being most precious in men's esteem, whereas common things are generally despised. In other words, God did very rarely in those days reveal his mind to any person. *There was no open vision*—Here vision includes all the ways whereby God revealed himself to men. And the declaration implies that, though God might privately reveal himself, and his will, to some pious persons, for their particular direction, he did not impart his mind by way of revelation openly, or to any public person, to whom others might resort for satisfaction. In the whole book of Judges, we only find two prophets mentioned. This is premised as a reason why Samuel understood not when God called him once or twice.

Ver. 2—4. *At that time*—After the man of God, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, Ver. 27, had been with Eli;

A. M. 2839.  
B. C. 1163.  
C. Ch. 1. 9.

out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 || Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli

Or, Thus did Samuel before he knew the LORD, and before the word of the LORD was revealed unto him.  
See Acts 19. 3.

perceived that the LORD had called the child.

A. M. 2843.  
B. C. 1157.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee; that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the LORD came and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

11 ¶ And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: † when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 || For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for

Ch. 2. 30.  
36.

† Heb. beginning and ending.

Or, And I will tell him. Ac. Ch. 2. 29. 31, &c.

‡ Ezek. 7. 3.

perhaps the very night after he had delivered his message. *When Eli was laid down in his place*—In the court of the tabernacle, where there were divers rooms for several uses of the priests, as there were afterwards at the temple. *That he could not see*—Clearly to do his duty, after it became duskish. This, it is likely, made him go to bed betimes, and leave directions with Samuel what to do, till it was time for him also to repose himself. *Ere the lamp of God went out*—Before the lights of the golden candlestick were put out in the morning. It has been inferred by some, from Exod. xxvii. 20, 21, that the lamp in the great shaft of this candlestick, which bent towards the most holy place, never went out. Some others of them, however, did go out, or were put out when it was morning. The meaning therefore here is that, ere it was day the Lord called Samuel, which, it appears, he did, out of the most holy place. So the Targum, *A voice was heard out of the temple of the Lord—He answered, Here am I*—It is likely Eli lay nearer the tabernacle than Samuel did. It appears, however, he heard nothing, the voice passing by him to Samuel, to whom it was directed, and who alone heard it.

Ver. 7. *Samuel did not yet know the Lord*—How God was wont to teach and instruct men in his will. *Neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed to him*—He was not acquainted with the way wherein God made himself and his mind known unto the prophets, because he had never spoken to him before. So that he did not know how to distinguish between the voice of God and that of men. And this ignorance of Samuel served God's design, as it gave Eli the fuller assurance of the truth of God's call and message to Samuel.

Ver. 10. *The Lord came and stood, &c.*—Before, the Lord spake to him at a distance, even from the holy oracle between

the cherubim: but now, to prevent all farther mistake, the voice came near to him, as if the person speaking had been standing near him. And Rabbi Kimchi thinks the expression denotes some glorious appearance of God to him, because it is the same which is used, Numb. xxii. 22—31, where the angel is said to stand to oppose Balaam's proceedings. And so the Targum, *The Lord was revealed, and stood and called, &c.*

Ver. 11. *Both the ears of every one—shall tingle*—Or, as we would express it, *It shall stun all that hear it*. This was awfully fulfilled, when the doleful news came that the ark was taken, and both Eli's sons were slain, and when Eli himself fell down and broke his neck.

Ver. 12. *In that day, I will perform against Eli, &c.*—In that time which I have appointed for this work, which was about twenty or thirty years after this threatening. So long space of repentance God allows to this wicked generation. *When I begin, &c.*—Though this vengeance shall be delayed for a season, to manifest my patience, and incite them to repentance; yet when once I begin to inflict, I shall not desist till I have made a full end; or, have fully accomplished all my threatenings, which was done in the death of Eli and his sons; and the slaughter of eighty-five priests of this family by Doeg, and the thrusting Abiathar, who escaped that slaughter, out of his office, and so depriving that family of its dignity and honour.

Ver. 13. *For the iniquity which he knoweth*—Here we see the crime of Eli, and cause of all the awful judgments executed on his house. He knew the wickedness of his sons: the man of God told him of it: he heard of it from all the people, Chap. ii. 23. And he knew he ought to punish it, and



A. M. 2863.  
B. C. 1141.  
1 Ch. 9. 12,  
17, 20.  
Or, occur-  
red.  
Heb.  
fronned  
not upon  
them.  
Ch. 2. 23,  
25.  
Num. 15.  
30.

the iniquity which he knoweth; be-  
cause <sup>1</sup>his sons made themselves || vile,  
and † <sup>m</sup>he restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn  
unto the house of Eli, that the ini-  
quity of Eli's house <sup>n</sup>shall not be  
purged with sacrifice nor offering for  
ever.

15 ¶ And Samuel lay until the  
morning, and opened the doors of  
the house of the LORD. And Samuel  
feared to shew Eli the vision.

16 Then Eli called Samuel, and  
said, Samuel, my son. And he an-  
swered, Here *am* I.

17 And he said, What is the thing

that he was guilty of great iniquity in not doing so. *Because his sons made themselves vile*—Heb. מְקַלְלִים *mekallelim lahem*, literally rendered themselves execrable, or accursed. And he restrained them not—כִּי נִחַם אֱלֹהִים וְעָלָם חֵם, non fuit corrugatus in eos, he did not frown upon and knit his brows at them in righteous anger, as the word means. It does not signify that he shewed no sign of displeasure against their wickedness, for he did chide them, though too gently, for it; but he did not severely reprove them; and, when that would not restrain them, turn them out of their office, or suspend them till they were reformed. For which cause God passed this severe sentence upon the whole family; that they should lose the dignity of the high-priesthood, and be made as contemptible as they had rendered God's service. "Unhappy those superiors," says Dr. Dodd, "and more particularly those parents, who, by a blind indulgence omit to chastise their inferiors and children for their crimes! They provide for themselves the most chagrining evils and afflictive punishments." And what shall we say of those ministers of religion, who, like Eli's sons, instead of doing honour to, and recommending the service of God by an exemplary conduct, bring it into disgrace, and expose it to contempt through their impieties and immoralities? Or, what shall we think of their superiors in the Church, who know of this their wickedness, and use no means to restrain or check it? Surely, in every department of society, and especially in the sacred office of the ministry, they who can, and do not, restrain others from sin, make themselves, like Eli, partakers of their guilt. And even civil magistrates will have a great deal to answer for, if the sword they bear be not a terror to evil-doers.

Ver. 14. *I have sworn*—Or, *I do swear*: the past tense being commonly put for the present in the Hebrew tongue. *Unto the house of Eli*—Or, *concerning it*. *Shall not be purged*—That is, the punishment threatened against Eli and his family, shall not be prevented by all their sacrifices, but shall infallibly be executed.

Ver. 15. *Opened the doors*—Although the tabernacle, whilst it was to be removed from place to place in the wilderness, had no doors, but consisted only of curtains, and had hangings before the entrance, instead of doors; yet when it

that *the LORD* hath said unto thee? <sup>A. M. 2866.  
B. C. 1146.</sup>  
I pray thee hide *it* not from me:  
<sup>o</sup> God do so to thee, and † more also, <sup>o</sup> Ruth 1.  
if thou hide *any* || thing from me of <sup>†</sup> Heb. so  
all the things that he said unto thee. <sup>add.</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Or, word

18 And Samuel told him † every <sup>†</sup> Heb. all  
whit, and hid nothing from him. <sup>the things,  
or, words.</sup>  
And he said, <sup>p</sup> It is the LORD: let <sup>p</sup> Job 1. 21.  
him do what seemeth him good.

19 ¶ And Samuel <sup>q</sup> grew, and <sup>r</sup> the <sup>q</sup> Ch. 9. 21.  
LORD was with him, <sup>s</sup> and did let. <sup>r</sup> Gen. 36. 2.  
none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>21.</sup>  
<sup>Ch. 9. 6.</sup>

20 And all Israel <sup>t</sup> from Dan even <sup>t</sup> Judg. 20.  
to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was <sup>1.</sup>  
|| established to be a prophet of the <sup>1</sup> Or, faith-  
LORD. <sup>ful.</sup>

was settled in one place, as now it was in Shiloh, it was inclosed within some solid building, which had doors and posts, and other parts belonging to it. *Feared to shew Eli the vision*—The matter of the vision or revelation, partly from the reverence he bore to his person, to whom he was loath to be a messenger of such sad tidings; partly, lest if he had been hasty to utter it, Eli should think him guilty of arrogance or secret complacency in his calamity.

Ver. 17. *God do so, &c.*—God inflict the same evils upon thee, which I suspect he hath pronounced against me, and greater evils too.

Ver. 18. *It is the Lord*—This severe sentence is from the sovereign Lord of the world, who hath an absolute right to dispose of me and all his creatures; who is in a special manner the ruler of the people of Israel, to whom it properly belongs to punish all mine offences; whose chastisement I therefore accept. This was a pious and noble answer, and shews what a deep sense Eli had of the Divine sovereignty over him, and the entire, implicit, and willing submission he owed to all God's decrees, however hard they bore upon him. This ought to be our language; this ought to be the feeling of our hearts, under all the dispensations of the divine providence towards us, whether prosperous or adverse, whether pleasing or painful to flesh and blood. Under all, our will should be resigned, and all that is within us should say, *It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.*

Ver. 19, 20. *The Lord was with him*—There were manifest tokens of God's presence with him, and favour towards him. See Gen. xxxi. 2. Or, he revealed his mind more and more to him: so that Israel knew God intended him for the prophetic office. *Let none of his words fall to the ground*—That is, want their proper effect: God made good all his predictions. It is a metaphor taken from precious liquors, which, when they are spilt upon the ground are altogether useless. Or, rather, it is taken from arrows shot out of a bow; which, when directed by a good archer, fail not to arrive at their intended mark.

Ver. 20, 21. *All Israel from Dan, &c.*—That is, through the whole land, from the northern bound Dan, to the southern, Beersheba; which was the whole length of the land. *That*

A. M. 2062.  
B. C. 1111. 21 And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by <sup>a</sup>the word of the LORD.

CHAP. IV.

*Israel smitten by the Philistines, ver. 1, 2. They bring the ark into the camp, which affrights the Philistines, ver. 3—9. Israel beaten and the ark taken, ver. 10, 11. The news brought to Shiloh, and the death of Eli, ver. 12—18. The travail and death of his daughter-in-law, ver. 19—22.*

Or, came to pass.  
Heb. was. **A**ND the word of Samuel || † came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside <sup>a</sup>Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek.

a Ch. 3. 1.  
& 7. 12. 2 And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when † they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the † army in the field about four thousand men.

† Heb. the battle was spread.  
† Heb. the array. 3 ¶ And when the people were

*Samuel was established, &c.*—That is, settled to be a constant prophet. *The Lord appeared again, &c.*—Having begun to appear to him in Shiloh, he continued this great favour, and revealed himself, not by dreams and visions, but by speaking to him with an audible voice, as he had done at first. And indeed he seems to have been the first eminent prophet, that was raised up, after Moses, to be a public instructor and governor of God's people. Others there had been before him; but not with so high an authority and public approbation. And therefore St. Peter says, Acts iii. *All the prophets from Samuel spake of those days*; intimating, that he was the first eminent prophet whom the Lord raised up after Moses.

CHAP. IV. Ver. 1. *The word of Samuel came to all Israel*—The revelation of God's mind and will, which had been very rare among them in former days, Chap. iii. 1, now became frequent and plentiful. For as Samuel himself was ready to instruct every one that came to him; so he instituted schools or colleges of prophets (as we read in the following parts of this book), which, in time, were settled in divers parts of the country, for the better preserving and spreading the knowledge of God among the people, Chap. x. 5, and xix. 18—20. *Israel went out against the Philistines*—Some have thought they did this at the word of Samuel, and that he was commanded by God to direct them to go in order that they might be humbled and punished for their sins, and so be prepared for deliverance. But we are not told that they went by Samuel's direction, and it is more likely that they were induced to take this step by the death of the lords of the Philistines, and the great slaughter which Samson had made of

A. M. 2062.  
B. C. 1111. come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us † fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

† Heb. take unto us. 4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, <sup>b</sup>which dwelleth *between* b 2 Sam. 6.  
2.  
c Exod. 25.  
15, 22. the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What *meaneth* the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?

them at his death, Judg. xvi. 27, 30. Or perhaps the Philistines, having recruited themselves from that loss, and wishing to be revenged of the Israelites, had made an inroad into their country, which they might the rather be induced to do at this time, in consequence of receiving intelligence that an eminent prophet had arisen in Israel, by whom they were likely to be united and assisted, and so to be rendered more formidable, unless they were crushed in the very beginning of their hopes and efforts.

Ver. 3, 4. *Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us?*—This was strange blindness, that when there was so great a corruption in their worship and manners, they could not see sufficient reason why God should suffer them to fall by their enemies. *Let us fetch the ark*—That great pledge of God's presence and help, by whose conduct our ancestors obtained success. *Instead of humbling themselves for, and purging themselves from their sins, for which God was displeased with them, they take an easier and cheaper course, and put their trust in their ceremonial observances, not doubting but the very presence of the ark would give them the victory. That they might bring the ark*—This they should not have done without asking counsel of God.

Ver. 5. *All Israel shouted*—From their great joy, and confidence of success. So formal Christians triumph in external privileges and performances; as if the ark in the camp would bring them to heaven, though the world and flesh reign in their hearts.

Ver. 7. *God is come into the camp*—Thus these ignorant idolaters termed the mere symbol of God's presence, God, imagining, no doubt, that the Israelites worshipped it. *They*

A.M. 2061.  
B.C. 1141. And they understood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp.

7 And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing † heretofore.

† Heb. yesterday, or, the third day.

8 Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these *are* the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

d 1 Cor. 16. 13.

9 <sup>d</sup> Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, <sup>e</sup> as they have been to you: † quit yourselves like men, and fight.

e Judg 13. 1.  
† Heb. be men.

10 ¶ And the Philistines fought, and <sup>f</sup> Israel was smitten, and they

f Ver. 9.

*said, Woe unto us*—The name of the God of Israel was formidable even to those that worshipped other gods, and some apprehensions even the infidels had of the danger of contending with him. And indeed those are in a woeful condition who have God against them. *There hath not been such a thing heretofore*—Not in our times; for the fore-mentioned removals of the ark were before it came to Shiloh. And in all the battles which they or their neighbours had fought with the Israelites, they had never heard of such a thing as this. They thought, therefore, that it must produce some extraordinary effects.

Ver. 8. *Who shall deliver us, &c.*—They had fought with men before; but now they thought they should have to fight with God, before whom none could stand. Here we see their unreasonableness and folly. They secretly confess the Lord to be greater than their gods, and yet presume to oppose him! *That smote the Egyptians in the wilderness*—They seem to have had but a very imperfect and incorrect knowledge of the Israelitish affairs, and to have supposed that all those plagues which are recorded in their history, had fallen on the Egyptians while the Israelites were in the wilderness, where they were when the last of these plagues befel them, and they were drowned in the Red Sea. But it is not strange that these heathens should mistake some circumstances relating to the affairs of another people, with whom they had no friendly intercourse, but were in a state of almost continual hostility, especially as some hundreds of years had now elapsed since these events had taken place.

Ver. 9. *Be strong and quit yourselves like men*—When they were recovered out of the fright which had at first seized them, they considered that they had made the Israelites subject to them notwithstanding the power of their God, and had also overthrown them in a late battle. Probably the words of this verse were spoken by some of their commanders, or they spoke thus to encourage one another.

Ver. 10. *They fled every man to his tent*—They were so

A.M. 2061.  
B.C. 1141. fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

11 And <sup>g</sup> the ark of God was taken; <sup>h</sup> and the two sons of Eli, Hophni <sup>i</sup> and Phinehas, † were slain.

† Heb. died.

12 ¶ And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and <sup>j</sup> came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and <sup>k</sup> with earth upon his head.

i 2 Sam. 1. 2.

k Josh. 7. 6.

13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon <sup>l</sup> a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told *it*, all the city cried out.

l Ch. 1. 9.

14 And when Eli heard the noise

routed that they did not flee to their camp as before, with an intent to renew the fight, but each man to his habitation, here called by the ancient name of *tent*. *There fell*—Before, they lost but four thousand; now, in the presence of the ark, thirty thousand, to teach them that the ark and ordinances of God, were never designed as a refuge to impenitent sinners, but only for the comfort of those that repent.

Ver. 11. *The ark of God was taken*—Which God justly and wisely permitted, to punish the Israelites for their profanation of it; that by taking away the pretences of their foolish confidence, he might more deeply humble them, and bring them to true repentance: and that the Philistines might by this means be more effectually convinced of God's almighty power, and of their own impotency, and of that of their gods, and so a stop might be put to their triumphs and rage against the poor Israelites. Thus, as God was no loser by this event, so the Philistines were no gainers by it; and Israel, all things considered, received more good than hurt by it. *The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain*—If Eli had done his duty, and put them from the priesthood, they might have lived, though in disgrace. But now God takes the work into his own hands, and chases them out of the world by the sword of the Philistines.

Ver. 12. *With his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head*—According to the manner of those who bewailed any great calamity, Josh. vii. 6; Job ii. 12; Ezek. xxvii. 30. From which last place it appears it was a custom among other nations.

Ver. 13. *His heart trembled for the ark of God*—Whereby he discovered a public and generous spirit, and a fervent zeal for God, and for his honour, which he preferred before all his natural affections, not regarding his own children in comparison of the ark, though otherwise he was a most indulgent father. *All the city cried out*—And well they might, for beside that this was a calamity to all Israel, it was a particular loss to Shiloh; for the ark never returned thither. Their

A. M. 2664.  
B. C. 1141.

of the crying, he said, What *meaneth* the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

in Ch. 3. 2.  
Heb.  
stood.

15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and <sup>m</sup> his eyes † were dim, that he could not see.

16 And the man said unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army.

2 Sam. 1.  
Heb. *is the thing?*

And he said, "What † is there done, my son?"

17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. || And he had judged Israel forty years.

cir. 1141.

He seems to have been a Judge to do justice only, and that in South-west Israel.

19 ¶ And his daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, *near*

andlestick was removed out of its place, and the city sunk and came to nothing.

Ver. 18. *He fell from his seat backward*—Being so oppressed with grief and astonishment that he had no strength left to support him. Though he was much to be blamed for his too great indulgence and lenity towards his sons, yet it was highly commendable in him that he was not so much affected by their death, and the slaughter of the people, as with the loss of the ark of God. *By the side of the gate*—At the entrance of the city, where his chair was set; the most convenient place for receiving speedy information of all occurrences. *For he was an old man, and heavy*—Old, and therefore weak, and apt to fall; heavy, and therefore his fall more dangerous. So fell the high priest and judge of Israel! So fell his heavy head, when he had lived within two of an hundred years! So fell the crown from his head, when he had judged Israel forty years: thus did his sun set under a cloud. Thus was the wickedness of those sons of his, whom he had indulged, his ruin. Thus does God sometimes set marks of his displeasure on good men, that others may hear and fear. Yet we must observe, it was the loss of the ark that was his death, and not the slaughter of his sons. He says, in effect, Let me fall with the ark! Who can live when the ordinances

A. M. 2664.  
B. C. 1141.  
Or, to cry out.

|| to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains † came upon her.

Heb. were turned.

20 And about the time of her death ° the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, † neither did she regard it.

Gen. 36. 17.

Heb. set not her heart.

21 And she named the child || P*I*-chabod, saying, °The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband.

That is, where is the glory? or, there is no glory.

Ch. 11. 2.  
Ps. 36. 9.

22 And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken.

CHAP. V.

*The Philistines carry the ark into the temple of Dagon, ver. 1, 2. Dagon is overthrown, ver. 3-5. The men of Ashdod and Gath plagues, ver. 6-9. The Philistines determine to send it back, ver. 10-12.*

**A**ND the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it <sup>a</sup> from <sup>a</sup> Eben-ezer unto Ashdod.

Ch. 4. 7.

of God are removed? Farewell all in this world, even life itself, if the ark be gone!

Ver. 20. *Fear not*—Indeed the sorrows of her travail would have been forgotten, for joy that a child was born into the world. But what is that joy to one that feels herself dying? None but spiritual joy will stand us instead then. Death admits not the relish of any earthly joy: it is then all flat and tasteless. What is it to one that is lamenting the loss of the ark? What can give us pleasure, if we want God's word and ordinances? Especially if we want the comfort of his gracious presence, and the light of his countenance?

Ver. 21, 22. *I-chabod*—Where is the glory? *The glory is departed*—That is, the glorious type and assurance of God's presence, the ark, which is often called God's glory, and which was the great safeguard and ornament of Israel, which they could glory in above all other nations. *For the ark of God is taken*—This is repeated to shew her piety, and that the public loss lay heavier upon her spirit, than her personal and domestic calamity.

CHAP. V. Ver. 1. *The Philistines took the ark of God*—Abarbanel gives several reasons why God suffered the ark of his presence to fall into the hands of these uncircumcised

A. M. 2663.  
B. C. 1131.

2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of <sup>b</sup> Dagon, and set it by Dagon.

3 ¶ And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon *was* <sup>c</sup> fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD.

And they took Dagon, and <sup>d</sup> set him in his place again.

4 And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and <sup>e</sup> the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands *were* cut off upon the threshold; only || *the stump* of Dagon was left to him.

5 Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, <sup>f</sup> tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6 ¶ But <sup>g</sup> the hand of the LORD

was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he <sup>h</sup> destroyed them, and smote them with <sup>i</sup> emerods, *even* Ashdod and the coasts thereof.

7 And when the men of Ashdod saw that *it was* so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our God.

8 ¶ They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about *thither*.

9 And it was *so*, that, after they had carried it about, <sup>k</sup> the hand of the LORD was against the city <sup>l</sup> with <sup>m</sup> a very great destruction: and <sup>n</sup> he

heathens. 1, The Israelites were such great sinners that they were unworthy of this symbol of the divine presence among them. 2, The idolatry of Micah remained to this day in the land, therefore God fulfilled his threatening, Lev. xxvi. 19, 31. 3, The sin of the priests highly provoked him to deliver up the ark, which was in their hands when they were killed. 4, The Israelites greatly offended in carrying the ark into the battle without asking counsel of God. 5, He resolved to demonstrate his power even among the enemies of Israel. *And brought it from Ebenezer*—Where the Israelites were encamped before the battle, Ch. iv. 1. *To Ashdod*—One of their chief cities, in which, as also at Gaza and Gath, some of the Anakims, the giants, remained till the time of David.

Ver. 2, 3. *They set it by Dagon*—By way of reproach, as a spoil and trophy set there to the honour of Dagon, to whom, doubtless, they ascribed this victory. *Behold Dagon was fallen upon his face*—In a posture of the most humble adoration, which was prostration; as acknowledging the God of Israel to be above all gods. *They* (the priests of Dagon) *took Dagon and set him in his place*—Supposing his fall to be casual.

Ver. 4, 5. *Behold Dagon was fallen, &c.*—Which shewed that his former fall was not by chance, but by the power of God, before whom he could not stand. *The head of Dagon, and both his hands—were cut off*—The head is the seat of wisdom; the hands the instruments of action; both are cut off to shew that he had neither wisdom nor strength to defend himself or his worshippers. Thus the priests, by concealing Dagon's shame before, make it more evident and infamous. *The stump*—Heb. *only Dagon*; that is, saith Rabbi Kimchi, that part of it from which it was called Dagon, namely, the fishy part; for *dag*, in Hebrew, signifies a fish. *Upon it—*

Upon the threshold; there the trunk abode in the place where it fell, but the head and hands were flung to distant places. *Neither the priests—tread on the threshold of Dagon*—Out of reverence to it, looking upon it as an holy thing, by the touch of Dagon's head and hands. So foolishly did they pervert the meaning of God, that, instead of being convinced that Dagon was no god, they even honoured the threshold which his broken limbs had fallen upon! *Unto this day*—When this history was written, which, if written by Samuel towards the end of his life, was a sufficient ground for this expression.

Ver. 6. *The hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod*—Since they were so blind as not to see his hand in throwing down their god, he smote them with such sore plagues in their own bodies as made them sensible of his power, by destroying great numbers of them. *With emerods*—The piles, a most painful and distressing disorder. *Ashdod and the coasts thereof*—Not only the people of the city, but of the villages belonging to it, were smitten with this plague.

Ver. 7. *The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us*—Now their eyes were opened to see that, though they had vanquished the Israelites, they could not stand before the God of Israel. *Let the ark be carried to Gath*—They seem to have been possessed with a superstitious conceit that there was something in the place which was offensive to the God of Israel, and therefore removed the ark from Ashdod, to which and its coasts they supposed the plague, for some particular reasons, was confined. Or they thought it had come upon them by chance, or for putting the ark into Dagon's temple, which they resolved they would not do.

Ver. 9. *They had emerods in their secret* (or *hidden*) parts—That is, *internally*, in their hinder parts; which is the worst

A.M. 3963.  
B.C. 1141.

smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts,

10 ¶ Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to † us, to slay us and our people.

† Heb. me, to slay me and my.

11 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay † us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; <sup>a</sup> the hand of God was very heavy there.

† Heb. me not, and my.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 4, 9.

12 And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

kind of emerods, as all physicians acknowledge, both because their pains are far more sharp than those of the other kind, and because the malady is more out of the reach of remedies.

Ver. 11, 12. *There was a deadly destruction through all the city*—That is, in every city where the ark of God came, some were struck with the pestilence and died, and others lingered under intolerable pains, which made them cry out in an inexpressible manner. *The cry of the city went up to heaven*—An hyperbolical speech; things that are exceeding great, beyond expression, being often said to reach to heaven, Deut. i. 28.

CHAP. VI. Ver. 1. *The ark was in the country of the Philistines seven months*—So long they kept it, as being loath to lose so great a prize, and willing to try all ways to keep it.

Ver. 2. *What shall we do to the ark of the Lord*—Heb. *Jehovah*. They never termed it the ark of Jehovah till this time: but now they seem to have been struck with some apprehension that Jehovah the God of Israel, was above all gods. *Tell us wherewith we shall send it, &c.*—They did not call the priests and diviners together, to be resolved whether they should send it home or not, (for upon that point they seem to have been resolved already, Ver. 11;) but in what manner it should be sent, and whether accompanied with any presents, to obtain the favour of him whose ark it was.

Ver. 3. *Send it not empty*—They answer directly to the question, first in general; that it must not be sent back without some offering. *In any wise return him a trespass-offering*—As an acknowledgment that they had offended the God

A.M. 3964.  
B.C. 1139.

*The Philistines send the ark back, ver. 1—12. The Israelites receive it, ver. 13—18. The people of Beth-shemesh smitten for looking into the ark, who therefore desire those of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it, ver. 19—21.*

AND the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. cir. 1140.

2 And the Philistines <sup>a</sup> called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place? a Gen. 41.

3 And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not <sup>b</sup> empty; but in any wise return him <sup>c</sup> a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall <sup>d</sup> be known to you why his hand is not removed from you. b Gen. 23. 13. c Lev. 2. 15. 16. d Ver. 9.

4 Then said they, What shall be

of Israel by bringing his ark from its proper place; for which they begged his pardon by this offering. *Then ye shall be healed, &c.*—Le Clerc renders this sentence, *Then if ye shall be healed, it shall be known, or manifest unto you, why his hand is not removed from you.* And it is evident this is the meaning of the words. For these diviners were not sure whence these plagues came; but they thought in this way they should either be healed or know that the ark was not the cause of their sickness. *It shall be known*—You shall understand what is hitherto doubtful, whether he is the author of these calamities, and why they are continued so long upon you.

Ver. 4. *Five golden emerods*—Figures in gold representing the disease. *Five golden mice*—Images of the mice which had marred their land by destroying its fruits. *According to the number of the lords of the Philistines*—Who were five, and were to be at the charge of offering one for each of them. These things they offered, not in contempt of God, for they sought to gain his favour thereby; but in testimony of their humiliation, that by leaving this monument of their shame and misery, they might obtain pity from God. It may be observed here, that it appears to have been a custom among the ancient heathen, to consecrate unto their gods such monuments of their deliverances as represented the evils from which they were freed. So the Philistines did on this occasion. And, according to Tavernier, this is still practised among the Indians. When any pilgrim goes to a pagod for the cure of a disease, he brings the figure of the member affected; made either of gold, silver, or copper, according to his quality; which he offers to his god, and then falls a singing, as all others do after they have offered. See Travels, page 92.

A. M. 2864.  
B. C. 1140. the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, <sup>e</sup> according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on † you all, and on your lords.

e Ver. 17,  
18.

† Heb.  
them.

f Ch. 5. 6.

g Josh. 7.  
19.

h Ch. 5. 6,  
11.

i Ch. 5. 2, 7.

k Exod. 7.  
13.

l Or, re-  
proach-  
fully.  
Exod. 12.  
31.

† Heb.  
them.

m 2 Sam. 6.  
8.

n Num. 19.  
9.

5 Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that <sup>f</sup> mar the land; and ye shall <sup>g</sup> give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will <sup>h</sup> lighten his hand from off you, and from off <sup>i</sup> your gods, and from off your land.

6 Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, <sup>k</sup> as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought || wonderfully among them, <sup>l</sup> did they not let † the people go, and they departed?

7 Now therefore make <sup>m</sup> a new cart, and take two milch kine, <sup>n</sup> on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

8 And take the ark of the LORD,

and lay it upon the cart; and put <sup>o</sup> the jewels of gold, which ye return <sup>p</sup> him for a trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.

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o Ver. 4, 5.

9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to <sup>p</sup> Beth-shemesh, *then* || he hath done us this <sup>q</sup> great evil: but if not, then <sup>r</sup> we shall know that *it is* not his hand *that* smote us; it was a chance *that* happened to us.

p Josh. 18.  
10,  
11.  
q Ver. 5.

10 ¶ And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home:

11 And they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.

12 And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and

Ver. 5. *Of your mice that mar the land*—By this it appears, that their country was infested by mice, which had eaten their corn in the field, and other fruits of the earth, though no mention is made of this before. *And—give glory to the God of Israel*—That is, acknowledge, by this present, that he is the inflicter of these plagues, and has power to remove them, begging his pardon and seeking for healing from him. And hereby give him the glory of his power in conquering you, who seemed to have conquered him; of his justice in punishing you; and of his goodness if he relieve you. For this is the signification of this phrase in a similar case, Rev. xvi. 9; where St. John complains that, after many plagues men did not repent, *to give glory unto God*, that is, to acknowledge his sovereign authority, power, justice, and other attributes.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts*—They express themselves thus, either because some opposed the sending home the ark, though most had consented to it; or because they thought they would hardly send it away in the manner prescribed, by giving glory to God, and taking shame to themselves.

Ver. 7. *Make a new cart, &c.*—It was in honour of the ark that they employed nothing about it that had ever served for any other use. And there was another reason for choosing such kine as are here mentioned; that it might be more manifest that they were led by the God of Israel, if they went directly into his country. For untamed heifers are apt to run back, or to wander and keep no certain and constant paths as oxen accustomed to the yoke do; and therefore were

very unlikely to keep the direct road to the land of Israel. And the taking their calves from them would excite natural affection in them, and cause them rather to return home to their calves than to go into a strange country.

Ver. 8. *In a coffer by the side thereof*—They had either heard, or by their present sufferings were made to fear that it was dangerous to look into the ark; and therefore they did not open it to put their present within it.

Ver. 9. *And see if it goeth up by—his own coast* without any guide. *To Beth-shemesh*—A city in the tribe of Judah, in the confines of both countries. *Then he hath done this great evil*—Hath inflicted this sore calamity upon us. This they might well conclude, if such heifers should, contrary to their custom and natural instinct, go into a strange path, and regularly and constantly proceed in it, without being guided by any one.

Ver. 12. *The kine took the straight way to Beth-shemesh*—Though they had no driver, nor visible director, and had such strong attractives to draw them back, and there were so many other ways in which they might have gone. *Lowing as they went*—After their calves which had been taken from them; and hereby evidencing at once both their natural and vehement inclination to their calves, and the supernatural power which over-ruled them to a contrary course. *The lords went*—To prevent all imposture, and to get assurance of the truth of the event. All which circumstances tended to the greater illustration of God's glory.



A.M. 2864.  
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the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

13 And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.

14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

15 And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.

Josh. 13.  
2.

16 And when the five lords of the

A.M. 2864.  
B.C. 1140.

Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day.

17 And these are the golden emerods which the Philistines returned for a trespass-offering unto the LORD; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askalon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one;

18 And the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fenced cities, and of country villages, even unto the great stone of Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the LORD: which stone remaineth unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite.

19 And he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, be-

Heb. Abel  
the great.

Heb. 10.  
91.

Ver. 14. *The cart came into the field of Joshua—and stood there*—This was another marvellous thing, that the kine went no further, but stood, as soon as they were come into the territory of a city belonging to the priests (for such Beth-shemesh was) whose office it was to take care of the ark. *Where there was a great stone*—Which seems to have been the boundary of the two countries. *They offered the kine*—That is, the Bethshemites, the priests did this, and not the lords of the Philistines. The great stone probably served for an altar, and on it they offered a whole burnt-offering in praise to God for his goodness. But was there not a double error in this act? 1, In that they offered females for a burnt-offering, contrary to Levit. i. 3. 2, In that they did it in a forbidden place? See Deut. xii. 5, 6. To this it must be answered, that a case so singular is not to be brought to the test of the general rules. These regulations respected only ordinary offerings, and not such as an extraordinary occasion, like this, might require. Besides the ark being here, and God having not yet appointed any place for its future residence, now Shiloh was destroyed, they thought in reason their sacrifice might be here acceptable to him. And they the rather chose to offer these cows to God, because they considered them as belonging to him, as having drawn his ark, and been particularly directed by him, and therefore to be his sacrifices.

Ver. 18. *Both of fenced cities and country villages*—This is added, either to shew, that under the name of the five cities were comprehended all the villages and territories belonging to them, in whose name, and at whose charge these presents were made; or to express the difference between this and the former present, the emerods being only five, ac-

ording to the five cities mentioned, Ver. 17; the cities, perhaps being chiefly afflicted with that disorder; and the mice being many more, according to the number of all the cities and villages as here expressed. *Abel*—This is mentioned as the utmost border of the Philistines' territory, to which the plague of mice extended. And this place is here called Abel, by anticipation from the great mourning mentioned in the following verse. It is desirable, to see the ark in its habitation, in all the circumstances of solemnity. But it is better to have it on a great stone, and in the fields of the wood, than to be without it. The intrinsic grandeur of divine ordinances ought not to be diminished in our eyes, by the meanness and poverty of the place, where they are administered.

Ver. 19. *Because they had looked into the ark*—Which God had forbidden, not only to the common people, but to the sons of Levi also, Num. iv. 20. But the people, having now an opportunity which they had not had before, were moved with a vehement curiosity to see the contents of the ark, forgetting the divine prohibition and their duty. Perhaps they were desirous to see whether the Philistines had taken out the tables of the covenant; or to have a view of such an ancient, sacred monument, written with God's own hand. *Even he smote of the people*—In and near Beth-shemesh, and coming from all parts on this occasion. *Fifty thousand threescore and ten men*—This translation is made by an unaccountable transposition of the words; which, in the Hebrew, lie exactly thus. *He smote of the people three score and ten men, fifty thousand men*. The most probable sense of which is this: *He smote three score and ten men, fifty out of a thousand men*. That is, God was so merciful as not to slay all that were guilty,

A. M. 2564.  
B. C. 1140.

cause the LORD had smitten *many* of the people with a great slaughter.

20 And the men of Beth-shemesh said, <sup>u</sup> Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and to whom shall he go up from us?

21 ¶ And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of <sup>x</sup> Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, and fetch it up to you.

## CHAP. VII.

*The ark remains at Kirjath-jearim twenty years, ver. 1, 2. Samuel reforms Israel from idolatry,*

but only seventy of them, observing this proportion, that out of a thousand offenders he smote only fifty persons, or, a twentieth part. And this interpretation is very easy, by only supplying the letter *n* *men* before *eleph*; *a thousand*, making the sense to be *out of a thousand*. And there are many passages of Scripture where this particle is manifestly wanting to make out the true meaning. This translation was long ago proposed by Bochart, and approved by Dr. Waterland, who renders the passage, *He smote of the people three score and ten men out of fifty thousand*: which, he says, "is a juster rendering of the Hebrew, and is well defended by Le Clerc upon the place." Josephus, it must be observed, mentions only seventy Bethshemites as smitten on this occasion; Antiq. book 6. cap. 2. And Dr. Kennicott appeals to three Heb. MSS, in confirmation of this sense of the clause. *A great slaughter*—It was a great slaughter, considering the smallness of this place, probably only a village.

Ver. 20. *Who is able to stand, &c.?*—That is, to minister before the ark, where the Lord is present. Since God is so severe to mark what is amiss in his servants, who is sufficient to serve him? They seem by this to have been made sensible of their rashness, and brought to acknowledge the holiness of God to be such that they were not worthy of his divine presence among them, and therefore they desired that the ark might be placed elsewhere. *And to whom shall he go up from us?*—Who will dare to receive the ark with so much hazard to themselves. Thus when the word of God works with terror on men's consciences, instead of taking the blame to themselves, they frequently quarrel with the word, and endeavour to put it from them.

Ver. 21. *Kirjath-jearim*—Whither they sent, either because the place was not far off from them, and so it might soon be removed: or, because it was a place of eminency and strength, and somewhat farther distant from the Philistines, where therefore it was likely to be better preserved from any new attempts of the Philistines, and to be better attended by the Israelites, who would more freely and frequently come to it at such a place, than in Beth-shemesh, which was upon the border of their enemies' land.

and judges Israel, ver. 3—6. The Philistines come up against Israel, are overthrown, and restore the cities they had taken, ver. 7—14. Samuel administers justice through all the land, ver. 15—17.

AND the men of <sup>a</sup> Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of <sup>b</sup> Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

2 ¶ And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

3 ¶ And Samuel spake unto all the

CHAP. VII. Ver. 1. *The men of Kirjath-jearim—fetched up the ark*—That is, by the priests appointed to that work. *Into the house of Abinadab*—As the care of the ark belonged to the Levites, doubtless Abinadab was of that tribe, otherwise, indeed, he could not have consecrated, that is, set apart, or solemnly appointed his son to *keep*, or to attend it, and see that no rudeness was offered to it; to keep the place, where it was, clean, and to guard it that none might touch it but such as God had allowed so to do. *In the hill*—This place they chose, both because it was a strong place, where it would be most safe; and a high place, and therefore visible at some distance, which was convenient for them, who were at that time to direct their prayers and faces towards the ark. And for the same reason David afterwards placed it on the hill of Zion. If it be enquired why they did not carry the ark to Shiloh, its ancient seat; the answer is, that the Philistines had destroyed that place; and the tabernacle, upon the death of Eli, was removed from thence unto Nob; where it remained till the death of Samuel.

Ver. 2. *For it was twenty years*—It is not said, that this space of twenty years was all the time of the ark's abode there, for it continued there from Eli's time till David's reign, 2 Sam. vi. 2, which was forty-six years: but that it was so long there before the Israelites were sensible of their sin and misery. *And all the house*—Or rather, as Dr. Lightfoot translates the words, *Then all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord*—That is, followed after God with lamentations, for his departure, and prayers for his return. Their idolatry had taken such deep root in them, that neither the loss of the ark, nor the slaughter of so many Israelites wrought upon their hearts; but it was twenty years before they were brought to a proper sense of their sinfulness and guilt, and so humbled as to deplore their apostasy with genuine godly sorrow, and seek after the favour of God, and reconciliation with him.

Ver. 3. *Samuel spake to all the house of Israel*—To all the rulers and people too, as he had occasion in his circuit, described below, mixing exhortations to repentance, with his judicial administrations. *If ye return unto the Lord*—If you

A. M. 2544. B. C. 1120. house of Israel, saying, If ye do <sup>c</sup> return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* <sup>d</sup> put away the strange gods and <sup>e</sup> Ashtaroth from among you, and <sup>f</sup> prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and <sup>g</sup> serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

h Judg. 2. 11. 4 Then the children of Israel did put away <sup>b</sup> Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

i Judg. 20. 4. 5 And Samuel said, <sup>i</sup> Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

k 2 Sam. 14. 14. 6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, <sup>k</sup> and drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and l Neh. 9. 1. <sup>l</sup> fasted on that day, and said there, m Judg. 10. 10. <sup>m</sup> We have sinned against the LORD.

A. M. 2544. B. C. 1120. And Samuel <sup>n</sup> judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh. n Ecclus. 46. 14.

7 ¶ And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, <sup>o</sup> Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. o Heb. be not silent from us from crying. Isa. 31. 4.

9 ¶ <sup>p</sup> And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered *it* for a burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD: and <sup>q</sup> Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD <sup>r</sup> heard him. p Ecclus. 46. 16. q Ps. 99. 4. r Or, answered.

do indeed what you profess, if you be resolved to go on in that which you seem to have begun. *With all your heart*—Sincerely and in good earnest. *Put away the strange gods*—Out of your houses, where some of you keep them; and out of your hearts, where they still have an interest in many of you. *And Ashtaroth*—Especially, Ashtaroth, whom they, together with the neighbouring nations, did more eminently worship. *Prepare your hearts*—By purging them from all sin, and particularly from all inclinations to other gods.

Ver. 4, 5. *Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim, &c.*—Samuel's reproofs and instructions, and the representations he had made of their sin and danger, touched their hearts and induced them to break off their sins by repentance. *Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you*—He could have prayed for them himself alone in private, but he knew it would tend to perfect the repentance and reformation begun among them, and to establish them in God's service, to engage them to unite with him in that duty; and it was well worth while for them to come from the most distant part of the country to join with Samuel in seeking God's favour. Doubtless Samuel prayed both that they might, by the grace of God, be separated from their idols, and then, by the providence of God, delivered from the Philistines.

Ver. 6. *They drew water and poured it out*—As an external sign whereby they testified, both their own filthiness and need of washing by the grace and Spirit of God, and the blood of the covenant, and their sincere desire to pour out their hearts before the Lord, in true repentance, and to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. *Before the Lord*—That is, in the public assembly, where God is in a special manner present. *Samuel judged*—That is, governed them, reformed all abuses against God or man, took care that the laws of God should be observed, and wilful transgressions punished.

Ver. 7. *The lords of the Philistines went up*—With an

army, suspecting the effects of their general convention, and intending to nip them in the bud. *They were afraid*—Being a company of unarmed persons, and unfit for battle. When sinners begin to repent and reform, they must expect Satan will muster all his forces against them, and set his instruments at work to the uttermost, to oppose and discourage them.

Ver. 8. *Cease not to cry unto the Lord, &c.*—We are afraid to look God in the face, because of our great wickedness: do thou therefore intercede for us, as Moses did for his generation. They had reason to expect this, because he had promised to pray for them, had promised them deliverance from the Philistines, and they had been observant of him, in all that he had spoken to them from the Lord. Thus they who receive Christ as their Lawgiver and Judge, need not doubt of their interest in his intercession. O what a comfort it is to all believers, that he never ceaseth, is never silent, but *always appears in the presence* of God for us.

Ver. 9. *Samuel took a sucking lamb*—For after a lamb was eight days old, it was fit to be sacrificed to God, Exod. xxii. 30; Lev. xvii. 27. *And offered it for a burnt-offering*—For though he was not a priest, nor this place appointed for sacrifice; yet as a prophet he had authority from God to build an altar any where and offer sacrifices. Thus other holy men, Gideon and Manoah, were warranted to offer extraordinary sacrifices, in places which God had not before appointed. And thus we read of an altar he built in another place, Ver. 17, as Elijah did in following times. *And Samuel cried unto the Lord*—He made intercession with the sacrifice. So Christ intercedes in virtue of his satisfaction. And in all our prayers we must have an eye to his great oblation, depending on him for audience and acceptance. *And the Lord heard him*—Probably God answered Samuel as he did Manoah, by sending fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, in testimony of his acceptance of it.

A. M. 2884.  
B. C. 1120.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

r Josh. 10.  
10.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Bethcar.

s Gen. 28.  
12.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it || Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

† That is,  
The stone  
of help.  
Ch. s. 1.

† Judg. 13.  
1.

u Ch. 13. s.

13 ¶ So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even

Ver. 11. *The men of Israel pursued the Philistines, &c.*—This victory was the more wonderful, since it does not appear that the Israelites came provided with any weapons to Mizpeh, but probably smote the Philistines with their own weapons, which they threw away when they fled, affrighted by this uncommon tempest, or which were found among those that were slain by the lightning.

Ver. 12. *Then Samuel took a stone*—A rude unpolished stone, which was not prohibited by that law, Lev. xxvi. 1, there being no danger of worshipping such a stone, and this being set up only as a monument of the victory. *Eben-ezer*—That is, *the stone of help*. And this victory was gained in the very same place where the Israelites received their former fatal loss. *Helped us*—He hath begun to help us, though not completely to deliver us. By which wary expression, he excited both their thankfulness for the mercy received, and their holy fear and care to please and serve the Lord, that he might help and deliver them effectually.

Ver. 13. *Came no more*—That is, with a great host, but only molested them with straggling parties, or garrisons. *All the days of Samuel*—That is, while Samuel was their sole judge, or ruler; for in Saul's time they did come.

Ver. 14. *There was peace*—An agreement for the cessation of all acts of hostility. *Between Israel and the Amorites*—That is, the Canaanites, often called Amorites, because these were formerly the most valiant of all those nations, and the first enemies which the Israelites met with, when they went to take possession of their land. They made this peace with

unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

A. M. 2884.  
B. C. 1120.

15 ¶ And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

16 And he went from year to year † in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

† Heb. and  
he cir-  
cuted.

17 And † his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD.

† Ch. s. 4.

† Judg. 9.  
4.

CHAP. VIII.

*Samuel's decay, and the degeneracy of his sons, ver.*

1—3. *The people petition him for a king, and he refers it to God, ver. 4—6. God directs him what answer to give, ver. 7—18. They insist upon their petition, ver. 19, 20. Which he promises shall be granted, ver. 21, 22.*

AND it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

a Deut. 16.  
18.

b Judg. 10.  
4.  
compared  
with Judg.  
5. 10.

the Canaanites, that they might be more at leisure to oppose the Philistines, now their most potent enemies.

Ver. 15. *Samuel judged Israel, &c.*—For though Saul was king in Samuel's last days, yet Samuel did not cease to be a judge, being so made by God's extraordinary call, which Saul could not destroy; and therefore Samuel did sometimes, upon great occasions, though not ordinarily, exercise the office of judge after the beginning of Saul's reign; and the years of the rule of Saul and Samuel are joined together, Acts xiii. 20, 21.

Ver. 16. *Judged Israel in all those places*—He went to those several places, in compliance with the people's desire, whose convenience he was willing to purchase with his own trouble, as an itinerant judge and preacher; and by his presence in several parts, he could the better observe, and rectify all sorts of miscarriages and abuses.

Ver. 17. *Built an altar*—That, by joining sacrifices with his prayers, he might the better obtain direction and assistance from God upon all emergencies. And this was done by prophetic inspiration, as appears by God's acceptance of the sacrifices offered upon it. Indeed Shiloh being now laid waste, and no other place yet appointed for them to bring their offerings to, the law which obliged them to one place, was for the present suspended. Therefore, as the patriarchs did, he built an altar where he lived; and that not only for the use of his own family, but for the good of the country, who resorted to it.

CHAP. VIII. Ver. 1. *Samuel was old*—And so unfit for

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.  
¶ Fazhwi,  
1 Chron.  
6. 23. **2** Now the name of his first-born was || Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: *they were judges in Beer-sheba.*

c Jer. 29.  
13.  
d Exod. 18.  
21.  
e Deut. 16.  
19. **3** And his sons <sup>c</sup> walked not in his ways, but turned aside <sup>d</sup> after lucre, and <sup>e</sup> took bribes, and perverted judgment.

cir. 1096. **4** Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

f Ver. 19.  
20. **5** And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now <sup>f</sup> make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

† Heb. was evil in the eyes of Samuel. **6** ¶ But the thing <sup>†</sup> displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.  
**7** And the LORD said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for <sup>e</sup> they have not rejected thee, but <sup>f</sup> they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. Exod. 16.  
8.  
h Ch. 10. 19.

**8** According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

**9** Now therefore || hearken unto their voice: || howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and <sup>i</sup> shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them. Or, obey.  
Or, notwithstanding when thou hast solemnly protested against them, then thou shalt shew, &c.  
i Ver. 11.

**10** ¶ And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that

his former travels and labours. He is not supposed to have been now above sixty years of age; but he had spent his strength and spirits in the fatigue of public business; and now if he thinks to *shake himself as at other times*, he finds he is mistaken; age has cut his hair. They that are in the prime of their years, ought to be busy in doing the work of life; for as they go into years, they will find themselves less disposed to it, and less capable of it. *He made his sons judges*—Not supreme judges, for such there was to be but one, and that of God's choosing; and Samuel still kept that office in his own hands, Chap. vii. 15; but his deputies, to go about and determine matters, with reservation, however, of a right of appeal to himself. He had doubtless instructed them in a singular manner, and fitted them for the highest employments; and he hoped that the example he had set them, and the authority he still had over them, would oblige them to diligence and faithfulness in their trust.

**Ver. 2. They were judges in Beer-sheba**—In the southern borders of the land of Canaan, which were very remote from his house at Ramah; where, and in the neighbouring places, Samuel himself still executed the office of judge.

**Ver. 3. Took bribes**—Opportunity and temptation discovered that corruption in them which, till now, was hid from their father, and, it may be, from themselves. It has often been the grief of holy men, that their children did not tread in their steps. So far from it, that the sons of eminently good men have been often eminently wicked.

**Ver. 5. Make us a king**—Their desires exceed their reasons, which extended no farther than the removal of Samuel's sons from their places, and the procuring some other just and prudent assistance to Samuel's age. Nor was the grant of their desire a remedy for their disease, but rather an aggravation of it. For the sons of their king were likely to be as corrupt as Samuel's sons; and, if they were, would not be so easily removed. *Like other nations*—That is, as most of the nations about us have. But there was not the like reason;

because God had separated them from all other nations, and cautioned them against the imitation of their examples, and had taken them under his own immediate care and government; which privilege other nations had not.

**Ver. 6. The thing displeased Samuel**—Because God was hereby dishonoured, through that distrust of him, and that ambition, and itch after changes, which were the manifest causes of this desire; and because of that great misery which he foresaw the people would hereby bring upon themselves. **Prayed**—For the pardon of their sin, and direction and help from God in this great affair.

**Ver. 7. The Lord said, Harken unto the people, &c.**—He grants their desire in anger, for their punishment. For these, it is plain, are the words of displeasure, being as much as to say, Let them have their will. Samuel took it very ill that they should be dissatisfied with his government: but God tells him that he himself had more reason to be angry. For, in truth, they had thrown off his authority who was their king, as Samuel tells them afterwards, Chap. xii. 12; and who had governed them by judges, whom he raised up and extraordinarily inspired when he saw occasion: as he had before conducted them by Moses and Joshua, who never ordained any thing of moment without a special command from God. **They have not rejected thee**—Merely or chiefly. **They have rejected me**—This injury and contumely, reflects chiefly upon me and my government. **Should not reign**—By my immediate government, which was the great honour, safety, and happiness of this people, if they had had hearts to prize it.

**Ver. 8, 9. So do they also unto thee**—Thou farest no worse than myself. This he speaks for Samuel's comfort and vindication. **Yet protest solemnly unto them**—That, if it be possible, thou mayest yet prevent their sin and misery. **Shew them the manner of the king**—That is, of the kings which they desire, like those of other nations. Shew them at large into what a state of servitude they are going to throw themselves by casting off the government of judges set over them by my

A.M. 2900.  
B.C. 1095.  
Deut. 17.  
16, &c.

asked of him a king.

11 And he said, <sup>k</sup> This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: <sup>l</sup> He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall run before his chariots.

12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands; and captains over fifties; and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

13 And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers.

14 And <sup>m</sup> he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-

yards, *even* the best of *them*, and give *them* to his servants.

15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his <sup>†</sup> officers, and to his servants.

16 And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

18 And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD <sup>n</sup> will not hear you in that day.

19 ¶ Nevertheless the people <sup>o</sup> refused to obey the voice of Samuel;

self, and subjecting themselves to the power of such kings as rule in other nations.

Ver. 11. *He will take your sons*—Injurious, and by violence. *And appoint them for himself*—To attend him as the guards of his body, and in other offices. This shows that he speaks of the arbitrary power which the kings in those days used. And therefore Samuel doth not say absolutely, *I will shew you the manner* (Heb. *שמעו*, *mispeth*, judgment, or right) of a king, as if it were a right belonging to all kings, but *This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you*: or such will be the consequence of your having kings. They will indeed be like those of the neighbouring nations, puffed up with their authority, haughty, arbitrary, and tyrannical: and you will find yourselves in a state of oppression and servitude. *For his chariots, and to be his horsemen*—To look after his chariots and his horses. *Some shall run before his chariots*—As his footmen.

Ver. 12. *He will appoint him*—Heb. *To or for himself*; for his own fancy, or glory, and not only when the necessities of the kingdom require it. *Captains over thousands, and captains over fifties*—Will dispose of them to military offices, higher or lower as he pleases, Chap. xiv. 52, to be perfectly subject to him, and placed or displaced as he thinks fit. And though this might seem to be no disadvantage, but an honour to the persons so advanced; yet even in them that honour was accompanied with great dangers, and pernicious snares of many kinds, for which those faint shadows of glory could not recompense them; and as to the public, their pomp and power proved very burthensome to the people, whose lands and fruits were taken from them, and bestowed upon these, for the support of their state. *And will set them to ear his ground, &c.*—Will make them his husbandmen to plough his ground and reap his corn, at his own pleasure, and on his own terms, when, perhaps, their labour is necessary about their own fields. *To make his instruments of war, &c.*—Others he will make artificers: which was not very agreeable to that nation, who were inclined, from their first rise, rather to employ themselves in attending to the breeding of cattle, and in looking after their flocks and herds.

Ver. 13. *He will take your daughters, &c.*—He will exercise as arbitrary a power over the women as over the men; whom he will make to serve in such employments as he shall think fit; either for nothing, or such wages as he shall please to give them. To have their daughters taken in this manner would be peculiarly grievous to the parents, and dangerous to themselves, because of the tenderness of their sex, and their liability to many injuries.

Ver. 14, 15. *He will take your fields*—By fraud or force, as Ahab did from Naboth. *And give them to his servants*—He will not only take the fruits of your lands for his own use, but will take away your possessions to give to his servants. *The tenth*—Besides the several tenths which God hath reserved for his service, he will, when he pleaseth, impose another tenth upon you. *And give to his officers*—Heb. *To his eunuchs*, which may imply a farther injury, that he should against the command of God, make some of his people eunuchs; and take those into his court and favour, which God would have cast out of the congregation.

Ver. 16—18. *He will take your men-servants*—By constraint and without sufficient recompence. *Your goodliest young men*—The most beautiful and proper persons he can find. *And your asses, and put them to his work*—Either at the plough, or for carriage, or any other employment wherein he shall think they will be useful. *And ye shall be his servants*—So subject to him, that if he please, ye shall be no better than slaves, deprived of that liberty which you now enjoy. *And ye shall cry out in that day*—Ye shall bitterly mourn for the sad effects of this inordinate desire of a king. This shows, that in the foregoing verses, Samuel describes the uncontrollable power which the eastern princes exercised over their subjects, who were obliged patiently to bear whatever their kings imposed upon them, without any power to help themselves. *The Lord will not hear you in that day*—Because you will not hear nor obey his counsel in this day; but he will leave you under this heavy yoke.

Ver. 19, 20. *Nevertheless the people refused to obey*—This description of kingly government, as then exercised in the East, did not deter them from persisting in their desires. But

A.M. 2919.  
B.C. 1095.  
Heb. eunuchs.  
Gen. 37.  
36.  
Prov. 1.  
25.  
Jer. 44.  
16.

A. M. 2919.  
B. C. 1099. and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

3 Ver. 5. 20 That we also may be <sup>p</sup> like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

a Ver. 7. 22 And the LORD said to Samuel, <sup>a</sup> Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

## CHAP. IX.

*A short account of Saul, ver. 1, 2. Seeking his father's asses, he is advised to consult Samuel, ver. 3—10. He is directed to him, ver. 11—14. Samuel being informed of God concerning him, treats him with respect, and prepares him for the news, that he must be king, ver. 15—27.*

a Ch. 16. 51. **N**OW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was <sup>a</sup> Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, **||** a Benjamite, a mighty man of **||** power.

1 Or, the son of a man of Benjamin.  
1 Or, substance. 2 And he had a son, whose name

A. M. 2919.  
B. C. 1099. was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and *there was* not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: <sup>b</sup> from his shoulders and <sup>b</sup> Ch. 10. 21. upward *he was* higher than any of the people.

3 And the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.

4 And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of <sup>c</sup> Shalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and *there they were* not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not. c 2 Kings 4. 43.

5 And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and take thought for us.

6 ¶ And he said unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this city <sup>d</sup> a man of <sup>d</sup> d Deut. 32. 1. God, and *he is* an honourable man; <sup>e</sup> all that he saith cometh surely to e Ch. 2. 19.

they still peremptorily demanded a king, although Samuel told them that this demand was, in effect, throwing off the government of God. *That we also may be like all other nations*—Strange blindness and stupidity, that they could not see it was their singular felicity that they were not like other nations! Numb. xxiii. 9; Deut. xxxiii. 28; as in other glorious privileges, so especially in this that they had God for their king and governor, who never failed in time of need, to raise up men of wonderful worth to be their deliverers. But they wanted a king to go out before them, and to fight their battles. Could they desire a battle better fought for them than the last was, by Samuel's prayers and God's thunders? Were they fond to try the chance of war, at the same uncertainty that others did? And what was the issue? Their first king was slain in battle: and so was Josiah, one of the last and best.

Ver. 21. *He rehearsed*—He repeated them privately between God and himself; for his own vindication and comfort: and as a foundation for his prayers to God, for direction and assistance.

Ver. 22. *Go ye every man unto his city*—Betake yourselves to your several homes and employments, till you hear

more from me in this matter. Thus he bade them leave the business unto him, intimating, that he doubted not but God would set a king over them.

CHAP. IX. Ver. 1, 2. *A mighty man of power*—This seems not to be meant of his wealth or interest in his country, for Saul himself, says he, was of a mean family, Ver. 21; but of his great strength, courage, and fortitude. *A choice young man and goodly*—Comely and personable. *Higher than any of the people*—A tall stature was much valued in a king in ancient times, and in the eastern countries.

Ver. 3. *The asses of Kish were lost*—Asses were there of great price, because of the scarcity of horses, and therefore were not thought unworthy to be sought by Saul, especially in these ancient times, when simplicity, humility, and industry were in fashion among persons of quality.

Ver. 6. *A man of God, and—an honourable man*—One of great reputation for his skill and faithfulness. Acquaintance with God and serviceableness to the kingdom of God, makes men truly honourable. *He can shew us our way*—The course we should take to find the asses. He saith, *peradventure*, because he doubted whether so great a prophet would seek,



A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.

pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.

† Judg. 6.  
18.† Heb. *is gone out of, &c.*† Heb. *is with us.*

7 Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, *if we go*, what shall we bring the man? for the bread † is spent in our vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to the man of God: what † have we?

† Heb. *there is found in my hand.*

8 And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, † I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: *that will I give* to the man of God, to tell us our way.

† Gen. 25.  
27.

9 (Beforetime in Israel, when a man † went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for *he that is now called* a Prophet was beforetime called † a Seer.)

† 2 Sam. 24.  
11.† Heb. *thy word is good.*

10 Then said Saul to his servant, † Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God was.

† Heb. *in the ascent of the city.*  
† Gen. 24.  
11.

11 ¶ *And* as they went up † the hill to the city, † they found young

or God would grant him, a revelation concerning such mean matters: although sometimes God was pleased herein to condescend to his people, to cut off all pretence or occasion of their seeking to heathenish divination.

Ver. 7, 8. *Behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man*—It was a part of the honour they did great men, in those countries to make them a present when they had occasion to address themselves to them. Particularly their prophets were thus honoured; being *men of God*, before whom they judged they ought not to appear empty, but to bring them presents, either as a testimony of respect; or as a grateful acknowledgement; or, for the support of the prophets themselves; or of the sons of the prophets; or of other persons in want known to them. Thus, also, it was usual to shew their respect to their king, Chap. x. 27. *The fourth part of a shekel of silver*—A small present, but as acceptable as the widow's mite; being all they had left on their journey.

Ver. 9. *Come, let us go to the Seer*—So termed, because he discerned and could discover things secret and unknown to others. And these are the words, either of some later sacred writer, who after Samuel's death, inserted this verse. Or, of Samuel, who, being probably fifty or sixty years old at the time of writing of this book, and speaking of the state of things in his first days, might well call it *before time*.

Ver. 12, 13. *He came to-day to the city*—He had been travelling abroad, and was now returned to his own house in Ramah. *High place*—Upon the hill mentioned, Ver. 11, and

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.

maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here?

12 And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, *he is* before you: make haste now, for he came to day to the city; for † *there is* a † sacrifice of the people to-day † in the high place:

† Gen. 31.  
24.  
† Or, *feast.*  
1 Kings 3.  
2.

13 As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about † this time ye shall find him.

† Heb. *to-day.*

14 And they went up into the city: and when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.

15 ¶ <sup>m</sup> Now the LORD had † told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,

† m Ch. 15. 1.  
† Heb. *revealed the ear of Samuel.*  
Ch. 20. 2.

16 To-morrow about this time I

near the altar which Samuel built for this use. *Ye shall straightway find him*—At home and at leisure. *Before he go up to eat*—The relics of the sacrifices. *Because he doth bless the sacrifice*—This was a peace-offering or a thank-offering, and the blessing of it, no doubt, consisted both of thanksgiving to God for mercies received, and of prayer to him that this sacrifice might be accepted. But perhaps it was not what was offered upon the altar, but what the people eat afterwards, that he blessed. We may observe here, that by blessing of victuals in Scripture, is meant chiefly, the giving thanks to God for the food before it be eaten. Instances of which we have in abundance in the New Testament, our Lord and his Apostles being continually said to give thanks before any thing was eaten. And here it is said, *He doth bless the sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that be bidden*—It is probable, however, that Samuel both prayed for God's blessing on what they eat, and gave thanks that they had it to eat. We see here how ancient the custom has been of praying to God, and giving thanks at our meals, and how blamable they are that neglect it.

Ver. 14, 15. *Behold, Samuel came out against them*—Met them directly in his way to the sacrifice. For † God, in his providence, had disposed things, as it follows in the next words. *The Lord had told Samuel in his ear*—That is, secretly, perhaps by a small, still voice. In the Hebrew it is, *He revealed, or uncovered the ear of Samuel*.

Ver. 16. *To-morrow—I will send thee a man, &c.*—This

<sup>A.M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.</sup> will send thee a man out of the land  
<sup>n Ch. 10. 1.</sup> of Benjamin, <sup>n</sup> and thou shalt anoint  
him *to be* captain over my people Is-  
rael, that he may save my people out  
of the hand of the Philistines: for I  
<sup>o Exod. 2.  
25.</sup> have <sup>o</sup> looked upon my people, be-  
cause their cry is come unto me.

17 And when Samuel saw Saul, the  
<sup>p Ch. 16.  
12.</sup> LORD said unto him, <sup>p</sup> Behold the  
man whom I spake to thee of! this  
same shall <sup>†</sup> reign over my people.  
<sup>† Heb. re-  
strain in.</sup>

18 ¶ Then Saul drew near to Sa-  
muel in the gate, and said, Tell me,  
I pray thee, where the seer's house is.

19 ¶ And Samuel answered Saul,  
and said, I *am* the seer: go up be-  
fore me unto the high place; for ye  
shall eat with me to-day, and to-mor-  
row I will let thee go, and will tell  
thee all that *is* in thine heart.

<sup>q Ver. 3.</sup> 20 And as for <sup>q</sup> thine asses that  
were lost <sup>†</sup> three days ago, set not  
thy mind on them; for they are found.  
<sup>† Heb. *to*  
*day, three*  
*days.*</sup>

<sup>r Ch. 8. 3.  
19.</sup> And on whom <sup>r</sup> is all the desire of Is-

rael? *Is it* not on thee, and on all thy  
father's house? <sup>A.M. 2909.  
B.C. 1095.</sup>

21 And Saul answered and said,  
<sup>s Ch. 15. 17.</sup> *Am* not I a Benjamite, of the  
<sup>t Judg. 20.  
45, 46.</sup> *smallest* of the tribes of Israel? and  
<sup>u Judg. 6.  
15.</sup> *my family* the least of all the fami-  
lies of the tribe of Benjamin? where-  
fore then speakest thou <sup>†</sup> so to me?  
<sup>† Heb. ac-  
cording  
to this  
word.</sup>

22 And Samuel took Saul and his  
servant, and brought them into the  
parlour, and made them sit in the  
chiefest place among them that were  
bidden, which *were* about thirty per-  
sons.

23 And Samuel said unto the cook,  
Bring the portion which I gave thee,  
of which I said unto thee, Set it by  
thee.

24 And the cook took up <sup>x Lev. 7. 26.  
Ezek. 24.  
4.</sup> *the*  
shoulder, and *that* which *was* upon  
it, and set *it* before Saul. And Sa-  
muel said, Behold that which is <sup>||</sup> left!  
<sup>y Or, re-  
served</sup> set *it* before thee, *and* eat: for unto  
this time hath it been kept for thee

shews still that all was done by God's direction. *Out of the hand of the Philistines*—Though driven out of the country by Samuel, they were now ready, as appears by the following history, to invade it again; and being the constant and nearest enemies of the Israelites, they were most dreaded by them. And from these did Saul in some measure save them, and would have saved them much more, if his, and the people's sins had not hindered. *For I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me*—Though he would not hear their cry to relieve them from the oppressions of their kings, (Chap. viii. 18,) yet he was so gracious as to make those kings instruments of their deliverance from the oppression of their cruel neighbours.

Ver. 17. *The Lord said unto him*—Most probably, by a divine, silent suggestion, or secret notification to his mind, without any voice, Ver. 15. *This same shall reign over my people*—The phraseology in the original is peculiar, the word rendered *reign*, implying coercion and restraint: *יקצר בקמי Jangzor begnammi*, He shall rule my people sternly and rigidly, with an absolute uncontrollable power. So the eatsern monarchs ruled.

Ver. 20. *As for thine asses that were lost, &c.*—This must have satisfied Saul that he was a prophet, as he hereby shewed that he knew for what Saul came to him, though he had not told him. *And on whom is all the desire of Israel?*—That is, all Israel desire a king, and there is no one more fit for

such an office than thyself. *On all thy father's house*—That honour is designed for thee, and after thy death for thy family and posterity, if by thy sin thou dost not cut off the entail.

Ver. 21. *Of the smallest of the tribes of Israel*—Such indeed the tribe of Benjamin was, having been all cut off except six hundred, Judg. xx. which blow they never recovered, and therefore they were scarce reckoned as an entire tribe, but as a remnant of a tribe; and being ingrafted into Judah, in the division between the ten tribes and the two, they in some sort lost their name, and together with Judah were accounted but one tribe.

Ver. 22. *In the chiefest place*—Thereby to raise their expectation, and to prepare them for giving that honour to Saul, which his approaching dignity required.

Ver. 23, 24. *Bring the portion*—The master of the house was wont to distribute to every one his portion. And Samuel had commanded the cook, before they sat down, not to set one dish upon the table, but to keep it till he called for it. *And set it before Saul*—As the principal place was given him at the feast, so the principal dish also was set before him, to express still the great regard he had to his person. *Behold, that which is left*—Or rather reserved. *For unto this time it hath been kept, since I said, &c.*—That is, when I first signified that I had invited the people to join with me in my sacrifice, and afterwards to partake with me of the feast, I then ordered the cook to reserve this part for thy use.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095. since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

25 ¶ And when they were come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* communed with Saul upon <sup>y</sup> the top of the house.

26 And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.

† Heb. to-day. 27 *And* as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still † a while, that I may shew thee the word of God.

CHAP. X.

*The anointing of Saul, ver. 1. Samuel gives him signs and instruction, ver. 2-8. The signs ac-*

Ver. 25. *Samuel communed with Saul*—Concerning the kingdom designed for him by God, and his administration of the government. *Upon the top of the house*—For coolness in the evening, and privacy. The Vulgate adds here, *Saul prepared him a bed on the top of the house, and slept*, an addition which Houbigant approves, accounting very plausibly for the deficiency of the Hebrew. The Seventy also understood the passage in a similar way, translating it, *And they spread a bed for Saul on the top of the house, and he slept*.

Ver. 27. *Samuel said—Bid the servant pass on before us*—That thou and I may speak privately of the matter of the kingdom. Which Samuel hitherto endeavoured to conceal, lest he should be thought now to impose a king upon them, as before he denied one to them: and that it might appear by the lot mentioned in the next Chapter, that the kingdom was given to Saul by God's destination, and not by Samuel's contrivance. *That I may shew thee the word of God*—That is, a message delivered to me from God, which now I shall impart to thee.

CHAP. X. Ver. 1. *And poured it upon his head*—We do not read of any order of God, given for the anointing of kings. But it was the usual rite in the designation, as of prophets and priests, so also of kings, as appears from the parable of Jotham, recorded Judges ix. 8, and delivered 200 years before this time. By using this ceremony Samuel signified the pouring forth of the gifts and graces of God's Spirit upon Saul, to fit him for the administration of his office. These sacred unctions then used, pointed at the great Messiah, or anointed One,

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095. *accomplished, ver. 9-13. His return to his father's house, ver. 14-16. He is elected, solemnly inaugurated, and returns to his own city, ver. 17-27.*

**T**HEN <sup>a</sup> Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, <sup>b</sup> and kissed him, and said, *Is it not because* <sup>c</sup> the LORD hath appointed thee *to be* captain over <sup>d</sup> his inheritance?

2 ¶ When thou art departed from me to-day, then thou shalt find two men by <sup>e</sup> Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin <sup>f</sup> at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left <sup>†</sup> the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?

3 Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up <sup>g</sup> to God to Beth-el, one carrying three

the King of the Church, and *High-priest of our profession*, who was anointed with the oil of the Spirit without measure, above all the priests and princes of the Jewish Church. *Kissed*—As a testimony of his sincere friendship and affection to him. *His inheritance*—That is, over his own peculiar people. Whereby he admonisheth Saul, that this people were not so much his, as God's; and that he was not to rule them according to his own will, but according to the will of God. This sudden and unexpected elevation of Saul to the royal dignity, was a thing not easy to be believed, and therefore Samuel gives him three or four signs in the following verses, to assure him that God called him to this high office, and to confirm his faith in the divine appointment.

Ver. 2. *By Rachel's sepulchre*—In the way to Bethlehem, which city was in Judah; her sepulchre might be either in Judah, or in Benjamin; for the possessions of those two tribes were bordering one upon another. The first place he directs him to was a sepulchre, the sepulchre of one of his ancestors. There he must read a lecture of his own mortality, and now he had a crown in his eye, must think of his grave, in which all his honour would be laid in the dust.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt come to the plain*—Not that at the foot of mount Tabor, which was far from these parts; but another belonging to some other place. *Bethel*—Properly so called, which was in Ephraim, where there was a noted high-place, famous for Jacob's vision there, Gen. xxviii. 19; and where it is probable they offered sacrifices, in this confused state of things, when the ark was in one place, and the tabernacle in another.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095. kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine:

† Heb. ask thee of peace: as Judg. 18. 15. 4 And they will † salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands.

h Ver. 10.  
i Ch. 14. 3. 5 After that thou shalt come to <sup>h</sup> the hill of God, <sup>i</sup> where is the gar- rison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming <sup>k</sup> down <sup>l</sup> from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; <sup>l</sup> and they shall prophesy:

m Num. 11. 25. 6 And <sup>m</sup> the Spirit of the LORD will

come upon thee, and <sup>n</sup> thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.

7 And † let it be, when these <sup>o</sup> signs are come unto thee, † that thou do as occasion serve thee; for <sup>p</sup> God is with thee.

8 And thou shalt go down before me <sup>q</sup> to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings: <sup>r</sup> seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.

9 ¶ And it was so, that when he had turned his † back to go from Samuel, God † gave him another

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.  
n Ver. 10.

† Heb. it shall come to pass, that when these signs, &c.

o Exod. 4. 9.  
† Heb. do for thee as thine hand shall find, Judg. 9. 23.  
p Judg. 6. 12.  
q Ch. 11. 14.  
r Ch. 13. 8.

† Heb. shoulder.  
† Heb. turned.

Ver. 4. *They will salute thee, &c.*—This may be considered as a third sign, or an appendix to the second. And it is the more remarkable; because this present, which they made him, was a figure of that honour which the people did him, when he was declared their king.

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt come to the hill of God*—So called, either because they were wont to sacrifice here; or, because here was a school of the prophets, who were called *men of God*. *A company of prophets*—By prophets here, he understands persons that wholly devoted themselves to religious studies and exercises. For the term of *prophesying* is not only given to the most eminent act of it, foretelling things to come; but also to preaching, and to the making or singing of psalms, or songs of praise to God. And they that wholly attended upon these things, are called *sons of the prophets*, who were commonly combined into companies or colleges, that they might more conveniently assist one another in God's work. This institution God was pleased so far to honour and bless, that sometimes he communicated unto those persons the knowledge of future things. *Coming down from the high-place*—Probably, from a sacrifice which they had offered in the high-place: and now they praised God for his benefits in the following manner. *With a psaltery*—Such instruments being then used by the prophets and other persons, to compose their minds and render them fit to receive divine communications, as well as to raise their affections to God, and to the contemplation of things spiritual and heavenly. *They shall prophesy*—Either sing God's praises, as the word sometimes signifies, Exod. xv. 21; 1 Chron. xxv. 3; or speak of the things of God, by a peculiar impulse of his Spirit.

Ver. 6. *The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee*—Heb. *nrby tsalcha, irruel in te, (Buxtorf) shall rush upon thee*. This was the highest assurance of all the rest, that Samuel anointed him by God's authority. *Thou shalt prophesy with them*—Shalt break forth into the praises of God, and utter divers truths, and even predictions by the inspiration of his Spirit. *Shalt be turned into another man*—That is, thou shalt be suddenly endowed with another spirit, filled with

skill in divine things, with courage, and wisdom, and magnanimity; and other qualifications befitting thy dignity.

Ver. 7. *Do as occasion shall serve thee*—Heb. *Do what thy hand findeth to do*; that is, as thou shalt have a call and opportunity. As if he had said, I cannot give thee particular directions about every thing that is to be done by thee: but God's Spirit shall guide thee to do that which the present occasion requires. He does not intend that he should take the kingly government upon him, before his call to it was owned by the people, but that he should dispose his mind to a readiness of undertaking any public service when he should be called to his office.

Ver. 8. *Seven days shalt thou tarry till I come*—This, though now mentioned and commanded, was not immediately to be performed; as is evident, partly from the whole course of the story, (which shews, that Saul and Samuel, and the people, first met at Mizpeh, ver. 17, &c. where Saul was chosen of God, and accepted by the people as king; and afterwards went to Gilgal once before the time here spoken of, Chap. xi. 14, 15,) and partly, by comparing this place with Chap. xiii. 8, &c. where we find Saul charged with the violation of this command, two years after the giving of it. It seems this was given as a standing rule for Saul to observe while Samuel and he lived; that in case of any great future difficulties, as the invasion of enemies, Saul should resort to Gilgal, and call the people thither, and tarry there seven days, which was but a necessary time for gathering the people, and for the coming of Samuel thither. And Gilgal was chosen for this purpose, because that place was famous for the solemn renewing of the covenant between God and Israel, Josh. iv. and for other eminent instances of God's favour to them, the remembrance whereof was a confirmation of their faith; and because it was a very convenient place for the tribes within and without Jordan to assemble in, and consult, and unite their forces together upon such occasions.

Ver. 9, 10. *God gave him another heart*—He immediately fulfilled the last and chief of these signs: for Saul was no sooner gone from Samuel than he felt another spirit com-

A.M. 2909.  
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heart: and all those signs came to pass that day.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 5. 10 And <sup>b</sup> when they came thither to the hill, behold, <sup>c</sup> a company of prophets met him; and <sup>d</sup> the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

11 And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said <sup>e</sup> † one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? <sup>f</sup> Is Saul also among the prophets?

12 And one <sup>g</sup> † of the same place answered and said, But <sup>h</sup> who is their father? Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?

13 And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.

14 ¶ And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that they were no where, we came to Samuel.

15 And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you?

16 And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.

17 ¶ And Samuel called the people together <sup>i</sup> unto the LORD to <sup>j</sup> Mizpeh;

18 And said unto the children of Israel, <sup>k</sup> Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you:

19 <sup>l</sup> And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel had <sup>m</sup> caused

into him, a spirit of holiness, wisdom, and fortitude, to qualify him for the government of God's people; which afterwards God took from him because of his sins, Chap. xvi. 14. See Psal. li. 12. *He prophesied among them*—The accomplishment of the two former signs is supposed, and this only is expressed, because this was more eminent than the former; the others were only transient acts, which passed in private, between two or three persons meeting together; but this was a more permanent and notorious sign, done in a more solemn manner, and before many witnesses.

Ver. 11. *Is Saul also among the prophets?*—A man never instructed, nor exercised in, nor inclined to these matters. It begat wonder in all those who knew his education, that he should, on a sudden, be inspired as those were, who were bred up in the school of the prophets. For, though it was in the power of God alone to bestow the gift of prophecy upon men, yet it would seem that commonly, he endowed none with it, but such as were trained up in those studies, which might dispose them for it.

Ver. 12. *And one answered and said, But who is their father?*—This wonder was presently satisfied by a prudent person among them asking, Who is the father of all those prophets among whom Saul was now one? Who is it that instructs and inspires them but God? They have not this gift from their parents, nor from their education, but by inspiration from God, who, when he pleases, can bestow it on Saul

or any other man, and thereby make him a prophet without the help of any other master; as he did Amos, who was *no prophet, nor prophet's son, but an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit*. And therefore wonder not at this matter, but give God the glory. Hence it became a proverb, used when any strange or unexpected thing happened.

Ver. 13. *When he had made an end of prophesying*—Herein he differed from the prophets who met him, in that he prophesied but for a short time, this not being his office. And when he had done he went up to the high place from which they came down, they probably returning with him, to praise God for these wonderful favours, and to beg counsel and help from him in this high business.

Ver. 16. *He told him not*—In obedience to Samuel, who enjoined him to keep it secret, and from an humble modesty.

Ver. 19. *Your God, who himself saved you, &c.*—By raising up judges whenever you cried to him for help, who never failed to conquer your enemies. *Ye have said unto him, Nay, &c.*—When he desired you to continue under his government you refused, and would not be denied in what you asked. *Now therefore, &c.*—He puts them upon choosing their king by lot, that all might know, God had chosen Saul (for the disposal of the lot is of the Lord) and to prevent all dispute and exception.

Ver. 20. *Benjamin was taken*—Which tribe was now preferred before Judah, because the kingdom was freely promised

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095. all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

e Ch. 22. 2. 22 Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

f Ch. 9. 2. 23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is none* like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, <sup>b</sup> † God save the King!

25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 ¶ And Saul also went home <sup>k</sup> to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27 <sup>l</sup> But the <sup>m</sup> children of Belial said, How shall this man save us?

by God to Judah, and was to be given to him in love; but now the kingdom was in a manner forced from God, and given them in anger, and therefore conferred upon an obscure tribe.

Ver. 21. *When they sought him he could not be found*—Having withdrawn himself, either out of feebleness of spirit, as some think, or rather out of modesty, he declined so high an authority unless imposed upon him. Or perhaps he was discouraged, and even affrighted, when he heard Samuel still representing God as offended with them for asking a king: which he might think was to reject his government.

Ver. 22. *They enquired of the Lord*—Either by Urim and Thummim, which was the usual way of enquiry. Or by Samuel, who by his prayer procured an answer. *He hath hid himself among the stuff*—Among the carriages or baggage of the people there assembled. This he probably did from a sense of his own unworthiness.

Ver. 24. *Samuel said—See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen?*—Though the people were resolutely bent on having a king, yet they were sensible only God could make one. And therefore they came, in the beginning of this business, to ask one of his prophet. But Samuel could not constitute one without divine direction and appointment, as appears by the first verse of this chapter, where he says to Saul, *The Lord hath anointed thee*; and the lot, whereby he was publicly chosen, was cast before the Lord, Ver. 19, 23. Accordingly he here tells them, *The Lord hath chosen him*. Thus afterwards the Lord commanded David to be anointed, Chap. xix. 1, 3; and of all his sons, Solomon was particularly appointed by God to succeed him, 1 Chron. xxix. 5. *There is none like him among all the people*—As to his aspect and the height of his bodily stature, which was in itself desirable in a king, and some kind of indication of great endowments of mind. *God save the king*—Heb. *Let the king live*; that is, long and prosperously. The same form was used in after-ages when they made kings, 1 Kings i. 34, 39; 2 Kings xi. 12; 3 Chron. xxiii. 11. Hereby they accepted him for their king,

and, in effect, promised subjection to him. None will be losers, in the end, by their humility and modesty. Honour, like the shadows, follows them that flee from it, but flees from them that pursue it.

Ver. 25. *The manner of the kingdom*—The laws and rules by which the kingly government was to be managed; agreeable to those mentioned Deut. xvii. 16, &c. *Before the Lord*—Before the ark, where it was kept safe from devaluation.

Ver. 26. *Saul went home to Gibeah*—Not being actually inaugurated into his kingdom, he thought fit to retire to his former habitation, and to live privately till he had an occasion to shew himself in a more illustrious manner. *There went with him a band of men*—A company, probably, of stout, valiant men of great resolution, who went as his guard, to afford him safe and honourable conduct to his house, although, as it appears, not to abide with him there, which would not have suited his present circumstances. *Whose hearts God had touched*—Who were moved by a divine influence to do their duty in this instance. Thus the Holy Scriptures teach us to acknowledge God to be the author of all the good that is in us, or done by us.

Ver. 27. *But the children of Belial said, &c.*—Some wicked men, who hated all government, and being, it is probable, men of some rank and quality, were proud, and despised a person of such a mean family. *How shall this man save us?*—They would not vouchsafe so much as to call him by his name, but insolently contemned him, as a person of no note, who had no power to deliver them. *They brought him no presents*—As subjects in those times, and in the eastern countries, used to do to their kings, when they first tendered their service to them. *But he held his peace*—Which was an evidence both of his great humility, and of the mercifulness of his disposition. At the same time, to dissemble his knowledge of the scorn they put upon him was an act of great prudence. For if he had taken notice of it he must have punished it; and it would not have been safe to have begun his reign with

A.M. 2909.  
B.C. 1095. And they despised him,<sup>a</sup> and brought him no presents. But || he held his peace.

<sup>a</sup> Or, he was as though he had been deaf.

CHAP. XI.

The distress of Jabesh-gilead, ver. 1---3. Saul's readiness to relieve them, and success, ver. 4---11. His tenderness to them that had opposed him, ver. 12, 13. He is confirmed in his kingdom, ver. 14, 15.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 19. 12. **T**HEN <sup>a</sup> Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against <sup>b</sup> Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, <sup>c</sup> Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. 24. 14. <sup>e</sup> And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this *condition* will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for <sup>d</sup> a reproach upon all Israel.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. for bear us. <sup>f</sup> And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, † Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and

A.M. 2909.  
B.C. 1095. then, if *there be* no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

<sup>g</sup> Ch. 10. 24. <sup>h</sup> Judg. 2. 4. **4** ¶ Then came the messengers <sup>e</sup> to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and <sup>f</sup> all the people lifted up their voices, and wept.

**5** And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What *aieth* the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

<sup>i</sup> Judg. 3. 10. **6** <sup>g</sup> And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

<sup>j</sup> Judg. 19. 29. <sup>k</sup> Judg. 21. 4, 5, 10. **7** And he took a yoke of oxen, and <sup>h</sup> hewed them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, <sup>i</sup> Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out † with one consent.

an act of severity. Thus Christ held his peace in the day of his patience, but there is a day of recompence coming.

CHAP. XI. Ver. 1. *Then*—That is, about that time; for that this happened before, and was the occasion of their desire of a king, may seem from Chap. xii. 12; although it is possible that Nahash's preparation might cause that desire, and that he did not actually come till their king was chosen. *Will serve*—The occasion of this offer was, that they saw no likelihood of relief from their brethren in Canaan.

Ver. 2. *And lay it for a reproach upon all Israel*—That is, disgrace the whole Hebrew nation, by serving some of their people in this opprobrious manner; for it must necessarily have reflected great dishonour upon the whole state, that they should suffer any of their people to be served so. He probably meant also to disable them for war, in which the right eye was of most use, their shields, which they carried in their left hands, in a great measure covering their left eyes. He proposes, however, to leave them one eye, that they might be fit to serve in any mean and base office.

Ver. 3. *Give us seven days respite*—It may seem strange, either that they should propose to submit so soon to such base conditions, if they did not receive help, or that Nahash should grant them so much respite when he saw them so abject and inclined to yield to him. But the reason of both is evident: for the elders of Jabesh thought Saul was not able to help

them, having not yet taken upon him the government, but living privately, Ver. 5; and Nahash, it is probable, was loath to drive them to desperation by denying them this short space wherein to expect relief, which he thought they could not possibly obtain in the time, even if Saul should endeavour to levy an army and come to their aid, for that, he would naturally suppose, could not be done in so few days.

Ver. 4, 5. *To Gibeah of Saul*—So called because it was the place where Saul was born and brought up, and where he had hitherto dwelt. *Behold Saul came after the herd*—For being only anointed king, and not publicly inaugurated, nor having yet had opportunity of doing any thing worthy of his place, he thought fit to forbear all royal state, and to retire to his former private life, which, howsoever despised in these latter ages, was anciently in great esteem. *Saul said, What aieth the people that they weep?*—Let me know, that if it be a grievance that can be redressed, I may endeavour to help them. "Good magistrates," says Henry, "are in pain, if their subjects be in tears."

Ver. 7. *Sent them throughout all the coasts*—Wisely considering that the sight of men's eyes does much more affect their hearts than what they only hear with their ears. *After Saul and after Samuel*—He joins Samuel with himself, both because he was present with him, and that hereby he might gain the more authority. *The fear of the Lord fell on the people*—A fear was sent upon them by God, so that they did



A. M. 2009.  
B. C. 1095.  
k Judg. 1.  
l 2 Sam. 24.  
5.  
9.

8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children <sup>1</sup> of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To-morrow, by *that time* the sun be hot, ye shall have **||** help. And the messengers came and shewed *it* to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To-morrow <sup>m</sup> we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was *so* on the morrow, that <sup>n</sup> Saul put the people <sup>o</sup> in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

12 ¶ And the people said unto

not dare to deny their help. The fear of God will make men good subjects, good soldiers, and good friends to their country. They that fear God will make conscience of their duty to all men, particularly to their rulers. They will honour the king, and all that are in authority under him. *They came out with one consent*—God, who put courage into Saul, and now induced him to assert his royal authority over the people, influenced them with a fear of offending him, so that they readily came and joined him at his call.

Ver. 8. *The men of Judah thirty thousand*—They were numbered apart to their honour, to shew how readily they, to whom the kingdom was promised, Gen. xlix. 10, submitted to their king, though of another tribe, and how willing they were to hazard themselves for their brethren, although they might have excused themselves from the necessity of defending their own country from their dangerous neighbours the Philistines.

Ver. 10. *To-morrow we will come out unto you*—They spoke this by way of stratagem, to make the Ammonites easy and secure.

Ver. 12, 13. *The people said unto Samuel*—Who, it appears from hence, accompanied Saul in this expedition, to encourage him with hopes of good success. *Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day*—Saul had prudently dissembled his knowledge of their despising him before the kingdom was confirmed to him. But the moderation which he now manifested, after he had been so wonderfully victorious,

A. M. 2009.  
B. C. 1095.  
p Ch. 10. 27.  
q Luke 19. 27.

Samuel, <sup>p</sup> Who *is* he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? <sup>q</sup> bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, <sup>r</sup> There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to-day <sup>s</sup> the LORD hath wrought <sup>t</sup> salvation in Israel.

14 ¶ Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go <sup>u</sup> to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king <sup>v</sup> before the LORD in Gilgal; and <sup>w</sup> there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

## CHAP. XII.

*Samuel clears himself from all imputation of abusing the power which he now resigns to Saul, ver. 1—5. He reminds them of the great things God had done, ver. 6—13. He sets before them the blessing and the curse, ver. 14, 15. He calls upon God for thunder, ver. 16—19. He encourages and exhorts them, ver. 20—25.*

argued still greater nobleness of mind, and benevolence, and mildness of disposition. For nothing is more glorious than to be humble and meek in the height of power.

Ver. 14. *Then said Samuel*—While the people were together by Jabesh-gilead. *Come and let us—renew the kingdom*—That is, confirm our former choice, and more solemnly and unanimously inaugurate Saul for our king. Herein Samuel's great prudence and fidelity to Saul appeared. He suspended the confirmation of Saul at first, whilst the generality of the people were disaffected, and now, when he had given such eminent proof of his princely virtues, and when the people's hearts were eagerly set upon him, he takes this as the fittest season for that work.

Ver. 15. *There they made Saul king*—Owned and accepted him for their king. Saul had been anointed in Ramah, and chosen by lot in Mizpeh; but still some disdained to acknowledge him for their king; which made him content himself for a time with a private life. But now, after this signal token of God's presence with him, in the late victory, he was by common consent received by all the people for their king. *Before the Lord*—Not before the ark, the symbol of God's presence, as the expression sometimes means; for the ark was now at Kirjath-jearim; and not at Gilgal: but in a solemn manner, as in God's presence, appealing to him as a witness of their sincerity in this transaction, and with solemn sacrifices, and prayers for his blessing upon it.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.

**A**ND Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

a Ch. 9. 5.  
19.  
b Ch. 10.  
21.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and gray-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

c Num. 27.  
17.  
d Ch. 8. 1, 5.

3 Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

e Ecclus.  
46. 19.

f Ver. 5.  
Ch. 10. 1.  
g Num. 16.  
15.

† Heb. ransom.  
‡ Or, that I should hide mine eyes at him.  
h Deut. 16.  
19.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, nei-

ther hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.

5 And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

i John 18.  
36.  
k Exod. 22.  
4.

6 ¶ And Samuel said unto the people, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

l Mic. 6. 4.  
Or, made.

7 Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers.

m Isai. 1.  
11.  
† Heb. righteousnesses, or, benefits, Judg. 6. 11.

8 When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth

† Heb. with.  
n Gen. 46. 5.  
o Exod. 3. 23.  
p Exod. 3. 10.

CHAP. XII. Ver. 1. *Samuel said unto all Israel*—While they were assembled together in Gilgal. And this is another instance of Samuel's great wisdom and integrity. He would not reprove the people for their sin, in desiring a king, whilst Saul was unsettled in his kingdom; lest, through their accustomed levity, they should as hastily cast off their king, as they had passionately desired him, and therefore he chooseth this season for it; because Saul's kingdom was now confirmed by an eminent victory: and because the people rejoiced greatly, applauded themselves for their desires of a king; and interpreted the success which God had given them, as a divine approbation of those desires. Samuel, therefore, thinks fit to temper their joys, and to excite them to that repentance which he saw wanting in them, and which he knew to be necessary, to prevent the curse of God upon their new king, and the whole kingdom.

Ver. 2. *The king walketh before you*—Ruleth over you. To him I have fully resigned my power, and own myself one of his subjects. *I am old*—And therefore unable to bear the burden of government. *My sons are with you*—Or, among you, in the same state, private persons, as you are; if they have injured any of you, the law is now open against them; any of you may accuse them, your king can punish them, I do not intercede for them. *Walked before you*—That is, been your guide and governor; partly, as a prophet; and partly, as a judge.

Ver. 3. *Behold, here I am*—I here present myself before the Lord, and before your king, ready to give an account of all my administrations. And this protestation Samuel makes of his integrity, not out of ostentation; but for his own just vindication, that the people might not hereafter, for the defence of their own irregularities, reproach his government; and that being publicly acquitted from all faults in his govern-

ment, he might more freely reprove the sins of the people, and, particularly, that sin of theirs in desiring a king, when they had so little reason for it.

Ver. 5. *The Lord is witness*—There cannot be a stronger or more amiable picture of integrity, than we have in this speech of Samuel. Who can read it without feeling his heart touched with admiration of his character? Happy Samuel, who could thus call a whole kingdom to bear witness to his uprightness! Strange, infatuated people, that could wish to change such a governor for a king possessed of absolute power!

Ver. 7. *Now, therefore, stand still*—Having obtained an honourable testimony from them as to his own conduct, he would not dismiss them till he had represented to them the great benefits which they had received from God, and their ingratitude to him. *Of all the righteous acts of the Lord*—Heb. *the righteousnesses*; that is, mercies or benefits, the chief subject of the following discourse; some of their calamities being but briefly named, and that for the illustration of God's mercy in their deliverances.

Ver. 8. *Made them dwell in this place*—In this land: in which Moses and Aaron are said to settle them; because they brought them into, and seated them in part of it, that without Jordan; because they were, under God, the principal authors of their entering into the land of Canaan; inasmuch as they brought them out of Egypt, conducted them through the wilderness; and there by their prayers to God, and counsels to them, preserved them from ruin, and gave command from God for the distribution of the land among them, and encouraged them to enter into it. And, lastly, Moses substituted Joshua in his stead, and commanded him to seat them there, which he did.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095. your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

q Judg. 3. 7.  
r Judg. 4. 2.  
s Judg. 10. 7.  
t Judg. 3. 12. 9 And when they <sup>a</sup> forgot the LORD their God, <sup>r</sup> he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of <sup>s</sup> the Philistines, and into the hand of the king <sup>t</sup> of Moab, and they fought against them.

u Judg. 10. 10.  
x Judg. 2. 14.  
y Judg. 10. 2b. 10 And they cried unto the LORD, and said, <sup>u</sup> We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, <sup>x</sup> and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now <sup>y</sup> deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

z Judg. 6. 14. 22.  
a Judg. 11. 1.  
b Ch. 7. 13. 11 And the LORD sent <sup>z</sup> Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and <sup>a</sup> Jephthah, and <sup>b</sup> Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

c Ch. 11. 1. 12 And when ye saw that <sup>c</sup> Nahash the king of the children of Am-

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095.  
d Ch. 8. 3. 19.  
e Judg. 3. 23. Ch. 8. 7.  
f Ch. 10. 24.  
g Ch. 8. 5. & 9. 20.  
h Hos. 13. 11.  
i Josh. 21. 14.  
j Heb. mouth.  
k Lev. 26. 14.  
l Ver. 9.  
m Exod. 14. 13, 31. mon came against you, <sup>d</sup> ye said unto me; Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when <sup>e</sup> the LORD your God *was* your king.

13 Now therefore <sup>f</sup> behold the king <sup>g</sup> whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye have desired! and, behold, <sup>h</sup> the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 If ye will <sup>i</sup> fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the <sup>j</sup> commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you <sup>k</sup> continue following the LORD your God:

15 But if ye will <sup>k</sup> not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, <sup>l</sup> as *it was* against your fathers.

16 ¶ Now therefore <sup>m</sup> stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

Ver. 9. *They forgot the Lord*—That is, they revolted from him, and carried themselves, as if they had wholly forgotten his innumerable favours. This he says to answer an objection, that the reason why they desired a king, was, because in the time of the judges they were at great uncertainties, and often exercised with sharp afflictions: to which he answereth by concession that they were so; but adds, that they themselves were the cause of it, by their forgetting God: so that it was not the fault of that kind of government, but their transgressing the rules of it. *Fought*—With success, and subdued them.

Ver. 11. *And Bedan*—We have no mention of Bedan in the book of Judges, or elsewhere, before, and therefore many commentators think that this is another name for Barak. Others, however, think Samson to be the person here meant, being here called *Ben-Dan*, the son of Dan, or *Be-Dan*, that is, *in or of Dan*, because he was of that tribe, and to signify that they had no reason to distrust God, who could raise so eminent a saviour out of so obscure a tribe. *And ye dwelled safe*—So that it was not necessity, but mere wantonness that made you desire a change.

Ver. 12. *When ye saw that Nahash—came against you, &c.*—From this it appears that Nahash had levied war against them some time before he came against Jabesh-gilead, as mentioned in the foregoing chapter; and that they took occasion from thence to demand a king, as being fearful and impatient of staying till God should raise them up a deliverer, or command Samuel, who was their judge, to go out to fight against him. *When the Lord your God was your king*—That is, when

God was your immediate king and governor, who was both able and willing to deliver you, if you had cried to him, whereof you and your ancestors have had plentiful experience; so that you did not at all need any other king; and your desire of another, was a manifest reproach against God.

Ver. 13. *Behold the king whom ye have chosen*—Though God chose him by lot, yet the people are said to choose him; either generally, because they chose that form of government; or particularly, because they approved of God's choice, and confirmed it. *The Lord hath set a king over you*—He hath yielded to your inordinate desire.

Ver. 14. *Then, &c.*—Heb. *then shall—ye—be*, (that is, walk, or go) *after the Lord*; that is, God shall still go before you, as he hath hitherto done, as your leader or governor, to direct, protect, and deliver you; and he will not forsake you, as you have given him just cause to do. Sometimes this phrase of *going after the Lord*, signifies a man's obedience to God; but here it is otherwise to be understood, and denotes not a duty to be performed, but a privilege to be received upon the performance of their duty; because it is opposed to a threatening denounced in case of disobedience, in the next verse.

Ver. 15. *As it was against your fathers*—Who lived under the judges; and you shall have no advantage by the change of government, nor shall your kings be able to protect you against God's displeasure. We mistake, if we think we can evade God's justice by shaking off his dominion. If we will not let God rule us, yet he will judge us.

A. M. 2909.  
B. C. 1095. 17 *Is it not* <sup>a</sup> wheat harvest to-day? <sup>o</sup> I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that <sup>p</sup> your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

q Exod. 14.  
31. 18 ¶ So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and <sup>a</sup> all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

r Exod. 9.  
26. 19 And all the people said unto Samuel, <sup>r</sup> Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.

20 ¶ And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

s Deut. 11.  
16.  
t Jer. 16.19. 21 And <sup>s</sup> turn ye not aside: <sup>t</sup> for *then should ye go after vain things,*

which cannot profit nor deliver; for <sup>u</sup> they are vain.

22 For <sup>u</sup> the LORD will not for-sake his people <sup>v</sup> for his great name's sake: because <sup>v</sup> it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD <sup>†</sup> in ceasing to pray for you: but <sup>a</sup> I will teach you the <sup>b</sup> good and the right way:

24 <sup>c</sup> Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for <sup>d</sup> consider ¶ how <sup>e</sup> great *things* he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, <sup>f</sup> ye shall be consumed, <sup>g</sup> both ye and your king.

CHAP. XIII.

*Saul and Jonathan's life-guard, ver. 1, 2. Jonathan smites a garrison, and the people are called together, ver. 3, 4. The Philistines come up, and the Israelites are terrified, ver. 5--7. Saul's*

Ver. 17. *Is it not wheat harvest to-day*—At which time it was a rare thing in those parts to have thunder or rain; the weather being more constant in its seasons than it is with us, and the rain being wont to fall periodically, only in the autumn and the spring, called the former and latter rain. *He shall send thunder and rain*—That you may understand that God is displeased with you, and see how foolishly and wickedly you have acted, in rejecting the government of that God, at whose command are all things, both in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 18. *The Lord sent thunder and rain*—Such was the power and favour with God that this man of God possessed! By this thunder and rain, God shewed them their folly in desiring a king to save them, rather than God or Samuel, expecting more from an arm of flesh than from the arm of God, or from the power of prayer. Could their king *thunder with a voice like God's*? Could their prince command such forces as the prophet could by his prayers? Likewise he intimates, that how serene soever their condition was now, (like the weather in wheat harvest) yet if God pleased he could soon change the face of the heavens, and *persecute them with his storms*.

Ver. 19—21. *The Lord thy God*—Whom thou hast so great an interest in, while we are ashamed and afraid to call him our God. *Fear not*—With a desponding fear, as if there were no hope left for you. *But turn not ye aside*—After idols; as they had often done before; and, notwithstanding this warning, did afterwards. *Vain things*—So idols are call-

ed, Deut. xxxii. 21; Jer. ii. 5; and so they are, being mere *nothings*, having no power in them; no influence upon us, nor being of any use or benefit to us.

Ver. 22. *His name's sake*—That is, for his own honour, which would suffer much among men, if he should not preserve and deliver his people in imminent dangers. And this reason God allegeth, to take them off from all conceit of their own merit; and to assure them, that if they did truly repent of all their sins, and serve God with all their hearts, yet even in that case their salvation would not be due to their merits, but the effect of God's free mercy. *To make you his people*—Out of his own free grace, without any desert of yours, and therefore he will not forsake you, except you thrust him away.

Ver. 24. *Only fear the Lord, and serve him with truth, &c.*—Otherwise neither my prayers nor counsels will stand you in any stead. Thus we see that amidst all the changes of the Hebrew state, their prophets steadily inculcated one and the same great principle, viz. that of fearing and serving the one true and living God, in spirit and in truth. Whether Moses or Joshua, the elders, or judges, or kings, were their governors, this great point was kept in view, and pursued still. And this indeed was the end of the divine providence in selecting this people: to preserve and spread among mankind the knowledge and worship of the true God, and obedience to his will was the great point in view, in the divine counsels, in all that was done to, and for the Israelites. And this great purpose, notwithstanding all their revolts and rebel-

A.M. 2911.  
B.C. 1093. sacrifices, ver. 8--10. *As reproved by Samuel,* ver. 11--14. *The people diminished, plundered, and disarmed,* ver. 15--23.

† Heb. the son of one year in his reigning.

**S**AUL † reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

oir. 1093.

a Ch. 10. 26.

2 Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in <sup>a</sup>Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

b Ch. 10. 3.

3 ¶ And Jonathan smote <sup>b</sup> the garrison of the Philistines that was in || Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.

† Or, the hill.

4 And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also † was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

† Heb. did drink, Gen. 34. 30.

5 ¶ And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people

as the sand which is on the sea-shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.

A.M. 2911.  
B.C. 1093.

6 ¶ When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people <sup>c</sup> did hide themselves in caves, <sup>c</sup> Judg. 6. 2. and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

7 And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people † followed him trembling.

† Heb. trembled after him.

8 ¶ <sup>d</sup> And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

d Ch. 10. 8.

9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And he offered the burnt-offering.

10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might † salute him.

† Heb. bless him.

lions, was still carried on, at least in a measure, and accomplished.

CHAP. XIII. Ver. 3, 4. *Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines*—The Philistines, though subdued by Samuel at Ebenezer, and driven out of the country, yet still retained possession of some strong-holds. *Saul blew the trumpet*—That is, he sent messengers to tell them all what Jonathan had done, and how the Philistines were enraged at it, and therefore what necessity there was of gathering themselves together for their own defence. *Israel heard that Saul had smitten, &c.*—Perhaps contrary to some treaty. *That Israel was held in abomination with the Philistines*—That is, that they were highly incensed to take revenge.

Ver. 5. *Thirty thousand chariots*—The Syriac and Arabic copies mention only three thousand chariots, which seems to be the true reading; for there is no foundation for believing that the Philistines could bring into the field thirty thousand chariots of war. Indeed we read of nothing like it in all history. Or, we may suppose that most of them were but carriages for the baggage of the army.

Ver. 6. *Israel saw that they were in a strait*—Though

their wonderful success against the Ammonites had encouraged them to obey the summons of such a prosperous leader as Saul had been; yet when they saw the vast army of the Philistines, how well they were appointed, and themselves unprovided, their hearts failed them, and they slunk away from him as fast as they had flocked to him. *The people were distressed*—Notwithstanding their former presumption, that if they had a king they would be free from all such difficulties and distresses. Hereby God intended to teach them the vanity of confidence in men; and that they did not one jot less need his help now, than they did when they had no king. And probably they were the more discouraged, because they did not find Samuel with Saul. Sooner or later men will be made to see, that God and his prophets are their best friends.

Ver. 7, 8. *Some of the Hebrews went over Jordan*—They fled as far as they could from the present danger, even into the country of the two tribes and a half. *All the people followed him trembling*—That is, all that were left, who, it appears, were not many. *He tarried seven days*—Not seven complete days, for the last day was not finished. *According to the set time that Samuel had appointed*—This seems to

A. M. 9911.  
B. C. 1093.

11 ¶ And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

12 Therefore said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not † made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: † thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14 <sup>g</sup> But now thy kingdom shall

not continue: <sup>h</sup> the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.

15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people *that were* † present with him, <sup>1</sup> about six hundred men.

16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people *that were* present with them, abode in † Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

17 ¶ And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way *that leadeth* to <sup>k</sup> Ophrah, unto the land of Shual:

A. M. 9911.  
B. C. 1093.  
<sup>h</sup> Ps. 99. 20.<sup>†</sup> Heb. found.  
<sup>1</sup> Ch. 14. 2.<sup>†</sup> Heb. Gibeah,  
Ver. 3.<sup>k</sup> Josh. 18. 23.<sup>†</sup> Heb. *in-  
treated  
the face.*<sup>e</sup> 2 Chron. 16. 9.  
<sup>†</sup> Ch. 15. 11.<sup>g</sup> Ch. 15. 28.

refer to the command given two years before, and recorded Chap. x. 8: See the note on that verse. *But Samuel came not to Gilgal*—So soon as Saul expected him.

Ver. 11, 12. *I saw that—thou camest not*—When the seventh day was come, and a good part of it was past, I concluded thou wouldst not come that day. *I have not made supplication*—Hence it appears that sacrifices were accompanied with solemn prayers. *I forced myself*—I did it against my own mind and inclination: I offered a burnt-offering lest my enemies should attack me before I had commended myself and my cause to God, and entreated his aid and blessing.

Ver. 13. *The Lord would have established thy kingdom for ever*—The phrase, *for ever*, in Scripture, often signifies only a long time. And this declaration would have been abundantly verified, if the kingdom had been enjoyed by Saul, and by his son, and by his son's son; after whom the kingdom might have come to Judah.

Ver. 14. *A man after his own heart*—That is, such a man as will fulfil all the desires of his heart, and not oppose them as thou dost. *The Lord hath commanded*—That is, hath appointed, as the word *commanded* is often used. But although God threatened Saul with the loss of his kingdom for his sin, yet, it is not improbable, there was a tacit condition implied, viz. if he did not repent of this, and of all his sins; for the full, and final, and peremptory sentence of Saul's rejection is plainly ascribed to another cause, Chap. xv. 11, 23—29; and, till that second offence, neither the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, nor was David anointed in his stead. But, "Was not this a severe sentence now passed on Saul? Was it not hard to punish so little a sin with the loss of his kingdom?" Not to mention that no sin is little, because God, against whom all sin is committed, is a being of infinite

majesty; and not to insist that what to men seems a small offence, to him, who knows the heart, may appear a heinous crime; this sin of Saul certainly can in no point of view be thought little, being an act of manifest disobedience to a known and express command of God; and disobedience to God, though in a small matter, is a great provocation. "Samuel expressly says, *Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee*. What was this commandment? Why, not only to wait seven days till Samuel came to assist at the sacrifice, but to receive God's direction, by the prophet, *what he should do*, or what measures he was to take upon the invasion of the Philistines, and not to act in so critical a conjuncture without his orders. Saul, under a pretence of piety, *and making supplication to the Lord*, absolutely contradicts the command, thinks himself above waiting for the prophet, takes upon himself the ordinance of an affair that no way belonged to him; and, as though God's direction by the prophet was of no consequence to him, resolves to act for himself, and deal with the Philistines as well as he could. Let any inferior prince thus violate the orders of his sovereign, and act in any affair of importance directly contrary to his instructions and duty, and no one will scruple to pronounce him guilty of rebellion, or think he was too hardly treated by being removed from his dignity and government."—Dodd, and Chandler.

Ver. 15—17. *Saul numbered the people—about six hundred men*—A strange alteration since the last year, when going out against the Ammonites, he had 300,000 with him, besides those of Judah, Chap. xi. 6. *Saul—and the people—abode in Gibeah*—This was a strong place, in which they could defend themselves better than in the open field. *The spoilers came out—in three companies*—The Philistines sent

A. M. 3917.  
B. C. 1057. 18 And another company turned the way to <sup>1</sup>Beth-horon: and another company turned to the way of the border that looketh to the valley of <sup>m</sup>Zeboim toward the wilderness.

1 Josh. 16.  
3. 19 ¶ Now <sup>n</sup>there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make *them* swords or spears:

20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coultter, and his ax, and his mattock.

1 Heb. a file with mouths. 21 Yet they had † a file for the mattocks, and for the coultters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and † to sharpen the goads.

1 Heb. so  
ect. 22 So it came to pass in the day of battle, that <sup>o</sup>there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that *were* with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

out parties three several ways, to ravage the country, there being none to oppose them. This, we find from sundry instances, was the method which the enemies of Israel usually took to distress them.

Ver. 19. *There was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel*—To this miserable condition the Philistines had reduced them during the forty years tyranny which they exercised over them, as we read Judges xiii. 1. But after Samuel had put an end to that tyranny, by the great overthrow which he gave the Philistines at Ebenezer, it seems something strange they had not restored their artificers. But the sloth of the Israelites appears in their whole story: and it was not easy, in so short a time, for men to learn this trade; which the Philistines wisely destroyed, as the Chaldeans, when they took Jerusalem, carried away all the smiths to Babylon; that they who remained in the land might not arm themselves again, 2 Kings xxiv. 14.

Ver. 20, 21. *The Israelites went down to the Philistines*—Not to the country of the Philistines, for that was too far from many parts of the land of Israel; but to their garrisons, which they held among them even after Samuel had driven the main body of them out of the country. In these, it seems, the Philistines kept all the smiths, and there they allowed them to exercise their art for the uses following. *Yet they had a file, &c.*—They were allowed some proper instruments and tools for sharpening their implements of husbandry, in some degree; but no other.

23 <sup>p</sup>And the ¶ garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.

A. M. 3917.  
B. C. 1057.  
p Ch. 14. l. 4.  
¶ Or, standing camp.

## CHAP. XIV.

*Jonathan proposes to his armour-bearer the attacking of the Philistine's army, ver. 1—10. They make the attack; the Philistines are terrified, ver. 11—15. They slay one another, and are pursued by the Israelites; ver. 16—23. Saul adjures the people to eat nothing till night; Jonathan eats honey, ver. 24—30. The people smite the Philistines, and eat the spoil with the blood, ver. 31, 32. Saul remedies this, ver. 33—35. Dooms Jonathan to death, who is rescued by the people, ver. 36—46. A general account of Saul's exploits and family, ver. 47—52.*

**N**OW ¶ it came to pass upon a Or, there was a day. day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father.

2 And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pome-

Ver. 22. *There was neither sword nor spear*—This, it seems, must be restrained to the six hundred that were with Saul and Jonathan; for there were, no doubt, a considerable number of swords and spears among the Israelites, but they generally hid them, as now they did their persons, from the Philistines. And the Philistines had not yet attained to so great a power over them, as wholly to disarm them, but thought it sufficient to prevent the making of new arms, knowing that the old ones would shortly be decayed and useless. There were likewise other arms more common in those times and places than swords and spears; to wit, bows and arrows, and slings and stones. And besides these, people anciently often used clubs, wherewith to beat down their enemies; and, before the invention of spears with iron points, they had sharp stakes hardened in the fire, as many authors inform us.

Ver. 23. *And the garrison of the Philistines went out*—This probably refers to the garrison mentioned in the beginning of the next chapter. And Michmash seems to have been the name of the garrison, not of the passage: as if it had been said, *The garrison of the Philistines in Michmash went out to the passage.* For Michmash, it appears, was upon an high hill, as Gibeah was; between which places was a valley, called here a passage; into which the garrison descended to invite the Israelites to battle.

CHAP. XIV. Ver. 2. *Saul tarried in the uttermost part*



A.M. 9917.  
B.C. 1087.

granate tree which *is* in Migron :  
and the people that *were* with him  
*were* <sup>a</sup>about six hundred men ;

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 19.  
15.  
<sup>b</sup> Ch. 22. 9,  
11, 20,  
called *A-*  
*himelech.*  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. 4. 21.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. 2. 26.  
<sup>e</sup> Ch. 13. 22.  
<sup>f</sup> Heb.  
tooth.  
cir. 1087.

3 And <sup>b</sup>Ahiah, the son of Ahitub,  
<sup>c</sup>I-chabod's brother, the son of Phi-  
nehas, the son of Eli, the LORD's  
priest in Shiloh, <sup>d</sup>wearing an ephod.  
And the people knew not that Jona-  
than was gone.

4 And between the passages, by  
which Jonathan sought to go over  
unto the Philistines' garrison, *there*  
*was* a sharp rock on the one side,  
and a sharp rock on the other side :  
and the name of the one *was* Bozez,  
and the name of the other Seneh.

5 The <sup>†</sup>forefront of the one *was*  
situate northward over against Mich-  
mash, and the other southward over  
against Gibeah.

6 And Jonathan said to the young  
man that bare his armour, Come,  
and let us go over unto the garrison  
of these uncircumcised : it may be

that the LORD will work for us : for  
there is no restraint to the LORD <sup>f</sup>to  
save by many or by few.

7 And his armour-bearer said un-  
to him, Do all that *is* in thine heart :  
turn thee ; behold, I *am* with thee  
according to thy heart.

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold,  
we will pass over unto *these* men,  
and we will discover ourselves unto  
them.

9 If they say thus unto us, <sup>†</sup>Tarry  
until we come to you ; then we will  
stand still in our place, and will not  
go up unto them.

10 But if they say thus, Come up  
unto us ; then we will go up : for  
<sup>g</sup>the LORD hath delivered them into  
our hand : and <sup>h</sup>this *shall be* a sign  
unto us.

11 And both of them discovered  
themselves unto the garrison of the  
Philistines : and the Philistines said,  
Behold, the Hebrews come forth out

of Gibeah—In the out-works of the city, where he had in-  
trenched himself to observe the motions of the Philistines.  
Under a pomegranate tree—A grove of pomegranate trees.  
Which is in (or towards) Migron—A place near Gibeah.

Ver. 3. *And Ahiah, the son of Ahitub*—The high priest,  
who was here to attend upon the ark, which had been  
brought hither, Ver. 18. *The son of Eli, the Lord's priest*  
*in Shiloh*—These last words manifestly belong, not to Ahiah  
but to Eli, who was high priest while the tabernacle was at  
Shiloh. *Wearing an ephod*—Or rather, *the ephod* ; that is,  
the high priest's ephod, comprehending the breast-plate with  
the *Urim* and *Thummim*, which were inseparable from it.  
These Ahiah, being high-priest, now wore. Saul being  
now in great distress, probably had sent for Ahiah, that he  
might consult God for him, as there should be occasion.

Ver. 4. *Between the passages*—Two passages, both which  
Jonathan must cross, to go to the Philistines, and between  
which the following rocks lay, but the words may be rendered,  
*in the middle of the passage* ; the plural number being put  
for the singular. *There was a sharp rock*—Which is not to  
be understood, as if in this passage one rock was on the  
right hand, and the other on the left ; for so he might have  
gone between both : and there was no need of climbing up  
to them. But the meaning is, that *the tooth* (or prominence)  
*of one rock*, (as it is in the Hebrew) *was on the one side* ;  
that is, northward, looking towards Michmash (the garrison  
of the Philistines) and *the tooth of the other rock was on the*  
*other side* ; that is, southward, looking towards Gibeah,  
(where Saul's camp lay) : and Jonathan was forced to climb

over these two rocks, because the common ways from one  
town to the other were obstructed.

Ver. 6. *The garrison of these uncircumcised*—So he calls  
them, to strengthen his faith by this consideration, that his  
enemies were enemies to God ; whereas he was circumcised,  
and therefore in covenant with God, who was both able, and  
engaged to assist his people. *It may be*—He speaks doubt-  
fully ; for though he felt himself stirred up by God to this ex-  
ploit, and was assured that God would deliver his people ;  
yet he was not certain that he would do it at this time, and in  
this way. *That the Lord will work*—Great and wonderful  
things. *There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or*  
*few*—From this it appears that Jonathan had a true faith in  
the power of God, being fully persuaded that he could do  
every thing, and needed not the help or co-operation of na-  
tural causes.

Ver. 10. *This shall be a sign unto us*—Jonathan, not being  
assured of the success of this intended exploit, desires a sign,  
and by the instinct of God's Spirit pitches on this. He could  
upon no good ground have spoken in this manner without an  
impulse from God, who often suggested such thoughts and  
resolutions unto good men's minds in ancient times, as we  
see in the example of Abraham's servant, Gen. xxiv. 14, &c.  
God, we must observe, has the governing of the hearts and  
tongues of all men, even of those that know him not, and  
serves his own purposes by them, though they mean not so,  
neither do their hearts think so.

Ver. 11, 12. *Both of them discovered themselves*—At the  
bottom of the rocks. *Come up to us, &c.*—A speech of con-

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1057.

of the holes where they had hid themselves.

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer, Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were || an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plough.

15 ¶ And there was trembling

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1057.

in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and <sup>k</sup>the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was †<sup>l</sup>a very great trembling.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they <sup>m</sup>went on beating down <sup>n</sup>one another.

17 ¶ Then said Saul unto the people that *were* with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armour-bearer *were not there*.

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.

19 And it came to pass, while

Or, half a furrow of an acre of land.  
Judg. 7.  
21.

12 Kings 7.  
7.  
Job 18.  
11.

tempt and derision. *The Lord hath delivered them, &c.*—Jonathan, hearing those of the garrison make use of the very words which he had fixed on as a sign of victory, immediately concluded that God had influenced their minds and tongues, and thereby caused them to use the words, and would certainly render his designed attempt successful. And he piously and modestly ascribes the success, which he now foresees, to God only. And he does not say, *into our hand*, but *into the hand of Israel*; for he sought not his own glory, but the public good. His faith being thus strengthened, nothing can stand against him: he climbs the rock upon all-four, though he had nothing to cover him, none to second him, nor any probability of any thing but death before him.

Ver. 13. *They fell before Jonathan*—It is probable that the garrison, after they had spoken to Jonathan and his armour-bearer, concerned themselves no further about them, so that they climbed up unperceived, and fell upon the Philistines unawares, and perhaps when they were unarmed. And being endowed with extraordinary strength and courage, and having, with incredible boldness, killed the first they met with, it is not strange if the Philistines were both astonished and intimidated; God also struck them with a panic; and withal, infatuated their minds, and possibly put an evil spirit among them, which in this universal confusion made them conceive that there was treachery among themselves, and therefore caused them to sheathe their swords in one another's bowels.

Ver. 14, 15. *Within an half acre of land*—The garrison seems to have been divided into several bands, and posted upon several craggy eminences; for this first party that Jonathan attacked seems to have been quite separate from the rest. *There was a trembling in the host*—That is, in the

whole host which was in the field. The Philistines hearing of this slaughter of the twenty men, undoubtedly concluded that they had been attacked by a considerable number of Israelites, which put them into a great consternation. *Among all the people*—That is, among all the rest of their forces, as well as those in the garrison at Michmash, and the spoilers, mentioned Chap. xiii. 17; the report of this prodigy, and with it the terror of God, speedily passing from one to another. The Hebrew is, *a trembling of God*, signifying not only a very great trembling, but such as was supernatural, and came immediately from the hand of God. He that made the heart knows how to make it tremble. To complete their confusion, even *the earth quaked*; it shook under them, and made them fear it was just going to swallow them up. Those who will not fear the eternal God, he can make afraid of a shadow.

Ver. 16, 17. *Behold the multitude melted away*—Were discomfited and scattered; so that fewer and fewer were seen in a company together. *They went on beating down one another*—Not being able in this confusion to distinguish their friends from their enemies. *Then said Saul—Number now, &c.*—Saul, upon the report of the watchmen concerning the seeming confusion in the army of the Philistines, concluded that some of his people had gone out unknown, and attacked them. He therefore ordered them to be numbered, to see who were missing.

Ver. 18, 19. *Saul said—Bring hither the ark of God*—Finding only Jonathan and his armour-bearer missing, Saul did not know what to conclude, and therefore called in all haste for Ahiah the priest, to inquire of the Lord concerning it, and in what manner he and the people with him were to act. But before the priest had performed his office, the rout and flight of the Philistines were perceived so plainly that Saul

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1097.  
a Num. 27.  
1 Or. tu-  
mult.

Saul <sup>a</sup> talked unto the priest, that the **||** noise that *was* in the host of the Philistines went on and increased: and Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine hand.

† Heb. were  
cried to-  
gether.

20 And Saul and all the people that *were* with him † assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, <sup>o</sup> every man's sword was against his fellow, *and there was* a very great discomfiture.

o Judg. 7.  
22.  
2 Chron.  
20, 23.

21 ¶ Moreover the Hebrews *that were* with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp *from the country* round about, even they also *turned* to be with the Israelites that *were* with Saul and Jonathan.

p Ch. 13. 6.

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which <sup>p</sup> had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, *when* they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.

q Exod. 14.  
20.  
Ps. 44. 6.  
7. Hos. 1.  
7.

23 <sup>q</sup> So the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over <sup>r</sup> unto Beth-aven.

r Ch. 13. 6.

24 ¶ And the men of Israel were

called to the priest to desist, or, as it is expressed, to *withdraw his hand*, as there was no occasion for further inquiry, it being plain what the matter was, and what they had to do.

Ver. 20, 21. *There was a very great discomfiture*—Viz. in the army of the Philistines; which, it is likely, consisted of various nations, and in the confusion into which they were thrown, they fell upon one another, not distinguishing friends from enemies. *The Hebrews that were with the Philistines*—Having gone with their army, either by constraint, as servants, or in policy, to gain their favour and protection. *They also turned to be with the Israelites*—In the midst of this battle they went over to their own countrymen.

Ver. 23. *The Lord saved Israel that day*—Their deliverance was evidently effected by him, and that by means very extraordinary, and such as could have produced no such effect without his almighty power working thereby. *The battle passed over unto Beth-aven*—That is, the warriors that were engaged in the battle, and were pursuing the Philistines.

Ver. 24. *The men of Israel were distressed that day*—With hunger, and weakness, and faintness, and all by reason of the following rash and inconsiderate oath, whereby Saul had foolishly adjured them, and to which, it is probable, they had consented. *Saying, Cursed be the man that catch any food until evening*—Saul's intention in putting this oath was undoubtedly to save time, lest the Philistines should gain

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1087.  
o Josh. 6. 26.

distressed that day: for Saul had <sup>o</sup> adjured the people, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted *any* food.

† Deut. 9.  
29.  
Matt. 23. 5.  
a Exod. 3. 6.  
Num. 13.  
27.  
Matt. 3.  
4.

25 <sup>†</sup> And all *they* of the land came to a wood: and there was <sup>a</sup> honey upon the ground.

26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath.

27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that *was* in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food this day. And the people were **||** faint.

Or, weary.

ground of them in their flight. But the event shewed it was a false policy; for the people were so faint and weak for want of food, that they were less able to follow and slay the Philistines than if they had stopped to take a moderate refreshment. *That I may be avenged of mine enemies*—As Saul's intention was good, so the matter of the obligation was not simply unlawful, if it had not been so rigorous in excluding all food, and in obliging the people to it under pain of an accursed death, which was a punishment far exceeding the fault.

Ver. 25. *All they of the land*—The six hundred that were with Saul, and who were now engaged in the pursuit of the Philistines, are chiefly intended here. Many others, however, from different parts of the neighbouring country, had begun to flock in, and join them as soon as they understood that their enemies fled. *There was honey upon the ground*—Which had dropped, as was usual, from the hollow trees, or the clefts of rocks, where bees were wont to make their combs in that country, as they also use to do in many others, and even upon the very ground.

Ver. 27, 28. *His eyes were enlightened*—He was refreshed, and recovered his lost spirits. This cleared his sight, which was grown dim by hunger and faintness. *Then answered one of the people*—One of them that came with Saul, whose forces were now united with Jonathan's.

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1087.

29 Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

31 ¶ And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were very faint.

32 ¶ And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew *them* on the ground: and the people did eat *them* with the blood.

x Lev. 3.  
17. & 7.  
26. & 17.  
10. & 19.  
26. Dent.  
12. 16. & 22.  
21.

33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have ||transgressed: roll a great stone unto me this day.

Or, dealt  
treacherously.

34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay *them* here, and eat; and sin

Ver. 30. *How much more if the people had eaten freely*—They would have been able to pursue them more swiftly, and to have done greater execution upon them, than they could when they were faint. Thus men, by their rashness, hinder what they most desire.

Ver. 32. *The people flew on the spoil*—Like ravenous birds. They were so faint and hungry that, in the evening, when the pursuit was given over, they seized upon, and devoured what was eatable of the spoil, and had not patience to wait the killing and draining of the blood from the beasts, in the manner it ought to have been done according to the law. *But did eat them with (or rather in) the blood*—Thus they who made conscience of obeying the king's commandment, for fear of the curse, made no scruple of transgressing God's command.

Ver. 33, 34. *Ye have transgressed*—He sees their fault, but not his own, in giving the occasion of it. *Disperse yourselves among the people*—Saul sends out his officers to charge the people that, when any more beasts were to be killed by or for any of them, they should bring them to a particular place,

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1087.

not against the LORD in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox † with him that night, and slew *them* there.

† Heb. in his hand.

35 ¶ And Saul <sup>y</sup> built an altar unto the LORD: † the same was the first altar that he built unto the LORD.

y Ch. 7. 17.  
† Heb. that altar he began to build unto the LORD.

36 ¶ And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.

37 ¶ And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But <sup>z</sup> he answered him not that day.

z Ch. 29. 6.

38 ¶ And Saul said, <sup>a</sup> Draw ye near hither, all the † chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day.

a Josh. 7. 14.  
Ch. 10. 19.  
† Heb. corners, Judg. 20. 2.

39 For, <sup>b</sup> as the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But *there was not a man among all the people that answered him.*

b 2 Sam. 18. 6.

40 Then said he unto all Israel,

where he had fixed a stone for the purpose, and slay them under the inspection of proper officers.

Ver. 36, 37. *Let us go down after the Philistines by night*—Having thus refreshed themselves in the evening, Saul proposed to them to renew the pursuit, hoping to cut off the whole army of the Philistines when they were asleep in the night. *Then said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God*—To the ark, in order to inquire of God. It is probable he stood before the altar, and wished to remind them that it was dangerous to undertake any thing without God's direction. *He answered him not that day*—Though the priest, it seems, often asked an answer, yet he received none.

Ver. 39. *As the Lord liveth*—Here again we have a proof of Saul's rashness and folly, and of the violence and impetuosity of his temper. As he had before adjured the people, and exposed them to an execration uttered most inconsiderately; so now he lays himself under an execration to put to death, as it turned out, even his son Jonathan, who had been the first and almost sole instrument of effecting this glorious deli-

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1097. Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, ¶ <sup>c</sup> Give a perfect lot. <sup>d</sup> And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people † escaped.

<sup>f</sup> Or, Show the innocent.  
<sup>c</sup> Prov. 16. 33.  
<sup>d</sup> Acts 1. 26.  
<sup>d</sup> Josh. 7. 16.  
Ch. 10. 20, 21.  
† Heb. went forth.

42 And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, <sup>e</sup> Tell me what thou hast done. And <sup>f</sup> Jonathan told him, and said, 'I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die.

verance for Israel, and that for no other fault than tasting a little honey, without knowing that he had thereby exposed himself to his father's curse. *But not a man answered him*—None of those that saw Jonathan eating, informed against him; because they were satisfied that his ignorance excused him; and from their great love to Jonathan, whom they would not expose to death for so small an offence.

Ver. 41, 42. *Give a perfect lot*—Or, *Declare the perfect, or guiltless person*. That is, O Lord, so guide the lot, that it may discover who is guilty in this matter, and who innocent. *The people escaped*—They were pronounced guiltless. *Jonathan was taken*—God so ordered the lot; not that he approved Saul's execration, Ver. 24, or his oath that the transgressor should die, Ver. 39, nor that he would expose Jonathan to death; but that Saul's folly might be chastised, when he saw what danger it had brought upon his eldest and most excellent son; and that Jonathan's innocency might be cleared.

Ver. 44, 45. *Thou shalt surely die, Jonathan*—This again was most rashly spoken. Saul, however, seems to have been influenced by a real fear of God, and certainly is to be commended for having a greater regard to his oath than to his kindred and natural affection. *The people said, Shall Jonathan die?*—Hitherto they had expressed themselves in a way that manifested their obedience to Saul, and acquiesced in what seemed good to him. But now, that Jonathan is in danger, Saul's word is no longer a law to them; but with the utmost zeal they oppose the execution of his sentence. *Who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel*—Shall that life be sacrificed which was so bravely exposed for the public service, and to which we owe our lives and triumphs? No, we will never stand by and see him thus treated whom God has delighted to honour. *As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground*—Saul had sworn that he should die; but they oppose their oath to his, and swear he shall not die. They did not rescue him by violence, but by reason and resolution. And Josephus says, "they offered prayers to God that he would forgive Jonathan's sin," and

44 And Saul answered, <sup>g</sup> God do so, and more also: <sup>h</sup> for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.

A. M. 2917.  
B. C. 1097.  
g Ruth 1. 17.  
h Ver. 39.

45 And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: <sup>i</sup> as the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

1 2 Sam. 14.  
11.  
1 Kings 1.  
33. Luke  
21. 18.

46 Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

47 ¶ So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of

that he might be loosed from the curse. *He hath wrought with God this day*—It is plain the blessing and favour of God has been with him. It has been in concurrence with God that he has wrought this salvation. And God is so far from being offended with Jonathan, that he hath graciously owned him in the great services of this day. We may suppose Saul had not so perfectly forgot the relation of a father, but that he was willing enough to have Jonathan rescued, and well pleased to have that done which yet he would not do himself; and he that knows the heart of a father, knows not how to blame him.

It may be edifying to the reader, and therefore not improper to copy here, the following important observations of a late but anonymous writer, on the foregoing verses:—"It may, at first sight, appear strange that the divine providence should so order things, by giving no answer to the high priest, and causing the lots so to fall, that Jonathan, who appears entirely guiltless, should be brought into imminent danger of his life. If we consider this only in respect to Jonathan, it does indeed appear unaccountable; but if we take in his father Saul, it will appear to have been an act of divine wisdom. It is manifest, as well from the unnecessary and unprofitable oath that Saul here exacted from the people, as from many other passages of his life, that Saul was of an hasty, precipitate temper. What better lesson then could God give to him, and to all of such hasty, precipitate tempers, than to bring him into the grievous strait of either breaking a solemn oath, or putting his own son to death? That this was the main intention of all that happened on this occasion, appears evident in that God inspired the people with such a courage and love for Jonathan, that they would not, upon any terms, permit even a hair of his head to fall to the ground. For we cannot suppose, if God had intended to punish Jonathan, as guilty of any crime, that the disposition of the people could have prevented his purposes, though they did those of Saul, which had no foundation in justice."

Ver. 47, 48. *Saul took the kingdom*—That is, resumed the administration of it, after he had, in a manner, lost it by the

A. M. 2917. k  
B. C. 1097. **Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of <sup>1</sup>Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.**

1 Or. wrought mightily. m Ch. 14. 8. 7. **48 And he || gathered an host, and <sup>m</sup> smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.**

a Ch. 31. 9. 1 Chron. 8. 33. **49 ¶ Now <sup>n</sup> the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchishua: and the names of his two daughters were these; the name of the first-born Merab, and the name of the younger Michal:**

**50 And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the captain of his host was † Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.**

† Heb. Abinera. o Ch. 9. 1. **51 <sup>o</sup> And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.**

**52 And there was sore war against**

A. M. 2925. B. C. 1079. **the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, <sup>p</sup> he took him <sup>p</sup> Ch. 8. 11. unto him.**

## CHAP. XV.

*God commands Saul utterly to destroy the Amalekites, ver. 1—3. He destroys them, but not utterly, ver. 4—9. Samuel pronounces sentence upon him for his disobedience, yet consents to honour him before the people, ver. 10—31. Slays Agag, ver. 32, 33. Takes his leave of Saul, yet mourns for him, ver. 34, 35.*

**SAMUEL** also said unto Saul, cir. 1079.  
**<sup>a</sup> The LORD sent me to anoint <sup>a</sup> Ch. 9. 16. thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.**

**2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, <sup>b</sup> how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.** b Exod. 17. 8, 14. Num. 24. 20. Deut. 25. 17, 18, 19.

Philistines, who had almost got the entire possession of it, and enslaved Israel. *And fought against all his enemies on every side*—He did not invade them, as may be gathered from the next verse, but repelled them, and kept them within their own limits. He gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites; which war is described, at large, in the next chapter.

Ver. 49. *And Ishui*—Called also Abinadab, Ch. xxxi. 2. Ishbosheth, Saul's other son, is here omitted, because the sacred historian intended to mention only those of Saul's sons who went with him into the battles here recorded, and who were afterwards slain with him.

Ver. 52. *When Saul saw any strong man, he took him*—That is, when he saw any one behave well in battle, or of great strength, he took him into his band to be near to him on all occasions, and to go out to battle with him.

CHAP. XV. Ver. 1, 2. *Hearken thou unto the voice---of the Lord*—Thou hast erred already; now regain God's favour by thy exact obedience to what he commands. *Thus saith the Lord, I remember, &c.*—Now I will avenge those old injuries of the Amalekites on their children, who continue in their parents' practices. God here refers to that most notorious instance of cruelty, inhumanity, and impiety, their invading and destroying, as far as in them lay, by treachery and surprise, and that uninjured and unprovoked, the people of Israel, when they were coming out of Egypt, and were manifestly under the immediate and miraculous protection of Almighty God. "This was a sin," says Dr. Delaney, "at once so inhuman and so atheistical, as perhaps cannot be paralleled. in any one

instance, from the foundation of the world, and therefore it is no wonder if this flagrant act of villainy and impiety produced that dreadful decree against them, recorded Exod. xvii. 14, *I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven: and again, Ver. 16, The Lord hath sworn that he will have war with Amalek, from generation to generation.* To reconcile this severe decree with the principles of justice, and God's own declaration, Ezek. xviii. of his limiting the vengeance of guilt to the person of the offender, we need only to reflect upon one plain observation, with which every day's experience sufficiently furnishes us, that nothing is more common than for children to be unrepentant, and, it may be, improved and inveterate in the sins of their ancestors: and that nothing is more easy to the divine prescience than to foresee this, and to pronounce upon it. And that this was the case of the Amalekites, sufficiently appears from their history. For, as their fathers attempted upon the Israelites, when under the manifest protection of God, their sons continued to do the same upon every occasion, though the same protection became every day more and more conspicuous by many and repeated instances." *When he came out of Egypt*—When he was newly come out of cruel and long bondage, and was now weak, and weary, and faint, and hungry, Deut. xxv. 18; and therefore it was barbarous, instead of that pity which even Nature prompted them to afford, to add affliction to the afflicted; it was also horrid impiety to fight against God himself, and to lift up their hand, in a manner, against the Lord's throne, whilst they struck at that people which God had brought forth in so stupendous a way.

A. M. 9925.  
B. C. 1019.c Lev. 97.  
28, 29.  
Josh. 6.  
17, 21.

3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

Or,  
fought.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and || laid wait in the valley.

d Num. 24.  
21. Judg.  
1. 16. &  
4. 11.e Gen. 18.  
25. & 19.  
14, 14. Rev.  
18. 4.f Exod. 18.  
10, 19.  
Num. 10.  
29, 32.

6 ¶ And Saul said unto <sup>d</sup> the Kenites, <sup>c</sup> Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for <sup>f</sup> ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed

Ver. 3. *Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, &c.*—This heavy sentence was pronounced against them long before, Exod. xvii. 14; and renewed at the Israelites' entrance into Canaan, with a charge not to forget it, Deut. xxv. 19, and now ordered to be put in execution. *Slay both man and woman, infant and suckling*—We are to consider these orders of God, given in Scripture, for the slaying the innocent with the guilty, even children and sucklings who could have done no harm, in the same light as we do a plague or earthquake, or any other of God's judgments in the earth, whereby the guiltless are cut off with the guilty; the reason of which, perhaps, may be, that the guilty, in such calamities, are more grievously afflicted and punished, by the cutting off their harmless children, than they would be by any thing that could befall themselves. And God can, and certainly does, crown elsewhere the innocent with happiness, great enough to reward them amply for the evils that fall upon them here. And, without doubt, every infant, however much its death may be lamented by its parents, receives a great favour and blessing from God by having death bestowed upon it in its infancy; as it is taken away from all the miseries of this life, in order to be made perfectly and eternally happy.

The reason, perhaps, of God's ordering the beasts to be all killed, upon this and some other occasions of this sort, was, that the neighbouring nations might know that these terrible executions of the Israelites upon some particular nations, did not proceed from any views of profit or interest to themselves, but were done in obedience to the commands of the Lord of all, to punish those whose iniquity was full. For, had the Israelites been allowed to spare the cattle (which were then the chief riches of nations) on these occasions, they would have appeared rather as the murderers of these people, for the sake of their riches, than the ministers of God's wrath, to punish nations whose abominations made them ripe for destruction.

Ver. 5. *Saul came to a city of Amalek*—Or, to the city Amalek. For the metropolis of the kingdom seems to be here

from among the Amalekites.

A. M. 2925.  
B. C. 1079.

7 ¶ <sup>g</sup> And Saul smote the Amalekites from <sup>b</sup> Havilah until thou comest to <sup>i</sup> Shur, that is over against Egypt.

g Ch. 14. 10.  
h Gen. 2. 11.  
& 25. 15.  
i Gen. 16. 7.

8 And <sup>k</sup> he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and <sup>l</sup> utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

k 1 Kings 9.  
24, 26, &c.  
l Ch. 30. 1.

9 But Saul and the people <sup>m</sup> spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and || of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

m Ver. 8.  
15.Or, of the  
second  
sort.

10 ¶ Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying,

meant, the name of which some have thought was Amalek. *And laid wait in the valley*—Or fought them in the valley; for they came out to give him battle.

Ver. 6. *Saul said unto the Kenites*—A people descended from, or nearly related to Jethro, who anciently dwelt in rocks near the Amalekites, Numb. xxiv. 21; and afterwards some of them dwelt in Judah, Judges i. 16, whence it is probable they removed (which, dwelling in tents, they could easily do) and retired to their old habitation, because of the wars and troubles wherewith Judah was annoyed. *Ye shewed kindness*—Some of your progenitors did so, and, for their sakes, all of you shall be spared and kindly treated. You were not guilty of that sin for which Amalek is now to be destroyed. When destroying judgments are abroad, God takes care to separate the precious from the vile. It is then especially dangerous to be found in the company of God's enemies. The Jews have a saying, *Wo to a wicked man, and to his neighbour.*

Ver. 7, 8. *To Shur*—That is, from one end of their country to the other; he smote all that he met with: but a great number of them fled away upon the noise of his coming, and secured themselves in other places, till the storm was over. *Destroyed all*—Whom he found. Now they paid dear for the sins of their ancestors. They were themselves guilty of idolatry and numberless sins, for which they deserved to be cut off. Yet, when God would reckon with them, he fixes upon this as the ground of his quarrel.

Ver. 9. *Would not utterly destroy them*—As they had been commanded of God, but took them as a prey to themselves. *Every thing that was vile—they destroyed*—All that was not worth the keeping. Thus they obeyed God as far as they could, without inconvenience and loss to themselves, which is a striking instance of the baseness of human nature, when governed by covetousness, or any such like grovelling affection or appetite.



A.M. 2925.  
B.C. 1079.

Ver. 35.  
Gen. 6.  
1, 7.  
2 Sam. 9.  
16.  
Josh. 99.  
16, 1 Kings  
9, 6.  
Ch. 13, 13.  
Ver. 3, 9.  
Ver. 35.  
Ch. 16, 1.

11 <sup>o</sup> It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is <sup>o</sup> turned back from following me, <sup>o</sup> and hath not performed my commandments. And it <sup>o</sup> grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

r Josh. 15.  
55.

12 ¶ And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

Gen. 14.  
19, Judg.  
17, 7.  
Ruth 3.  
10.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, <sup>s</sup> Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

Ver. 9, 21.  
Gen. 3.  
19, Prov.  
29, 13.

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul,

A.M. 2925.  
B.C. 1079.

Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, <sup>u</sup> When thou <sup>u</sup> wast little in thine own sight, <sup>u</sup> wast thou not <sup>u</sup> made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until <sup>†</sup> they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, <sup>a</sup> I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 <sup>v</sup> But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, <sup>a</sup> Hath the

u Ch. 9, 21.

† Heb. they consume.

Ver. 15.

Ps. 50, 6.  
9, Prov.  
21, 3, Isa.  
1, 11, 12,  
18, 16, 17.  
Jer. 7, 22.  
23, Mic.  
6, 6, 7, 8.  
Hebr. 10,  
6, 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 11. *It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king*—Repentance, properly speaking, implies grief of heart, and a change of counsels. Understood in which sense, it can have no place in God. But it is often ascribed to him in the Scriptures, when he alters his method of dealing with persons, and treats them as if he did indeed repent of the kindness he had shewn them. *He is turned back from following me*—Therefore he did once follow God, otherwise it would have been impossible he should *turn back from following him*. *He cried unto the Lord all night*—To implore his pardoning mercy for Saul and for the people.

Ver. 12, 13. *Behold, he set him up a place*—That is, a monument or trophy of his victory; perhaps a column, or barely a large heap of stones, as was the custom of those early ages. *I have performed the commandment of the Lord*—He makes so little account of the fault he had committed, that he even boasts of his performance.

Ver. 15. *They*—That is, the people, *have brought them from the Amalekites*—Thus he lays the blame upon the people, whereas they could not do it without his consent, and he should have used his power to over-rule them. *To sacrifice*

*unto the Lord thy God*—This was a plausible pretence; but, as the Lord had given express command that nothing should be saved, no more for himself than for them, this excuse could be no more than an instance of mean hypocrisy.

Ver. 18, 19. *The Lord sent thee on a journey*—So easy was the service, and so certain the success, that it was rather to be called a journey than a war. *Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord?*—The command was as plain as words could make it; and there was no reason but his own base covetousness why it was not obeyed.

Ver. 20, 21. *Have brought Agag the king*—To be dealt with as God pleaseth. Strange stupidity! to imagine such a partial obedience could be pleasing unto God. *But the people took of the spoil*—It was a mean thing to throw all the blame on the people whom he ought to have governed better: and, it was worst of all to pretend religion for his disobedience. *The things which should have been utterly destroyed*—Here he shews that he was conscious he had not done as he was commanded.

Ver. 22. *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice*—A most divine admonition this, and inculcated by all the following

A. M. 9945.  
B. C. 1079.

**LORD** as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, <sup>a</sup> to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

a Eccles. 5.  
1. Hos. 6.  
6. Matt. 9.  
13. Mark  
12. 33.

23 For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, <sup>b</sup> he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

† Heb. divination.  
Deut. 18.  
10.

b Ch. 13. 14.

24 ¶ <sup>c</sup> And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I <sup>d</sup> feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

c 2 Sam. 12.  
13.d Exod. 23.  
9. Prov.  
29. 25.  
Isai. 51.  
12. 13.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: <sup>e</sup> for

e Ch. 2. 30.

inspired writers, by David, Solomon, and the prophets; as the reader may see by consulting the margin. Obedience to God is a moral duty, constantly and indispensably necessary; but sacrifice is but a ceremonial institution, sometimes unnecessary, as it was in the wilderness: and sometimes sinful, when it is offered by a polluted hand, or in an irregular manner. Therefore thy gross disobedience to God's express command is not to be compensated with sacrifice. *To hearken*---That is, to obey. *The fat of rams*---Then the choicest part of all the sacrifice.

Ver. 23. *For rebellion*---Disobedience to God's command, *is as the sin of witchcraft*---Or the using divinations, and consulting familiar spirits, is as plainly condemned, and as certainly damnable and destructive. *Stubbornness*---Contumacy, persisting in sin, justifying it and pleading for it, *is as iniquity and idolatry*; or, rather *the iniquity of idolatry*, the highest degree of wickedness. The meaning is, that as Saul had wilfully disobeyed the command of God, he was guilty of rebellion against him; and that wilful, peremptory disobedience to any command of God is, for the nature of it, a most heinous sin, though the matter, in which it is manifested, be ever so small. *The Lord hath rejected thee from being king*---That is, hath pronounced the sentence of rejection; for that he was not now actually deposed by God, plainly appears in that not only the people, but even David, after this owned him as king. Indeed, he continued to be king till the day of his death. He was only actually rejected and deposed when he was slain in battle. But the expression may chiefly respect his posterity, to whom God would not suffer the kingdom to descend.

Ver. 24, 25. *I have sinned*---It does by no means appear, that Saul acts the hypocrite herein, in assigning a false cause of his disobedience. Rather, he nakedly declares the thing as

thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

A. M. 9925.  
B. C. 1079.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, <sup>f</sup> he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

f 1 King. 11.  
30.

28 And Samuel said unto him, <sup>g</sup> The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *that is better than thou*.

g Ch. 98. 17.  
18.  
1 Kings  
11. 31.

29 And also the **Strength** of Israel <sup>h</sup> will not lie nor repent: for *he is not a man, that he should repent*.

h Or, etern-  
nity, or  
victory.  
Numb. 23.  
19. Ezek.  
24. 13.  
2 Tim. 2.  
13. Tit.  
1. 2.

30 Then he said, I have sinned: *yet* <sup>i</sup> honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

i John 5. 44.  
& 19. 43.

31 So Samuel turned again after

it was. *Pardon my sin*---Neither can it be proved, that there was any hypocrisy in this. Rather, charity requires us to believe, that he sincerely desired pardon, both from God and man, as he now knew he had sinned against both.

Ver. 26. *I will not*---This was no lie, though he afterwards returned, because he spoke what he meant; his words and his intentions agreed together, though afterwards he saw reason to change his intentions. Compare Gen. xix. 2, 3. This may relieve many perplexed consciences, who think themselves obliged to do what they have said they would do, though they see just cause to change their minds. *Hath rejected thee, &c.*---But he does not say, he "*hath rejected thee from salvation*." And who besides hath authority to say so?

Ver. 28, 29. *The Lord hath rent the kingdom from thee*---Hath declared his firm resolution of laying aside thy family, and will soon actually take away thy life and thy kingly power. *Also the Strength of Israel*---Who is perfectly able to bring to pass all his purposes, and to make good all his declarations, *will not lie*. He gives God this title, to shew the reason why he neither can nor will lie. For lying generally proceeds from a man's weakness, and inability to accomplish his designs, as he thinks, without it. But God needs no such artifices: he can do whatsoever he pleaseth by his absolute power. *Nor repent*---Change his counsel and purpose, which is also an effect of weakness and imperfection, either of wisdom or power. So that this word is not here used in the sense it is, Ver. 11, and in several other passages, as Gen. vi. 6; Exod. xxxii. 14; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; Jer. xxvi. 19; in all which, and many others, it signifies a change of God's proceedings, and of his method of dealing with persons.

Ver. 31. *So Samuel turned again*---1, That the people might not, upon pretence of this sentence of rejection, withdraw

A. M. 925.  
B. C. 1619.

Saul; and Saul worshipped the LORD.

32 ¶ Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

<sup>h</sup> Exod. 17.  
<sup>11.</sup>  
<sup>11.</sup> Num. 14.  
<sup>43.</sup> Judg.  
<sup>1. 7.</sup>

33 And Samuel said, <sup>k</sup>As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 11. 4.

34 ¶ Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to <sup>l</sup>Gibeah of Saul.

<sup>m</sup> Ch. 19. 24.

35 And <sup>n</sup>Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless, Samuel <sup>n</sup>mourned for Saul: and the LORD <sup>o</sup>repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 11.  
<sup>Ch. 16. 1.</sup>  
<sup>o</sup> Ver. 11.

their obedience from their sovereign; whereby they would both have sinned against God, and have been as sheep without a shepherd. 2, That he might rectify Saul's error, and execute God's judgment upon Agag.

Ver. 32, 33. *Agag came unto him delicately*—Heb. מְדַלֵּם, *magnadannoth*, in delights, or ornaments; that is, he came not like an offender expecting the sentence of death, but in the garb, and gesture, and majesty of a king. *And Agag said*—Or, *For Agag said*; this being mentioned as the reason why he came so. *Surely the bitterness of death is past*—I, who have escaped death from a warlike prince and his soldiers in the fury of battle, shall certainly not suffer it from a prophet in time of peace. *As thy sword hath made women childless*—By this it appears that he had been a tyrant, and guilty of many bloody actions; and was now cut off, not merely for the sins of his ancestors 400 years ago, but also for his own merciless cruelty. *Samuel hewed Agag in pieces*—This he doubtless did by a divine instinct, and in pursuance of God's express command, which had been sinfully neglected and disobeyed by Saul, but is now executed by Samuel. It is not said that Samuel cut Agag in pieces with his own hand; perhaps he only commanded him to be slain by proper officers. In those days, however, it was no unusual thing for the greatest persons to perform these executions. But no private persons are authorized to make such instances as these precedents for taking the sword of justice into their own hands. For we must be governed in our own conduct by the laws of God, and not by extraordinary examples. *Before the Lord in Gilgal*—That is, before the altar of the Lord, where they had been praying and offering sacrifices.

Ver. 35. *Samuel came no more to see Saul*—That is, to visit

A. M. 941.  
B. C. 1663.

CHAP. XVI.

*Samuel is appointed to anoint one of the sons of Jesse king, ver. 1—5. The elder sons are passed by, and David anointed, ver. 6—13. Saul, growing melancholy, is eased by David's music, ver. 14—23.*

AND the LORD said unto Samuel, <sup>a</sup>How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing <sup>b</sup>I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? <sup>c</sup>fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for <sup>d</sup>I have provided me a king among his sons.

cir. 1063.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 13. 35.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 15. 23.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. 9. 16.  
<sup>2</sup> Kings  
9. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 78. 10.  
<sup>4</sup> 59. 19.  
20. 67.  
13. 32.

2 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer † with thee, and say, <sup>e</sup>I am come to sacrifice to the LORD.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. 77

<sup>h</sup> 117.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 9. 13.

<sup>†</sup> 20. 29.

3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and <sup>f</sup>I will shew thee what thou

<sup>f</sup> Exod. 1. 15.

him, in token of respect or friendship; or, to seek counsel from God for him. Otherwise he did see him afterwards, Chap. xix. 24. Though indeed it was not Samuel that came thither with a design to see Saul, but Saul went thither to see Samuel and that accidentally. *Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul*—For his impenitency and rejection. He still had so much love to him, or to his country, as to lament the sad condition into which he was fallen.

CHAP. XVI. Ver. 1. *How long wilt thou mourn for Saul?*—And pray for his restoration, which the following words imply he did. *Fill thine horn with oil*—Which was used in the inauguration of kings. But here it was used in the designation of a king; for David was not actually made king by it, but still remained a subject. And the reason of this anticipation was the comfort of Samuel, and other good men, against their fears in case of Saul's death, and the assurance of David's title, which otherwise would have been doubtful. *I have provided me a king*—This phrase is very emphatical, and implies the difference between this and the former king. Saul was a king of the people's providing, he was the product of their sinful desires; but this is a king of my own providing, to fulfil all my will, and to serve my glory.

Ver. 2. *How can I go?*—That is, with safety. *Say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord*—Which he, being a prophet, might do any where, all the ritual laws being subject to the prophets. What the Lord commanded him to say was a truth, though not the whole truth.

Ver. 3, 4. *Call Jesse to the sacrifice*—To the feast upon the sacrifice, to which they might invite their neighbours and

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1062.  
1 Ch. v. 16. shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.

h Ch. vi. 1.  
h Heb. meeting.  
i 1 Kings 9.  
19.  
9 Kings  
9. 22. 4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

k Exod. 19.  
10, 14. 5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

l Ch. 17. 13,  
called  
Eliab,  
1 Chron.  
27. 18.  
m 1 Kings  
19. 26. 6 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD's anointed is before him.

7 But the LORD said unto Samuel,

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1062.  
n Ps. 147.  
10, 11.  
o Isaiah 65.  
8.  
p 2 Cor. 10.  
7.  
q Heb. eyes.  
q 1 Kings 9.  
30.  
1 Chron.  
29. 9. Ps.  
7. 9. Jer.  
11. 30. N.  
17. 10. &  
20. 18.  
Acts 1. 24.  
r Ch. 17. 13. Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

friends. *The elders trembled at his coming*—Because it was strange and unexpected to them, this being but an obscure town, and remote from Samuel, and therefore they justly thought there was some extraordinary reason for it. They might fear lest he came to denounce some judgment against them, or to shun Saul's displeasure, in which case it might have been dangerous for them to entertain him. *Peaceably*—The Hebrew phrase, *Comest thou in peace?* was as much as to say (in our phrase), *Is all well?*

Ver. 5. *I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord*—That was one intention of his coming; and though there was another, viz. to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be king, he was not bound to declare it. For where there are two ends of any action, a person may, without any injury to truth, declare the one and conceal the other. Thus Moses did when he told Pharaoh they must go and sacrifice to God in the wilderness; but suppressed their intention to march to the land of Canaan. This is set in a clear light by Dr. Waterland:—"As to Samuel pretending a sacrifice, it was a just pretence, and a true one; for he did offer sacrifice, as God had commanded him, Ver. 5. And what if he had a farther intention? was he bound to declare all he knew, or to disclose to every man the whole of his errand? Secrecy is of great use in all important business; and the concealing one design by going upon another, to prevent giving offence, or doing other worse mischief, is as righteous and as laudable a practice as the drawing a curtain to keep off spies. The making one good design the cover for a better is doing two good things at once; and both in a proper way; and though men have been blamed, and very justly, for using acts of religion as a cloak for iniquity; yet I have never heard that there could be any thing amiss in performing one act of obedience towards God in order to facilitate the performance of another."—See Scrip. Vind. p. 93.

*He sanctified Jesse and his sons*—It seems evident that there was something peculiar in Jesse's invitation. For, first, both he and his sons were invited; whereas the others were only invited for their own persons. Secondly, the different

phrase here used, that *he sanctified* these, when he only bade the others sanctify themselves, argues a singular care of Samuel in their sanctification. Which makes it probable, that the rest were only to join with them in the act of sacrificing; but these, and only these, were invited to feast upon the remainders of the sacrifices.

Ver. 6. *He looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed, &c.*—Struck with the gracefulness and dignity of his person, he immediately concluded that this was the person whom God designed for his anointed; wherein, however, he was mistaken, as other prophets sometimes were, when they hastily spake their own thoughts, before they had consulted God. *Before him*—That is, in this place, where God is now present. For it is observable, that not only the sacrifice is said to be offered, but even the feast upon the remainders of it, is said to be eaten *before the Lord*, Deut. xii. 7; that is, before, or near his altar, where God was present in a special manner.

Ver. 7, 8. *The Lord said unto Samuel*—By a secret inward suggestion. *Look not on his countenance*—All have not a noble spirit who have a noble aspect, as appeared by Saul; which should have prevented Samuel's concluding so hastily from Eliab's appearance that he was the person whom God had chosen. *Neither hath the Lord chosen this*—God suggested to him, as he did concerning the former, that this was not the man of his choice.

Ver. 10. *Again (or rather, Thus) Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel*—Not all at once, but seven in all, one after another, in order, David being the eighth, See Chap. xvii. 12. Probably, however, one of these was either only an adopted son, or was born of a concubine, and therefore is not noticed, 1 Chron. ii. 13—15, where only seven of Jesse's sons are named, and David is said to have been the seventh. *Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these*—These words shew that Samuel had acquainted Jesse with his business.

A. M. 2011.  
B. C. 1048. 11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, 'There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit †down till he come hither.

Ch. 17. 12. 12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* \*ruddy, and withal †of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. †And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

Ch. 17. 42.  
Can. 5. 11.  
Heb. *safr*  
of eyes.  
Ch. 9. 17. 13 ¶ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and \*anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and \*the

Ver. 11. *Behold, he keepeth sheep*.—And consequently is the most unfit of all my sons for that high employment. Either, therefore, he did not understand David's wisdom and valour, or he judged him unfit, by reason of his mean education. And God so ordered it by his providence, that the choice of David might plainly appear to be God's work, and not Samuel's or Jesse's. David signifies *beloved*; a fit name for so eminent a type of God's beloved Son. It is supposed, David was now about twenty years old. If so, his troubles by Saul lasted near ten years; for he was thirty years old when Saul died. Samuel having done this went to Ramah. He retired to die in peace, since his eyes had seen the salvation, even the sceptre brought into the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 12, 13. *The Lord said, &c.*—Spoke secretly by his Spirit to Samuel's heart; for it is not probable that any audible voice was uttered. *Samuel anointed him in the midst of his brethren*.—This is a perfectly literal translation of the Hebrew, confirmed by the Seventy; and the words seem evidently to imply that he was anointed publicly among his brethren. But though they saw his unction, it is probable they had no idea that he was anointed to the kingdom, but were only told by Samuel that it was to some great service, which they should be informed of hereafter. Samuel certainly was afraid to have it known at present that he was anointed to be king, and therefore would not tell it out among his brethren. And by Eliab's treatment of David after this, Chap. xvii. 28, it appears that he did not know him to be the king-elect of God's people. Thus Jesse only and David understood the whole business; but his brethren would be able to bear witness to the fact of Samuel's anointing him, which, with other collateral evidences, would be abundantly sufficient to prove David's right to the kingdom, if need should be. Dr. Waterland proposes to translate the words, *from the midst*, instead of *in the midst*; but Houbigant approves of our reading, and thinks the anointing was made publicly, as has just been stated, but that Samuel did not signify, unless to Jesse, the purpose for which he was anointed. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon David, &c.*—

Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

14 <sup>b</sup>But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and <sup>c</sup>an evil spirit from the LORD || troubled him.

15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.

16 Let our lord now command thy servants, *which are* <sup>d</sup>before thee, to seek out a man, *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall <sup>e</sup>play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.

A. M. 2011.  
B. C. 1048.

Ch. 11. 6.  
& 18. 10.  
& 28. 18.  
Judg. 16.  
30. Ps. 51.  
11.  
Judg. 9.  
23. Ch. 18.  
10. & 19.  
9.  
Or, *terrified*.

Gen. 41.  
46. Ver.  
21. 22.  
1 Kings  
10. 8.

Ver. 22.  
2 Kings  
2. 15.

That is, he was immediately endowed with extraordinary gifts of God's Spirit, as strength, and courage, and wisdom, and other excellent qualities, which prepared him for, and excited him to noble attempts.

Ver. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul*.—Which came upon him when he was first made king, and continued with him till this time; but which God now took away, depriving him of that prudence, courage, and alacrity, and other gifts wherewith he had qualified him for his public employment. *An evil spirit from the Lord*.—That is, by God's permission, who delivered him up to be buffeted by Satan. *Troubled him*.—Stirred up in him unruly passions, such as envy, rage, fear, or despair. Hence he grew fretful, peevish, and discontented, timorous and suspicious, frequently starting and trembling, as the Hebrew word here used seems to import. He therefore became very unfit for business, being sometimes melancholy, or furious and distracted, and always full of anxiety and solicitude of mind.

Ver. 15, 16. *His servants said, &c.*—His courtiers could not but observe the change which had taken place in him, and the strange disturbance in his mind, and very probably ascribed it to the hand of God upon him. *When the evil spirit from God is upon thee*.—When a melancholy fit seizeth thee. *He shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well*.—And the success confirmed their opinion. It is true, music cannot, of itself, have a direct influence on an evil spirit, to cause it to depart, yet because such a spirit, it seems, had not got possession of him, but only occasionally troubled him, by working on the passions of his mind, and humours of his body; and because it is manifest that music hath great power over these, frequently composing the spirits, and cheering and delighting the mind, and thereby gradually altering, qualifying, and sweetening the very juices and humours of the body; it is not strange if that evil spirit had not that power over Saul when these good effects of music had been experienced by him, which it had had before. Thus Satan had less power over lunaticks in the decrease than in the increase of the moon, Matt. xvii. 15, 18. And seeing

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1063.

17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me.

2 Ch. 17. 37.  
34, 35, 36.

1 Or, speech.

2 Ch. 2. 19.  
& 19. 12.  
14.

18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and <sup>f</sup>a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in <sup>||</sup> matters, and a comely person, and <sup>g</sup>the LORD is with him.

h Ver. 11.  
Ch. 17. 15.  
31.i Ch. 10. 27.  
& 17. 15.  
Gen. 43.  
11. Prov.  
18. 16.

19 ¶ Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, <sup>h</sup>which *is* with the sheep.

k Gen. 41.  
46.  
1 Kings  
16. 5.  
Prov. 22.  
29.

20 And Jesse <sup>i</sup>took an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul.

21 And David came to Saul, and <sup>k</sup>stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armour-bearer.

22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before

music prepared the Lord's prophets for the entertainment of the good Spirit, as 2 Kings iii. 15, why might it not dispose Saul to the resistance of the evil spirit? and why might not the cheering of his heart, in some measure strengthen him against those temptations of the devil, which were encouraged and strengthened by his melancholy humour? And by this means David, without any contrivance of himself or his friends, is brought to court, soon after he was anointed to the kingdom. Those whom God designs for any service, his providence will concur with his grace, to prepare and qualify them for it.

Ver. 18. *Then answered one of the servants, &c.*—It is likely this was some friend or acquaintance of David, who here gives him a very high character, which he did not disgrace, but fully verified, insomuch that Saul for a time highly esteemed him, finding him amiable in his spirit, and *prudent in matters*, and therefore useful to him in many other ways, as well as by his skill in music. We need not wonder that David was so suddenly advanced from a poor shepherd to so great a reputation; for this was the effect of those graces and gifts of the divine Spirit, which he had received when he was anointed. *The Lord is with him*—Said the servant; that is, directs and prospers all his undertakings.

Ver. 20. *Jesse took—bread, a bottle of wine and a kid, and sent them*—This present, though in our times it would seem contemptible, yet was very agreeable to the usage of those ages, and to the condition of Jesse, which was but mean in

me; for he hath found favour in my sight.

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1063.

23 And it came to pass, when <sup>1</sup>the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

1 Ver. 16, 16.

## CHAP. XVII.

*Goliath challenges the armies of Israel, ver. 1—11. David coming into the camp, hears his challenge, ver. 12—27. Eliab chides David, whose words are related to Saul, ver. 28—31. David undertakes to fight Goliath, ver. 32—37. He rejects Saul's armour, and goes with his sling, ver. 38—40. He attacks and slays Goliath, ver. 41—51. The Israelites pursue the Philistines, ver. 52, 53. David returns: the notice taken of him by Saul, ver. 54—58.*

**N**OW the Philistines <sup>a</sup>gathered <sup>a</sup>ch. together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at <sup>b</sup>Sho- <sup>b</sup>Josh. 15. 35. choh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and <sup>c</sup>pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in <sup>||</sup>Ephes-dammim.

c 2 Chron. 29. 18.

2 And Saul and the men of Israel

1 Or, the coast of Dammim, called, Pasdammim, 1 Chron. 11. 13.

the world. And it was usual in those days not to come before a prince without a present, as a token of respect.

Ver. 21. *David came to Saul and stood before him*—Ministered unto him among the rest of his servants. This sufficiently shews that Saul had no knowledge of the anointing of David, otherwise it cannot be supposed that he would have had him brought to his court. *And he loved him greatly*—So there was something good in Saul still; he had not lost all, though he had lost the kingdom. *He became his armour-bearer*—He had that place conferred upon him, though we do not read that he ever exercised it; for it seems he was gone back to his father upon some occasion not related; and had abode with him some considerable time, before the war described, Chap. 17, happened.

Ver. 23. *The evil spirit departed*—Namely, for a season. And the reason of this success might be partly natural, and partly supernatural, respecting David; whom God designed by this means to bring into favour with the king, and so to smooth the way for his advancement.

CHAP. XVII. Ver. 1. *The Philistines gathered together their armies*—Probably they had heard that Samuel had forsaken Saul, and that Saul himself was unfit for business. The enemies of the church are watchful to take all advantages, and they never have greater advantages than when her protectors have provoked God's Spirit and prophets to leave them.

A. M. 2911.  
B. C. 1081.  
† Heb. ranged the battle.

were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and †set the battle in array against the Philistines.

3 And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was a valley between them.*

c 2 Sam. 21. 19.  
d Josh. 11. 22.

4 ¶ And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named <sup>c</sup>Goliath, of <sup>d</sup>Gath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span.

† Heb. clothed.

5 And *he had* an helmet of brass upon his head, and *he was* †armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of brass.

† Or, gorget.

6 And *he had* greaves of brass upon his legs, and a †target of brass between his shoulders.

c 2 Sam. 21. 19.

7 And the <sup>e</sup>staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head *weighed* six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

rch. 8. 11.

8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set *your* battle in array? *am* not I a Philistine, and ye <sup>f</sup>servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

A. M. 2911.  
B. C. 1081.

9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and <sup>g</sup>serve us.

g Ch. 11. 1.  
h Ver. 26.  
i Sam. 21. 21.

10 And the Philistine said, I <sup>h</sup>defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

i Ver. 59.  
Ruth 4. 22.  
Ch. 16. 1. 19.  
k Gen. 35. 19.  
l Ch. 16. 10.  
1 Chron. 2. 13, 14, 15.

12 ¶ Now David *was* <sup>i</sup>the son of that <sup>k</sup>Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah, whose name *was* Jesse; and he had <sup>l</sup>eight sons: and the man went among men *for* an old man in the days of Saul.

m Ch. 16. 6.  
n Ch. 9. 1.  
o Chron. 2. 13.

13 And the three eldest sons of Jesse went *and* followed Saul to the battle: and the <sup>m</sup>names of his three sons that went to the battle *were* Eliab the first-born, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shamamah.

14 And David *was* the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

15 But David went and returned from Saul <sup>n</sup>to feed his father's sheep <sup>n</sup>at Beth-lehem.

16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

Ver. 4. *Goliath of Gath*—For to this city the Anakims fled when Joshua rooted them out of the land of Canaan, Josh. xi. 22. And here they propagated a race of giants; that is, people of great strength and stature. *Whose height was six cubits and a span*—At least nine feet nine inches. And this is not strange; for besides the giants mentioned in Scripture, Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, make mention of persons seven cubits high.

Ver. 5—7. *He was armed with a coat of mail*—Made of plates of brass laid over one another like the scales of a fish. *Five thousand shekels of brass*—The common shekel contained a fourth part of an ounce; and so five thousand shekels made one thousand two hundred and fifty ounces, or seventy-eight pounds; which weight was not unsuitable to a man of such vast strength as his height speaks him to have been. *Greaves*—Boots. *The staff of his spear like a weaver's beam*—On which the weavers fasten their web. It was like

this for thickness. And though the whole weight of Goliath's armour may seem prodigious, yet it is not so much by far as one Athanasius did manage, of whom Pliny relates that he saw him come into the theatre with arms weighing twelve thousand ounces. *A shield*—Probably for state; for he that was clad in brass, little needed a shield.

Ver. 8—11. *Let him come down to me*—That the battle may be decided by us two alone. *They were greatly afraid*—This may seem strange, considering the glorious promises of God, and their late experience of divine assistance. And where was Jonathan, who, in the last war, had so bravely engaged a whole army of the Philistines? Doubtless he did not feel himself so stirred up of God as he did at that time. As the best, so the bravest of men, are no more than what God makes them. Jonathan must sit still now, because this honour is reserved for David.

Ver. 12—15. *David was the son of that Ephrathite, &c.*—



A.M. 9941.  
B. C. 1063.

17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren ;

† Heb. *cheeses of milk.*  
† Heb. *captain of a thousand.*  
• Gen. 37. 16.

18 And carry these ten † cheeses unto the † captain of *their* thousand, and ° look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

† Or, *place of the carriage, Ch. 26. 5.*  
† Or, *battle array, or, place of fight.*

20 And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the || trench, as the host was going forth to the || fight, and shouted for the battle.

21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

Being chosen of God to combat with Goliath, we are here informed of whom he was descended. *The man went among men*—Was accounted an *old man*; therefore he went not himself to the camp. *David was the youngest*—Being young he was not put to the hardships of war; but the three eldest undertook to serve their prince and their country in this time of common danger. *David went and returned from Saul*—Left his court, with his permission, for the present. Probably he returned upon his father's sending his three eldest sons into Saul's service. Having been instrumental in relieving Saul, he was not now particularly wanted at court, but probably was wanted to feed his father's sheep, and might be sent for again when occasion should require.

Ver. 17, 18. *Jesse said—Take now for thy brethren, &c.*—He thought provisions might be scarce with them. But, having other sons at home with him, it was, no doubt, through a divine influence that he sent David from the sheep upon this errand. *Carry these ten cheeses unto the captain*—Whose favour might be very serviceable to them. *And take their pledge*—That is, bring me some token of their welfare. Perhaps Jesse and his sons had fixed on some pledge between them, that they might be assured the messengers they sent to each other had been with them, and executed their commission.

Ver. 19. *Fighting with the Philistines*—That is, in a posture and readiness to fight with them, as it is explained, Ver. 20, 21, being drawn up in battle-array. *In the valley of Elah*—Not, strictly speaking, in the valley, but hard by it, on the side of the mountain, where they faced the Philistines, and shewed themselves resolved to fight, if the latter came down from the other mountain to oppose them.

Ver. 20—22. *He came to the trench*—Probably the car-

22 And David left † his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and † saluted his brethren.

A.M. 9941.  
B. C. 1063.

† Heb. *the vessels from upon him.*

† Heb. *asked his brethren of peace,* as Judg. 18. 15.

23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake <sup>p</sup> according to the same words: and David heard *them*.

p Ver. 5.

24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled † from him, and were sore afraid.

† Heb. *from his face.*

25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, *that* the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and <sup>q</sup> will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

q Josh. 15. 16.

26 And David spake to the men

riages wherewith the host was surrounded. *As the host was going forth to the fight*—Jesse little thought of sending his son to the camp just at that critical juncture. But the wise God orders the time and all the circumstances of affairs so as to serve the designs of his own glory. *David left his carriage, &c.*—He left the provision which his father had sent his brethren with some proper person, it being not a time to present it to them when the armies were just going to engage. *And ran into the army*—Eager to know what was doing there, being deeply concerned for the success of Israel, and desirous of seeing and speaking with his brethren before the commencement of the battle; for possibly it might be the last time he should ever converse with them or see them alive.

Ver. 23, 24. *Behold there came up the champion*—Although the armies stood ready to engage, yet the vanity of Goliath made him once more desirous that the matter might be determined by single combat, and to challenge the whole host of Israel to produce a man to fight with him. *And all the men of Israel fled from him*—That is, none of the Israelites dared to come to an equal distance from their camp as Goliath did from that of the Philistines; and probably some that had advanced farther than the rest, retired back when they saw him approaching. Nay, it seems wher-ever he advanced they fled from him. But surely one Philistine could never have thus dismayed and put 10,000 Israelites to flight, unless their Rock, being forsaken by them, had justly sold them, and *shut them up*, Deut. xxxii. 30.

Ver. 25, 26. *The king will make his father's house free*—Free from all those tributes and charges which either the court or the camp required. *Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, &c.*—Thus David expresses an high indignation that

†

A.M. 2941  
B. C. 1605.  
Ch. 11. 2.  
Ch. 16. 6.  
Ver. 10.  
u Deut. 5.  
26.

that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

28 ¶ And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

29 And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

30 ¶ And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the

A.M. 2941.  
B. C. 1605.  
Heb. word.

same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

31 And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

32 ¶ And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

they, who were the servants of the living God, and fought under his banners, should be thus terrified by the great bulk of this idolater, as if the strength of God were not greater than that of this giant.

Ver. 28. *He said, Why camest thou down hither?*—His passion made him forget that David came by his father's order, in obedience to him and out of kindness to them. *With whom hast thou left those few sheep?*—Thus he intimates that David was fitter to look after sheep than to fight a giant. *I know thy pride*—Thy false confidence, vain glory, and curiosity. See the folly and wickedness of envy! How groundless its jealousies are, how unjust its censures, how unfair its representations! May God save and preserve us from such a spirit!

Ver. 29. *David said—Is there not a cause?*—Of my thus speaking? Is this giant invincible? Is our God unable to oppose him, and subdue him? However, David is not deterred from his undertaking by the hard words of Eliab. They that undertake public services, must not think it strange if they be opposed by those from whom they had reason to expect assistance; but must humbly go on with their work, in the face, not only of their enemies' threats, but of their friends' slights, suspicions, and censures.

Ver. 30. *He turned from him*—For being secretly moved by God's Spirit to undertake the combat, he speaks with divers persons about it, that it might come to the king's ear.

Ver. 32, 33. *Let no man's heart fail him, &c.*—It would have reflected upon his prince to say, *Let not thy heart fail*; therefore he speaks in general terms, *Let no man's heart fail*. A young shepherd, come but this morning from keeping sheep, has more courage than all the mighty men of Israel! Thus doth God often do great things for his people by the weak things of the world. *Thou art but a youth*—Not above twenty years old; and a novice, a raw and an unexperienced soldier.

Ver. 34, 35. *There came a lion and a bear*—Not both together, but at different times. *I went out after him*—I pursued the beast. *When he arose against me*—Turned again upon me. *I caught him by his beard*—I had resolution and strength enough given me to close with him, and catching him by the hair of his beard, smote and killed him on the spot. David does not say with what instrument he did this; but probably it was with a sword or spear. It is not improbable but in that age, and in those countries, it was usual to pursue, with proper arms, those wild beasts that came to devour their flocks. And travellers tell us, that, at this day, a single Arab, that is properly instructed and armed, will pursue a lion, and, if he overtake him, will overcome him. But that such a youth as David should have such extraordinary courage and strength cannot be accounted for but by supposing, as the Scriptures inform us, that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and that God intended by these things to train him up, and fit him for the greater things he was to be called to perform.

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1603.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

c Ps. 18, 16,  
17, & 64.  
7, & 77.  
11, & Cor.  
1, 10.  
2 Tim. 4,  
17, 18.

37 David said moreover, <sup>e</sup>The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and <sup>f</sup>the LORD be with thee.

f Ch. 20, 13.  
1 Chron.  
22, 11, 10.+ Heb.  
clothed  
David  
with his  
clothes.

38 ¶ And Saul † armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved

Ver. 36, 37. *Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear* &c.—There is a remarkable, and never to be sufficiently admired modesty in this relation of David, which he concludes by attributing all he had done to the goodness and power of God. And he takes encouragement from the experience which he had already had of these divine attributes being exerted on his behalf on a less important occasion, to believe that they would be exerted on this occasion also, which was much more important, as peculiarly involving the glory of God, and the best interests of his people, which had not been the case in the former instances. *This uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them*—Goliath debased himself below a brute by his blasphemy, and therefore he now carried no more terror with him to David than a lion or a bear. *Seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God*. Here we see the foundation of David's confidence of success. The Philistine had defied the living God in defying his armies, and had openly avowed himself his enemy. And David therefore comes forward as his friend to espouse his cause. It is as if he had said, The lion and the bear were only enemies to me and to my sheep, and it was only in defence of them that I attacked these brute beasts; but this Philistine is an enemy to God and his people, and it is for their honour that I attack him.

Ver. 38. *Saul armed David with his armour*—Not that which he was wont to wear himself; for he was so tall it would not have fitted David, but with armour taken out of his armoury. The Hebrew word *malais*, however, here rendered armour, more properly signifies *his vestments, or his garments*, and is so translated, Chap. xviii. 4, and in most other places where it occurs. Indeed his armour is distinguished from this, and particularly described in the following words. He therefore, doubtless, speaks in this clause

them. And David put them off <sup>A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1603.</sup> him.

40 And he took his staff in his hand, and choose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's † bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine.

Or, valley.  
+ Heb. ecc.  
eccl.

41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he <sup>g</sup>disdained him: for he was but a youth, and <sup>h</sup>ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

g Ps. 137, 4,  
5, 1 Cor.  
1, 27, 28.

h Ch. 16, 13.

43 And the Philistine said unto David, <sup>i</sup>Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

i Ch. 24, 14.  
2 Sam. 3,  
8, & 9, 9,  
& 16, 9,  
2 Kings 8,  
15.

of some military vestments which were then used in war, and were contrived for defence, as buff coats now are.

Ver. 39. *David girded his sword upon his armour*—Literally *above, upon his vestments*. He assayed to go—*ללכת, joel lalcheth*. The learned translate these words different ways, but nearly to the same sense, *Voluit ire, tentavit ire, conatus est incidere*; he *willed, wished, tried, or endeavoured to go*; that is, To walk or march. As he had never wore such things before, not being used to go armed, he wished to try how he could walk in them, and finding that they were likely rather to encumber him than facilitate his enterprise, he begged leave to lay them aside. “David marched with difficulty, as not accustomed to these; therefore he said to Saul, I cannot go with these arms, for I am not accustomed to them; and David put them off.”—Houb.

Ver. 40, 41. *He took his staff*—His shepherd's staff. These arms in themselves were contemptible, yet chosen by David; because he had no skill to use other arms; because he had inward assurance of the victory, even by these weapons; and because such a conquest would be more honourable to God, and most shameful, and discouraging to the Philistines. *He drew near*—Probably a signal was made that the Philistine's challenge was accepted. David, however, it seems, made the first motion towards him, to shew he did not fear him.

Ver. 42, 43. *He disdained him*—He had looked about expecting to meet some tall, strong man; but when he saw what a mean figure he made with whom he was to engage, he despised him, and thought it below him to enter the lists with him, fearing that the contemptibleness of the champion with whom he contended, would lessen the glory of the victory. *For he was a youth—of a fair countenance*—Not hav-

A.M. 2941  
B.C. 1063.

44 And the Philistine <sup>k</sup>said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; <sup>l</sup>but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast <sup>m</sup>defied.

46 This day will the LORD <sup>†</sup>deliver thee into mine hand: and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give <sup>n</sup>the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; <sup>o</sup>that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

19 Sam. 9.  
33, 35. Ps.  
124. 8. &  
125. 1.  
9 Cor. 10.  
4. Hebr.  
11. 33, 34.  
m Ver. 10.

† Heb. shut  
kacc up.

a Deut. 36.  
36.

o Job. 4.  
24.  
1 Kings 9.  
43. & 19.  
36.  
9 Kings  
19. 19.  
Isa. 52. 10.

47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD <sup>p</sup>saveth not with sword and spear: for <sup>q</sup>the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you <sup>r</sup>into our hands.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50 So <sup>r</sup>David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was no sword in*

A.M. 2941  
B.C. 1063.

p Ps. 44. 6, 7.  
Hos. 1. 7.  
Zech. 4.  
6.  
q 9 Chron.  
20. 16.

r Ch. 21. 9.  
Eccl. 47.  
4. 1 Mac. 4.  
30. Judg.  
3. 21. & 15.  
15. Ch. 22.  
21.

ing so much as the countenance of a martial person. *Am I a dog?*—Dost thou think to beat me as easily as thou wouldst thy dog? *The Philistine cursed David by his gods*—Imprecating the impotent vengeance of his idols against him, wishing that Dagon, Ashtaroth, and the rest of his gods would confound and destroy David. Thus the Romans used to curse their enemies, saying, "All the gods and goddesses destroy thee."

Ver. 44, 45. *Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air*—It will be a tender and delicate feast for them. With such confidence did he presume on his success! Thus the security and presumption of fools destroy them. *Then said David, I come to thee in the name, &c.*—By a commission from him who commands all creatures in heaven and earth, and who has called me to, and animated me for this undertaking. I rely on him as thou dost on thy sword and spear.

Ver. 46. *This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand*—He speaks with as much assurance as Goliath had done, but upon better grounds, confiding, not in his own strength, but in the divine omnipotence, and expecting, through it, certain victory, not only over Goliath, but over the whole army of the Philistines. *That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel*—Superior to all others. Heb. *That God is for Israel*, or on Israel's side, and against you. Or, *that Israel hath a God*, a God indeed! one who is able to help them; and not such an impotent idol as you serve.

Ver. 47. *Saveth not with sword and spear*—That is, that he can save without these arms, and with the most contemptible weapons, and that he needs not human force to effect his designs. *For the battle is the Lord's*—The events of war are wholly in his power. *And he will give you into our hands*—David speaks thus confidently, because he was assured of success, by particular inspiration. How great is the difference

between the speech of Goliath and that of David! The former consists of the vain-glorious boasting words of a man proudly confiding in his own strength, and thinking of nothing but his own glory. The words of the latter, although expressing an equal assurance of victory, are humble and modest, attributing nothing to himself, but all to the power and goodness of God; building his hopes upon, and rejoicing in the honour that would accrue to God from his success, instead of puffing himself up with the glory that would arise to himself therefrom.

Ver. 48, 49. *The Philistine arose and came and drew nigh*—Like a stalking mountain. Having nothing but victory in his thoughts, he marched in a stately manner, pompously covered over with armour, and fearing nothing. But David, being loaded with no armour, ran nimbly towards him, so far was he from fear! *David—smote the Philistine in his forehead*—Which was bare, perhaps the proud giant contemning David so much as to neglect to pull down his helmet over his face, lifting up that part of it which covered his forehead; or else the stone was thrown with such force that it pierced the helmet first, and then the forehead, or went in at the place that was left open for his eyes. However it was, the divine hand directed it. *And he fell upon his face to the earth*—"See," says Henry, "how frail and uncertain life is, even then when it thinks itself best fortified, and how quickly, how easily, and with how small a matter, the passage may be opened for life to go out and death to enter. Goliath himself *has not power over the spirit to retain the spirit*," Eccl. viii. 8: Let not the strong man glory in his strength, nor the armed man in his armour. See how God resists the proud, and pours contempt upon those that bid defiance to him and his people! None ever hardened his heart against God and prospered."

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1063.

the hand of David.

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, <sup>1</sup> they fled.

Hebr. 11.  
36.

52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to <sup>2</sup> Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.

1 Josh. 15.  
36.

53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

54 And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent,

55 ¶ And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said

unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, <sup>3</sup> whose son is this youth? and Abner said, *As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.*

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1063.  
Ch. 16. 21.  
22.

56 And the king said, Enquire thou whose son the stripling is.

57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul <sup>4</sup> with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, *thou young man?* And David answered, <sup>5</sup> *I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite.*

## CHAP. XVIII.

*David becomes the friend of Jonathan, the constant attendant of Saul, and the favourite of all the people, ver. 1—5. Saul's envy raised, ver. 6—9. He seeks to kill David, ver. 10, 11. Is afraid of him, ver. 12—16. Promises to give him his elder daughter, and gives him the younger, hoping to destroy him thereby, but in vain, ver. 17—27. He is more feared by Saul and esteemed by the people, ver. 28—30.*

Ver. 51. *David took his sword*—Hence it appears that David was not a little man, as many fancy, but a man of considerable bulk and strength, because he was able to manage a giant's sword. The stone threw him down to the earth, and bereaved him of sense and motion; but there remained some life in him, which the sword took away, and so completed the work. God is greatly glorified when his proud enemies are cut off with their own sword.

Ver. 54. *And brought it to Jerusalem*—After he had shewn it to Saul, Ver. 57, and exposed it to all the people, Chap. xviii. 6. Jerusalem was now become a noted city, which was the reason why he brought his head thither. Some think, however, that this is spoken of a future action, viz. that when David was come to the kingdom, and had made Jerusalem his royal seat, he ordered the scull of Goliath to be fixed up in some public place there, as a monument of this most signal victory. *But he put his armour in his tent*—A tent which probably was set up for David on this occasion. The sword was afterwards placed behind the ephod in the tabernacle, being consecrated to God, and preserved as a memorial of the victory to his honour, Chap. xxi. 9.

Ver. 55. *Whose son is this youth?*—It may, at first sight, appear strange, that Saul should be represented here as not knowing who David was, when we have a relation in the foregoing chapter of his sending for him to court, being highly pleased with his behaviour, and much delighted with his music, making him his armour-bearer, and sending to his father Jesse to ask his leave for his continuance at court.

But it may be observed, that Saul, in this place, does not express an entire ignorance of David, but only inquires *whose son he was?* A question of the more consequence to him, as he had promised his daughter in marriage to the conqueror of Goliath. Either Saul had never before made any inquiry about his parentage, or both he and Abner had forgot whence he was. And this might very easily happen to a king and a general of an army, who daily see and have to do with so many different faces, and who pay so little regard to things of this sort. Nay, if Saul had entirely forgot David, it would not have been strange, considering that he had been but little with him, had some time ago been dismissed from the court, and was returned home, where he had remained at least a year or two, during which time Saul had not seen him. Besides, the distemper of Saul's mind might make him forgetful, and David might now be much changed, both in his countenance and in his habit. *Abner said—I cannot tell*—Abner's employment was generally in the camp, when David was at the court; and when Abner was there he probably took little notice of a youth so much inferior to him as David was.

“We may learn from the whole of this pleasing chapter,” says Dr. Dodd, “how ready God is to help those who trust in him; for whose defence and protection he makes use of means apparently the most weak, to humble the pride of the wicked, and to destroy the powers which seem most formidable. Some writers have considered this destruction of Goliath by David as a type of the victory of Jesus Christ, in his

A.M. 9941.  
B.C. 1062.

**A**ND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that <sup>a</sup> the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 19. 2. <sup>b</sup> and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. 17. 15. <sup>c</sup> and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

5 ¶ And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and <sup>¶</sup> behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

¶ Or, proceeded.  
Ver. 14.  
14. 20.

state of weakness and humiliation, over the strong and gigantic powers of hell and the grave."

CHAP. XVIII. Ver. 1. *The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David*—On account of the prudence and modesty of his discourse and behaviour after such an heroic action, and the other excellent virtues which shone forth both in his speeches and actions; for the service he had done to God and to his people; and for the similitude of their age and qualities?

Ver. 2. *Saul took him that day*—By which it appears, that, before this, David had not had his constant residence at court, after he first came thither, but went home to his father when Saul was well, and had no need of him. This confirms the remarks made on the former chapter.

Ver. 3. *Jonathan and David made a covenant*—Solemnly entered into an agreement of perpetual friendship. *Because he loved him, &c.*—Or rather, as Le Clerc renders it, *so that each loved the other as his own soul*. For it cannot be supposed but that David loved Jonathan as well as Jonathan loved him. Their covenant seems to have implied an engagement for mutual assistance and defence, even until death, and kindness to the posterity of each other after either of them was dead. This was wisely ordered by the providence of God, who, by this means, preserved David in that sharp persecution which shortly after arose against him at court.

Ver. 4. *Jonathan stript himself of the robe that was upon him*—This he did that he might do honour to, as well as shew his affection for David. For it is probable that David

6 And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the ¶ Philistine, that <sup>d</sup> the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with † instruments of music.

7 And the women <sup>c</sup> answered *one another* as they played, and said, <sup>e</sup> Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying † <sup>g</sup> displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more but <sup>h</sup> the kingdom?

9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

10 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that <sup>i</sup> the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, <sup>k</sup> and he prophesied in the midst of the house:

A.M. 9941.  
B.C. 1062.

¶ Or, Philistines.  
d Exod. 15.  
20. Judg.  
11. 24.

† Heb. three-  
stringed  
instruments.  
e Exod. 15.  
21.  
f Ch. 21. 11.  
g Ps. 135.  
Eccles. 4.  
47. 6.

† Heb. was  
evil in his  
eyes.  
g Eccles. 4.  
47.

h Ch. 15.  
25.

i Ch. 16. 16.  
k Ch. 19. 24.  
1 Kings  
18. 29.  
Act. 16.  
16.

was before clothed in a rustic habit, not fit to appear in at court.

Ver. 5. *David went out, &c.*—Upon military expeditions, of which that phrase is often used. *And behaved himself wisely*—Shewed as much prudence in his conduct as he did courage. *Saul set him over the men of war*—Not over all, for Abner was general, as we speak, of all his forces; but he made him captain of his guard, or gave him some principal command in his army.

Ver. 6—9. *The women came out of all the cities*—All the neighbouring cities. *And the women answered one another as they played*—They sang, as well as played on musical instruments. And they sang alternately, as they did Exod. xv. 21. And the burden of the song seems to have been that which follows. *And said, Saul hath slain his thousands, &c.*—To understand this it is necessary to observe, that the usual way of singing at that time was in parts. So that some of these women having taken up or begun the song with—*Saul hath slain his thousands*, another party answered them in their turn in the same strain—*And David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth*—He begun to be jealous they would advance David to the throne in a little time, having so highly magnified him above their king. *And Saul eyed David*—Narrowly observed him, or looked upon him with an envious eye.

Ver. 10, 11. *On the morrow the evil spirit from God*—Which had formerly troubled him, producing melancholy, Chap. xvi. 14, was brought again upon him. The very next day after he conceived envy at David, discontent and anger, the evil spirit was permitted by God to seize him again.

A. M. 9941.  
B. C. 1063. and David played with his hand, as  
1 Ch. 19. 9. at other times: <sup>1</sup>and *there was* a  
javelin in Saul's hand.

m Ch. 19.  
10. & 29.  
33. Prov.  
27. & 11 And Saul <sup>m</sup>cast the javelin;  
for he said, I will smite David even  
to the wall *with it*. And David  
avoided out of his presence twice.

n Ver. 15.  
29.  
o Ch. 16. 13,  
19.  
p Ch. 16. 14.  
& 28. 15. 12 ¶ And Saul was <sup>n</sup>afraid of  
David, because <sup>o</sup>the LORD was with  
him, and was <sup>p</sup>departed from Saul.

13 Therefore Saul removed him  
from him, and made him his captain  
over a thousand; and <sup>q</sup>he went out  
and came in before the people.

q Ver. 16.  
Num. 27.  
17.  
2 Sam. 6.  
2.  
r Or pres-  
cribed.  
Ver. 6.  
r Gen. 39. 2,  
23.  
Josh. 6.  
27. 14 And David <sup>r</sup>behaved himself  
wisely in all his ways; and <sup>r</sup>the  
LORD *was* with him.

Such is the fruit of envy and uncharitableness! *And he prophesied in the midst of the house*—That is, he was actuated by such motions and agitations of body as the prophets sometimes were. *And David played with his hand, as at other times*—To compose and quiet his disturbed spirits. *And there was a javelin in Saul's hand*—Which he had provided on purpose, as the following words shew, to despatch David. *And Saul cast the javelin*—Being now quite under the power of that evil spirit. *Twice*—Once now, and another time, on a like occasion, Chap. xix. 10.

Ver. 12, 13. *Saul was afraid of David*—Lest, as he had gained the favour of God, and of all the people, he should also take away his kingdom. *Saul removed him from him*—From his presence and court; which he did because he feared lest David should find an opportunity to kill him, as he had designed to kill David; because his presence now made him more sad than ever his music had made him cheerful; and principally, that hereby he might expose him to the greatest hazards. *And made him his captain over a thousand*—Instead of captain of his guard, which required his attendance at court, he gave him a command abroad; but where, or at what distance, we are not informed. This he did, hoping he might be killed in some expedition, or that an opportunity might occur for taking away his life privately. *And he went out and came in, &c.*—As the leader of those thousand men.

Ver. 14, 15. *David behaved himself wisely*—He headed them in all their expeditions with a bravery and conduct equally distinguished; greatest in command, but greater in his example. He behaved in such a manner that no exception could be taken at any of his actions. *The Lord was with him*—Made all his undertakings prosperous. Saul's fears, however, increased in proportion as he saw David still behave so well.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, &c.*—He at last bethinks himself of the promise he had publicly made unto him that should kill Goliath. The performance of which David did not demand,

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

16 But <sup>s</sup>all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

17 ¶ And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, <sup>t</sup>her will I give thee to wife: only <sup>t</sup>be thou <sup>†</sup>valiant for me, and fight <sup>u</sup>the LORD's battles. For Saul said, <sup>x</sup>Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

18 And David said unto Saul, <sup>y</sup>Who *am* I? and what *is* my life, <sup>y</sup>or my father's family in Israel, that

but in modesty left it to Saul's own conscience; who now judges it would be a proper bait to be laid for his destruction. "David had been very successful; but it did not follow that he must always be so; he had prudence, prowess, and conduct; but all these are often disappointed and defeated in their best-laid schemes. What means, then, so likely to destroy him as flattering him in his good fortune, and inflaming his vanity to yet higher and bolder attempts? What human heart is proof against flattery well conducted? and what so likely to point it right as the prospect of the king's alliance? Merab, therefore, the king's eldest daughter, is promised to him in marriage, on condition of his exerting all his fortitude in the defence of his master and his country, against the enemies of God and them."—Delaney. *Only be thou valiant for me*—Thus, at the same time that he proposed to give David his daughter, he intimated that he should first perform some other military exploits, and, to give the better colour to this request, he calls it fighting the Lord's battles. *Let not mine hand be upon him*—Now he seems to have some sense of honour, and to lay aside those base thoughts of murdering him himself. *But the hand of the Philistines*—By whose hand God's just judgment so ordered things that Saul himself fell!

Ver. 18. *David said, Who am I? and what is my life?*—How little is my life worth, that by the exposing of that to some hazard, I should purchase a king's daughter! In these expressions David sheweth not only his humility, but also his wisdom, in discovering so deep a sense of his own meanness, that Saul might see how far he was from aspiring at the kingdom. *Or my father's family in Israel?*—In riches, for otherwise David's family was as noble as any in Israel. *That I should be son-in-law to the king*—This was not a refusal of the honour, but a modest acknowledgement how unworthy he was of it; and it indicates such modesty and prudence, that, considering David's youth, and all other circumstances, we may well conclude that nothing, but the Spirit of the Lord being with him could have made him act so wisely.



A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1063. I should be son-in-law to the king?

19 But it came to pass at the time when Merab Saul's daughter should have been given to David, that she was given unto <sup>a</sup>Adriel the <sup>a</sup>Meholathite to wife.

<sup>z</sup> 2 Sam. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Judg. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Ver. 25.

20 <sup>b</sup> And Michal Saul's daughter loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing <sup>†</sup> pleased him.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. was right in his eyes.

<sup>c</sup> Exod. 10.

<sup>d</sup> Ver. 17.

21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be <sup>c</sup>a snare to him, and that <sup>d</sup>the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt <sup>e</sup>this day be my son-in-law in *the one of the twain*.

<sup>e</sup> Ver. 26.

22 ¶ And Saul commanded his servants, *saying*, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.

23 And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you a light *thing* to be a king's son-in-law,

seeing that I *am* a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

A. M. 2941.  
B. C. 1063.

24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, <sup>†</sup>On this manner spake David.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. according to these words.

25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any <sup>f</sup>dowry, but an hundred fore-skins of the Philistines, to be <sup>g</sup>avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul <sup>h</sup>thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

<sup>f</sup> Gen. 34.  
<sup>g</sup> 12. Exod.  
<sup>h</sup> 23. 17.  
<sup>i</sup> Ch. 14. 24.

26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law: and <sup>i</sup>the days were not <sup>†</sup>expired.

<sup>i</sup> Ver. 21.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. fulfilled.

27 Wherefore David arose and went, he and <sup>k</sup>his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and <sup>l</sup>David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

<sup>k</sup> Ver. 18.

<sup>l</sup> 2 Sam. 5. 14.

28 ¶ And Saul saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that*

Ver. 19. *She was given unto Adriel*—The son of Barzillai, as he is called, 2 Sam. xxi. 8. This was an act of great injustice, at the same time that it was a most high affront to David, and accordingly this marriage was accursed by God, and the children begotten in it were, by God's appointment, cut off, 2 Sam. xxi. How Jonathan resented this usage of David we are not told. It is likely his duty to his father made him entreat him to take it patiently, and to look upon Saul as sometimes beside himself, and one that did not know what he did.

Ver. 20, 21. *The thing pleased him*—Not out of any love to David, or desire to perform his promise; but because he hoped, by her means, to bring his ends about of destroying David. *That she may be a snare to him*—He hoped his daughter, in obedience to him, might be persuaded to bring him into some snare that he would lay for him: or, that being exposed to great dangers, (which he was to undergo, as a condition of having her to wife) he might perish in some of them. *Thou shalt be this day my son-in-law*—That is, shortly, within a little time. *In the one of the twain*—Saul seems in this to have told David that though some reasons of state had obliged him to give his elder daughter to Adriel, yet still he would have him for his son-in-law, by giving the other unto him.

Ver. 22, 23. *Commune with David secretly*—It seems David was not forward to embrace Saul's offer; having been

before so grossly abused. Therefore Saul ordered his courtiers, in private discourse, to take occasion to persuade him to it. *Seeing that I am a poor man*—Having no estate, and of small credit; and therefore unable to endow her according to her quality.

Ver. 25. *The king desireth not any dowry*—It was customary in those times for the husband to give a present, or, as it is rendered, a dowry, to his father-in-law when he received his wife. *But an hundred fore-skins of the Philistines*—Saul made this demand of David, probably, thinking that the necessity he would be under of attacking the Philistines at a disadvantage, or, at all hazards, in order to get the proposed number of fore-skins within the time limited, would bring him into such dangerous encounters, as he could scarcely escape from. It is likely that Saul required the fore-skins rather than the heads of the Philistines, to take away all possibility of David's deceiving him, by bringing the heads of such of his own men as might fall in battle, and passing them on him for the heads of the Philistines.

Ver. 26, 27. *The days were not expired*—That is, the time allowed by Saul to David for the execution of this exploit. *Two hundred*—He doubled the number required; to oblige Saul the more to the performance of his promise; and to shew his great respect and affection to Saul's daughter.

Ver. 28, 29. *Saul knew that the Lord was with David*—He was convinced of it, by the success which he constantly

A. M. 9941. B. C. 1062. Michal Saul's daughter loved him.

29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually.

30 Then the princes of the Philistines <sup>m</sup> went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, *that* David <sup>n</sup> behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much <sup>†</sup> set by.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Sam. 11. 1.

<sup>n</sup> Ver. 5.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. precious. Ch. 26. 21. 2 Kings 1. 14. Ps. 116. 15.

## CHAP. XIX.

*Saul is pacified by Jonathan, ver. 1—7. Attempts again to kill David, ver. 8—10. Is deceived by Michal, who sends David away, ver. 11—17. David flies to Ramah, and Saul prophesies, ver. 18—24.*

**A**ND Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. 18. 1. 2 But Jonathan Saul's son <sup>a</sup> de-

had in all his undertakings. *And Saul was yet the more afraid of David*—Having thus advanced him; and seeing no hope of bringing his designs to pass against him. *And Saul became David's enemy continually*—He was every day more resolved to destroy him. Such strange blindness did his anger and hatred, and such like passions, bring upon him, that he set himself against him, who, he saw and knew, had God for his friend! In what a lost condition must Saul's mind have now been!

Ver. 30. *The princes of the Philistines went forth*—To fight with the Israelites: who had highly incensed them by David's late action, as well as by former losses. *David behaved himself more wisely, &c.*—By discovering, it is likely, the designs of the Philistines, and preventing them. For we do not read that they came to a battle.

CHAP. XIX. Ver. 1. *Saul spake to Jonathan—and all his servants*—When he could not destroy David by craft, he declares open enmity to him; and commands his son, and his whole court to make him away; some of whom he thought would obey him. It is strange he should speak to Jonathan to murder David, if he knew the friendship he had for him; and he could not well be ignorant of it, since he had so publicly declared it, as we read, Ch. xviii. 3, 4. But he imagined his love to a father would overcome his love to a friend; and there was a great providence of God in his disclosing his mind so freely to Jonathan, as-by that means David came to be certainly informed of his danger.

Ver. 2. *But Jonathan—delighted much in David, and told David*—Jonathan disobeyed the command, and, instead of murdering David, pleads his innocence and merits, as reasons for saving him. He also discovered his father's design and

lighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret *place*, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou *art*, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.

4 ¶ And Jonathan <sup>b</sup> spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king <sup>c</sup> sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works *have been* to thee-ward very good:

5 For he did put his <sup>d</sup> life in his hand, and <sup>e</sup> slew the Philistine, and <sup>f</sup> the LORD wrought a great salva-

fixed resolution to destroy him, and certainly in neither case acted inconsistently with his duty to his father, and king. "He," says Dr. Dodd, "who knows of a conspiracy against an innocent person's life, and doth not discover it; or, who kills such a one by another's instigation and command, is himself a murderer; and no duty to a father, or allegiance to a prince, can oblige any one to shed innocent blood. Jonathan was therefore so far from acting contrary to his duty and allegiance, in refusing to become his father's instrument, in murdering David, that he gave a noble instance of filial piety, affection, and duty, in his repeated endeavours to preserve him from so unnatural a crime; and humanity and virtue will ever applaud him for the generous concern he expressed for the honour of his father, and the preservation of his friend." *Take heed to thyself until the morning*—Jonathan knew not but some of the servants might be either so obsequious to Saul, or so envious at David, as to put the orders in execution, which Saul had given, if they could light on David.

Ver. 3. *I will—stand by my father in the field*—In which it is likely Saul used to walk in the morning and take the fresh air. Thereabouts he advised David to lurk in some secret place; that he might speedily acquaint him with the issue of his discourse with his father, Ver. 4—7. *Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul*—Which he could not do without hazard to himself. Herein, therefore, he performed the duty of a true friend and of a valiant man. *He put his life in his hand*—Or in the greatest hazard: *And slew the Philistine*—He puts him in mind of that *hazardous enterprize wherein he slew Goliath*; in which David did indeed hazard his life greatly, for had he missed with his sling he must certainly have been slain.

A. M. 9941. B. C. 1062.

<sup>b</sup> Prov. 31. 8, 9.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. 42. 22. Ps. 25. 18. & 107. 5. Prov. 17. 30. Jer. 15. 20.

<sup>d</sup> Judg. 9. 17. & 12. 3. Ch. 25. 21. Ps. 119. 109.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 17. 49. 50. <sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. 11. 13. 1 Chron. 11. 14.

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. tion for all Israel: thou sawest it,  
g Ch. 20. 32. and didst rejoice: <sup>e</sup>wherefore then  
h Matt. 27. wilt thou <sup>h</sup>sin against innocent  
a. blood, to slay David without a cause?

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, *As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain.*

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, <sup>i</sup>as <sup>†</sup>in times past.

i Ch. 16. 21.  
& 14. 2, 15.  
† Heb. yer-  
berney  
third day.

8 ¶ And there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from <sup>†</sup>him.

cir. 1062.  
† Heb. Aia  
face.

k Ch. 16. 14.  
& 16. 10,  
11.

9 And <sup>k</sup>the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in

his house with his javelin in his A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. hand: and David played with *his* hand.

10 And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

11 <sup>l</sup>Saul also sent messengers l Ps. 59.  
title. unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.

12 ¶ So Michal <sup>m</sup>let David down m Josh. 9.  
15. Acta  
9. 34, 35. through a window: and he went and fled, and escaped.

13 And Michal took an <sup>†</sup>image, † Heb. tera-  
phim,  
Gen. 31.  
19. Judg.  
17. 5. and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pil-

Ver. 6. *Saul sware, As the Lord liveth*—And, without all doubt, he intended what he said, feeling a real change in himself for the present. "God," says Mr. Henry, "inclined the heart of Saul to hearken to the voice of Jonathan." From this, however, and other similar instances, it appears that Saul was of a hasty, precipitate temper; and that he had too little reverence for an oath. And as he swore inconsiderately, so he as quickly and inconsiderately broke his oath; which may be a lesson to us never to take an oath upon any occasion, but with the greatest seriousness and an inward veneration, Ver. 8, 9. *And there was war again*—The battles of which were only between parties, for David commanded no more than a thousand men, Ch. xviii. 13. And if the whole army of the Philistines had been gathered together, Abner would have commanded the army of Israel against them; for he was captain of the host. *David went out and fought with the Philistines*—So David continues his good services, though they were ill requited. They who are ill paid for doing good, yet must not be *weary of well doing*, remembering how bountiful a benefactor God is, even to the evil and unthankful. *The evil spirit was upon Saul*—David's successes against the Philistines revived his envy, and the devil watched the opportunity as he had done before. And David *played with his hand*—He did not omit his duty to Saul, though he knew his danger.

Ver. 10. *Saul sought to smite David—with the javelin*—"How sad and shocking a scene was this! David labouring with all his study and skill to relieve Saul's anguish; and Saul, in the same instant, meditating his destruction! sitting sullen, and determined, with his javelin in his hand, watching his opportunity, and waiting, perhaps, until the power of music had so far calmed his spirits as to render his hand steady. He then darted his spear at David with all his might, and with such force, that, he happily declining it, it pierced

and stuck into the wall; and David fled," Delaney. Saul's wrath and fury, on this occasion, made him entirely forget his oath. So dangerous it is to be possessed with such passions! It seems likely, from Saul's having a javelin in or near his hand, that it was usual for kings, in those days, to hold one in their hands, in the same manner as a sceptre in after-times, as a mark of royal authority.

Ver. 11. *To slay him in the morning*—As he went out of the door of his house. By this it is apparent, when Saul missed his blow, he was the more enraged, and implacably pursued David's destruction. *And Michal David's wife told him*—She had intelligence either from her brother Jonathan, or some other friend at court: Or, perhaps she saw suspicious persons hovering about the house.

Ver. 12. *He fled and escaped*—It seems likely that a considerable part of the 18th Psalm, viz. from the 1st to the 29th verse, refers to this escape of David. The 29th verse seems entirely descriptive of it, and applicable to no other event of David's life that we read of. "By thee I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall." Saul's messengers, that were sent to slay him in the morning, undoubtedly surrounded his house, and were upon the watch, and therefore David had reason to look upon his escaping them to be a wonderful deliverance, in which the providence of God was concerned.

Ver. 13. *Michal took an image*—In the Hebrew it is *teraphim*; which *teraphim*, as Dr. Dodd observes, it plainly appears from hence, must have been figures of the human form; for the design of Michal was manifestly to deceive the messengers of Saul, by shewing them something in a bed so far resembling a man as to make them believe it was David himself asleep. Her intention was to procure David the longer time for escaping. And to render it still more like him, she covered the back part of the head of the image which ap-

A. M. 2943  
B. C. 1062. low of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.

14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.

15 And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.

16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.

17 And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?

n 7 Sam. 2.  
29.

peared in sight, with goats' hair of the same colour as David's was, so that any one might take it, at a slight view, especially in a sick man's room, where only a glimmering light is wont to be kept, for the back part of David's head. This is plainly the meaning of the next clause, not very properly interpreted in our translation, but which in the Vulgate is rendered, *et pellem pilosam caprarum possuit ad caput ejus; and she put the hairy skin of goats to, or upon his head, And covered it with a cloth*—Upon pretence of his being sick, and needing some such covering. If we may believe Abarbinel and Abendana, "women in those times were accustomed to have figures made in the likeness of their husbands, that when they were absent from them they might have their image to look upon." If this really be a fact, it is probable that Michal's image was one of this kind; or it was merely a statue for ornament. For we cannot suppose that any images, whether called *teraphim* or by any other name, were kept for the purposes of idolatry in David's family.

Ver. 14—17. *Saul sent messengers to take David*—As he did not come out of doors, where they waited for him, Saul sent other messengers to take him in the house. *She said, He is sick*—Her affection for David, and fear for his life, induced her to tell a plain lie, in which she is neither to be justified nor imitated. She intended hereby, however, to keep Saul in suspense for a while till David should arrive at some place of safety. *He said, Let me go: Why should I kill thee?*—This was another untruth; and an untruth very injurious to David's reputation. Far was it from him either to intend or threaten to kill any one, much more his own wife. But Michal feared to enrage her father to too high a degree if she told the truth. Her weakness is to be pitied, while it is to be condemned and shunned.

Ver. 18. *David—escaped and came to Samuel*—Both for comfort and direction in his distress, and for safety, supposing that Saul would be ashamed to execute his bloody designs in the presence of so venerable a person as Samuel.

18 ¶ So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.

20 ¶ And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and

A. M. 2943.  
B. C. 1062.

o John 7.  
32, 45, &c.  
p 1 Cor. 14.  
3, 24, 25.  
Ch. 10. 5.  
6.

q Num. 11:  
25. Joel  
2. 28.

*And told him all that Saul had done to him*—Which, while it afforded relief to the mind of David amidst his distress and trouble, could not but exceedingly grieve the mind of Samuel, to be informed how low Saul had fallen. *He and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth*—Or, as the Chaldee renders it, *The school of learning*. This was that famous school or college of the prophets, which was dedicated to the study of the Jewish law, and was in all respects a religious seminary.

Ver. 20. *Saul sent messengers to take David*—His implacable hatred had abolished all respect and reverence for Samuel (under whose protection David now was), and for the college of the prophets, which was a kind of sanctuary to those that fled to it. *Samuel standing as appointed over them*—To instruct and direct them in their holy exercises. For though they prophesied by divine inspiration, yet they were both to prepare themselves for it before-hand, and to make good improvement of it afterwards, in both which they needed Samuel's counsel and assistance. And whereas some might falsely pretend to those raptures; or the devil might transform himself into an angel of light, Samuel's presence and judgment was necessary to prevent and to detect such impostures. Besides, Samuel would by his present conjunction with them in those holy exercises, encourage them, and stir up others to the coveting of those gifts, and to the performance of such religious duties. *The Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul*—That, being wrapt up into an ecstasy, and no longer masters of themselves, their minds might be wholly taken off from their design of seizing David. *They prophesied*—Praised God in hymns, by a sudden impulse, which they could not resist.

Ver. 21—23. *He sent other messengers*—Strange obstinacy to contend so long with the Spirit of God. *And they prophesied likewise*. That is, they joined with the rest in praising God. "Instead," says Henry, "of seizing David, they were themselves seized." Thus God again secured David,

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. they prophesied also.

22 ¶ Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah.

23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also; and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 <sup>s</sup> And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and † lay down † naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, <sup>u</sup> Is Saul also among the prophets?

CHAP. XX.

David complains to Jonathan, and desires his help, ver. 1—8. Jonathan promises to give him intelligence, and confirms his friendship, ver. 9—23. He finds his father implacable, ver. 24—34. He gives David notice of it, in the manner they had agreed on, ver. 35—42.

put an honour on the sons and school of the prophets, and manifested his power over the spirits of men. *The Spirit of God was upon him also*—It came upon him in the way; whereas it came not upon his messengers till they came to the place. Hereby God would convince Saul of the vanity of his designs against David, and that in them he fought against God himself.

Ver. 24. *And he stript off his clothes also*—His royal robes—Perhaps this was intended to signify the taking away of his kingdom from him. *And lay down*—Heb. fell down upon the earth; for his mind being in an ecstasy, he had not the use of his senses; God so ordering it, that David might have an opportunity to escape. *Naked*—That is, stript of his upper garments, as the word *naked* is often used; and it is here repeated to signify how long he lay in that posture. *Day and night*—So God kept him as it were in chains, till David was got out of his reach. *Is Saul also among the prophets*—The same proverb which was used before is here revived, as an evidence of God's wonderful care over David; he made Saul, in some sort, a prophet, that he might make David a king.

CHAP. XX. Ver. 1. *David fled—and came and said before Jonathan*—Saul's being thrown into a trance, as mentioned in the foregoing verse, gave David time to escape, and he went from Naioth to Gibeah, where Jonathan was. "It was happy for David that he had such a friend at court, when he had such an enemy on the throne."—Hen. *What have I done? What is mine iniquity?* He appeals to Jonathan himself concerning his innocence, and endeavours

AND David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?

2 And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will † shew it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so.

3 And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.

4 Then said Jonathan unto David, ¶ Whatsoever thy soul † desireth, I will even do it for thee.

5 And David said unto Jonathan,

to convince him that, notwithstanding he had committed no iniquity, Saul sought his life.

Ver. 2. *He said—God forbid; thou shalt not die*—It appears by this that Jonathan knew nothing of his father's design, and that the messengers before-named had been sent to seize David without his privity. Hence, from a principle of filial respect to his father, he was very loath to believe that he would do so ill a thing. *Behold, my father will do nothing—but he will shew it me*—In this he was greatly mistaken. Communicative as Saul was to his son Jonathan in other things, he was ashamed to disclose to him the wicked design he had formed against the life of his friend. *Why should my father hide this thing from me?*—Why? For an obvious reason; because it was too base and shameful to be discovered to any one that had any fear of God before his eyes, or any sense of moral obligation. He was afraid too that if he should disclose his design to Jonathan, he should find means to prevent its execution. *It is not so*—Jonathan gave credit to his father's oath, mentioned Chap. xix. 6.

Ver. 3. *David sware moreover*—The matter being of great moment, and Jonathan doubting the truth of it, he confirms his word with an oath, which follows in the end of the verse. Only he interposeth a reason why Saul concealed it from Jonathan. *Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved*—What a noble and generous turn does David here give to the behaviour of Saul to Jonathan, lest he should think ill of his father, by insinuating that he had kept this a secret from him out of affection, lest it should give him pain!

Ver. 4, 5. *Whatsoever thou desirest*—He does not say, that shall be lawful and honest; for he knew David too well

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. Behold, to-morrow is the <sup>a</sup>new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may <sup>b</sup>hide myself in the field unto the third *day* at even.

c Ch. 16. 4. 6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked *leave* of me that he might run <sup>c</sup>to Beth-lehem his city; for *there is* a yearly **||** sacrifice there for all the family.

d Deut. 1.  
23. 7 Sam.  
17. 4. 7 <sup>d</sup>If he say thus, *It is well*; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, *then* be sure that <sup>e</sup>evil is determined by him.

e Ch. 25. 17.  
Esth. 7. 7. 8 Therefore thou shalt <sup>f</sup>deal kindly with thy servant; for <sup>g</sup>thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, <sup>h</sup>if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what *if* thy father answer thee roughly?

11 ¶ And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field.

12 And Jonathan said unto David, O LORD God of Israel, when I have <sup>†</sup>sounded my father about to-morrow any time, *or* the third *day*, and, behold, *if there be* good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and <sup>†</sup>shew it thee;

13 <sup>i</sup>The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father *to do* thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and <sup>k</sup>the LORD be with thee, as he hath

to think he would ask any thing that was otherwise. *I will do it for thee*—This is true friendship. Thus Christ testifies his love to us: *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do*. And we must testify ours to him by keeping his commandments. *Behold, to-morrow is the new moon*—There were solemn sacrifices every new moon, and then a feast upon them. And David being one of the king's family, by marrying his daughter, used to eat with him at these festival times. *That I may hide myself in the field till the third day*—That is, unto the next day but one, after the new moon. His meaning is not, that he would hide himself in any certain place all the three days, but that he would secure himself either at Beth-lehem with his friends, or in some other place, till the third day.

Ver. 6. *Say, David earnestly asked of me*—Jonathan, being the king's son and deputy, used, it seems, to give license to military men to depart for a season upon just occasions. *There is a yearly sacrifice for all the family*—It is likely it was a custom among pious families to meet together once a year, and praise God for his mercies toward them all.

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant*—In giving me timely notice, and a true account of Saul's disposition and intention towards me. *A covenant of the Lord*—That is, a solemn covenant, not lightly undertaken, but seriously entered into, in the name and fear of God, and in his presence, calling him to be the witness of our sincerity therein, and the avenger of perfidiousness in him that breaks it. *Slay me*—I am contented thou shouldst kill me. *For why*—Why shouldst thou betray me to thy father, by concealing his evil intentions from me?

Ver. 9—13. *Jonathan said, Far be it from thee*—Or rather, *Far be this away*; for Jonathan is speaking of himself in this thing. *Then said David—Who shall tell me?*—Who shall bring me advice how matters stand? *They went out both—into the field*—To take their measures about this matter. *Jonathan said, O Lord God of Israel*—Do thou hear and judge between us. These first words of the sentence seem to be an exclamation, or an abrupt speech, not unusual in great passions, and the rest are as if he had said, Shall I, who love thee so much, be thought capable of breaking my word with thee? In all these verses the words are broken, concise, and interrupted: as the words of lovers are wont to be, especially when they are disturbed. But there is a tenderness and sincerity in this exclamation of Jonathan which is scarcely to be equalled. *If there be good towards thee*—I will shew it thee, that thou mayest be easy. *If it please my father to do thee evil*—I will send thee away that thou mayest be safe. Thus he would help to deliver him from evil if it were real, and from the fear of evil if it were but imaginary. *The Lord do so, and much more to Jonathan*—If I speak deceitfully, or break my word with my friend: he expresseth himself thus solemnly that David might be fully assured of his sincerity. And thus God has confirmed his promises to us, that we might have strong consolation, Heb. vi. 17, 18. *The Lord be with thee*—And protect and prosper thee. Thus, to his protestations, Jonathan adds his hearty prayers for David. *As he hath been with my father*—Formerly, though now he be withdrawn. This intimates his belief that David would be in his father's place, and his desire that he might prosper in it better than his father now did.

† Heb. searched.

† Heb. uncovered mine ear, Ver. 9.

† Ruth 1. 17.

k Josh 1. 5.  
Ch. 17. 37.  
1 Chron.  
22. 11, 16.

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. been with my father.

14 And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not:

1 e Sam. 9.  
1, 3, 7, &  
21. 7. 15 But *also* <sup>1</sup>thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.

† Heb. cut. 16 So Jonathan †made a *covenant* with the house of David, *saying*, <sup>m</sup>Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies.

m Ch. 25.  
21. Ch. 31.  
2. 2 Sam.  
4. 7. & 21.  
6. 17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, || because he loved him: <sup>n</sup>for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

† Or. by his love toward him.  
n Ch. 18. 1. 18 ¶ Then Jonathan said to David, <sup>o</sup>To-morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be †empty.

† Heb. missed.

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062. 19 And *when* thou hast stayed three days, *then* thou shalt go down || †quickly, and come to <sup>p</sup>the place where thou didst hide thyself †when the business was *in hand*, and shalt remain by the stone || Ezel.

† Or. diligently.  
† Heb. Greatly.  
p Ch. 19. 2.  
† Heb. in the day of the business.  
† Or. that sheweth the way. 20 And I will shoot three arrows <sup>1</sup>on the side *thereof*, as though I shot at a mark.

21 And, behold, I will send a lad, *saying*, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows *are* on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for *there is* peace to thee, and †no hurt; <sup>q</sup>as the LORD liveth.

† Heb. not anything.  
q Jer. 4. 2. 22 But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows *are* beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away.

23 And *as touching* <sup>r</sup>the matter r Ver. 14, 16.  
Ver. 48.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt—shew me the kindness of the Lord*—That kindness to which thou hast engaged thyself, in the covenant sworn between thee and me in God's presence. The words in the Hebrew run plainly thus; *and wilt thou not, if I be then alive, (viz. when God had advanced David to the throne as he had done Saul) wilt thou not shew me the loving-kindness of the Lord?*—He made no doubt, but rather strongly affirmed his belief of it. *That I die not*—That thou do not kill me or mine, as princes of another line used to kill the nearest relations of the former line, from whom the kingdom was translated to them.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house*—The covenant they had made was not merely personal, but reached to their posterity, and was to be kept even when David should have the greatest power, and there were none to oppose his will. These verses seem strongly to indicate that Jonathan knew of David's being anointed to the kingdom! How unspeakable a generosity is here shewn by Jonathan to stipulate for his own life, and the lives of his posterity with that man whose life, humanly speaking, was now in his power!

Ver. 16, 17. *So Jonathan made a covenant*—The covenant which before was personal, he now extends to the whole house of David, expecting a reciprocal enlargement of it on David's side, which doubtless he obtained. *At the hand of David's enemies*—If either I, or any of my house shall prove enemies to David or to his house, let the Lord, the witness of this covenant, severely punish the violators of it. *Jonathan caused David to swear again*—Heb. *and Jonathan added or proceeded to swear*; that is, having himself sworn to David, or adjured David, in the foregoing verse, he here requires David's oath to him, by way of restipulation or confirmation. *For he loved him, &c.*—The greatness of his love to him in-

duced him to use every mean in his power to secure David's friendship to himself and his posterity, and to ensure the inviolable observance of this covenant through all their generations.

Ver. 19. *When thou hast stayed three days, &c.*—This is commonly interpreted of his staying so long with his kindred at Bethlehem. In the Hebrew the words are, *Thou shalt three times go down to a very low place*—And the meaning seems to be that if Jonathan did not come to the place appointed the first day, David should take it for granted that he had no information of importance to communicate; and should come again the second day, and if Jonathan brought him no intelligence then, he should come on the third. Houbigant interprets the words, "But on the third day thou shalt come quickly to that place, in which thou shalt hide thyself on the feast day." *When the business was in hand*—When this same business which they were now treating about was in agitation formerly; viz. to discover Saul's mind and purpose towards David, Chap. xix. 2, 3. *By the stone Ezel*—A stone probably erected to direct travellers in the way: he was to hide himself in some cave or other convenient place near it.

Ver. 21—23. *I will send a lad, &c.*—I will send him before I shoot to find and take up the arrows which I shall shoot: and I shall shoot them either short of him or beyond him as I shall see occasion. *If I say—Behold the arrows are beyond thee*—This signal seems to have been agreed on between them, in case Jonathan was so watched and followed, as not to have an opportunity of communing with David by word of mouth. *The Lord be between thee and me*—As a witness and a judge, and between our families for ever, if on either side, this league of friendship be violated.



A. M. 2912.  
B. C. 1062. which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD *be* between thee and me for ever.

24 ¶ So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.

25 And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, *even* upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.

26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he *is* not clean; surely he *is* not clean.

27 And it came to pass on the morrow, *which was* the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to-day?

28 And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked *leave* of me to go to Beth-lehem:

29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice

in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to *be there*: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, ¶ † Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?

31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he † shall surely die.

32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?

33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

34 So Jonathan arose from the

A. M. 2912.  
B. C. 1062.

Or, thou perverse rebel.  
† Heb. son of perverse rebellion.

† Heb. is the son of death.

Ch. 19. 5.  
Matt. 27.  
23. Luke  
23. 22.

x Ch. 18. 11.

y Ver. 7.

Ver. 24—26 *David hid himself in the field*—Namely, at the time appointed: for it seems probable, that he went first to Bethlehem, and thence returned to the field, when the occasion required. *Jonathan arose*—He rose from his seat where he had sat next the king, and stood up at Abner's coming, to do honour to him, who was his father's cousin, and the general of the army. *Something hath befallen him*—Some accident which has rendered him unclean, and so unfit to partake of this feast, which consisted in part of the remainders of the peace-offerings, according to the law, Levit. vii. 20. unfit also to come into any company, much more, into the king's company, lest he should pollute them also.

Ver. 27, 28. *Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse?*—So he calls him in contempt and scorn, to mark the meanness of his original, and as not deigning to call him by his proper name. *Neither yesterday nor to-day*—For the uncleanness that came by some accident usually lasted but for one day. *David earnestly asked leave of me*—Which he, being next to the king, it is likely, had power to grant, as appears from Saul's demanding of him what was become of David.

Ver. 29, 30. *My brother, he hath commanded me to be there*—The eldest brother, it seems, was wont to let all the rest know that their company was expected. *Thou son of*

*the perverse, rebellious woman*—Or rather, according to the Hebrew, *Thou son of perverse rebellion*; that is, a very perverse rebel. *Thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion*—Made him thy friend to thy utter undoing and disgrace. For men will conclude that thou hast no royal blood in thy veins, that thou canst so tamely give up thy crown to so contemptible a person. *The confusion of thy mother's nakedness*—To the reproach of her having children, as if she were an adulteress, and thou and the rest base-born, and none of you worthy to inherit the kingdom: or rather, he thus asperses Jonathan's very birth, as if so degenerate a son could not be his, but must be the offspring of his mother's guilt, the issue of a criminal commerce with some other man.

Ver. 31. *Thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom*—Though Samuel had long before this declared to Saul, in the name of the Lord, that the kingdom should not continue with him, nor descend to his posterity; yet he seems to have had hopes that he should be able to prevent this declaration from being verified by his policy and taking proper measures.

Ver. 33, 34. *Saul cast a javelin to smite him*—Saul seemed a moment before to be in great care, that Jonathan should be established in his kingdom: and now he himself aims at his

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062.

table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

35 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.

36 And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. *And* as the lad ran, he shot an arrow † beyond him.

† Heb. to pass over him.

37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, *Is* not the arrow beyond thee?

38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

39 But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

life! What fools, what worse than savage beasts does anger make men! *Because*---or, *and because*, &c.---for this seems to be a second cause of his grief; *his father had done him shame*---That is, had done shame, not to David but Jonathan, by giving him such rough words, and throwing a javelin at him. It may, however, be understood of his father's speaking so contemptuously of David.

Ver. 37. *When the lad was come to the place*---That is, near to the place: Or, *and the lad went*; or, *was going on to the place*; for the words following shew that he was not yet come thither. The Hebrew word בּוֹ bo, signifies either to come, or to go. See Ruth iii. 7; and Jonah i. 3.

Ver. 40. *His artillery*---His bow, and arrows, and quiver.

Ver. 41. *And fell on his face to the ground*, &c.---After three bows, he fell on his face; out of reverence to Jonathan as the king's son, and in tenderness to him as his most generous friend. *They kissed one another, and wept one with another*---Nothing can be imagined more generous, and, at the same time, more soft and moving, than this meeting of these two friends. Jonathan seems, out of tenderness to David, to have suppressed some part of his grief. But David, who reflected that he was now taking his last leave of a friend, who had often saved his life, and was now just come from speaking in his favour, at the imminent hazard of his own life, could not restrain himself. The thought of taking a farewell of so invaluable a friend, and, at the same time, of

40 And Jonathan gave his † artillery unto † his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062.  
† Heb. in, instruments.  
† Heb. that was his.

41 *And* as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

42 And Jonathan said to David, <sup>2</sup> Go in peace, || forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

Ch. 1. 17.  
Or, the LORD be witness of that which, &c. Ver. 23.

## CHAP. XXI.

*David coming to Nob, takes the shew-bread, and Goliath's sword, ver. 1—9. Goes to Achish, and feigns himself mad, ver. 10—13. Is dismissed by Achish, ver. 14, 15.*

**T**HEN came David to Nob to <sup>a</sup> Ahimelech the priest: and

Ch. 14. 5, called Ahiah: called also Abiathar, Mark 2. 26.

leaving all his comforts, even those of God's sanctuary, was so bitter, that he could not bear it with moderation; and therefore is said to have exceeded. Perhaps his temper was more tender, and his passions stronger than those of Jonathan; who, however, seems evidently to have done great violence to his feelings, and to have had no little difficulty so to restrain his grief as not to sink his friend too much, but to send him away with a calm confidence in God, and religious tranquillity and peace of mind.

Ver 42. *Jonathan said, The Lord be between thee and me*, &c.---As much as to say, Fear not, but I will faithfully keep my covenant with thee; as I doubt not of thy perpetual steadfastness in it with me and my posterity. And this must be our satisfaction in this sad separation. *And he arose and departed*.---That is, David left Jonathan, that he might avoid the effects of Saul's wrath, and escape immediate destruction, and Jonathan returned to his family and friends. And it appears that these two friends never met again on earth, except once, and that was by stealth in a wood, Ch. xxiii. 16. But their spirits have long been united in the paradise of God, and they shall spend an eternity together in their complete persons, in that world of love and harmony where, the former things being passed away, friends united in heart will be separated no more!

CHAP. XXI. Ver. 1. *Then came David to Nob*—A city of

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062.  
Ch. 16. 4.

Ahimelech was <sup>b</sup> afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?

2 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place.

3 Now therefore what is under

the priests in the tribe of Benjamin, about twelve miles from Gibeah, not far from Anathoth and Jerusalem, Nehem. xi. 32; Isai. x. 32. The tabernacle, it appears, had been removed hither, and hither David now resorts, in hopes of finding shelter for a season, and a supply of his necessities, which he supposed he might obtain here without danger of being betrayed into the hands of Saul; and principally that in this great distress, he might receive direction and comfort from the Lord. To Ahimelech the priest—Probably the chief priest. David, in his first flight from Saul, had recourse to the prophet of God, and now his next is to his priest. Ahimelech was brother to that Ahiah, mentioned Ch. xiv. 3, (who was now dead), and his successor in the priesthood, for they were both sons of Ahitub. Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David—"Lest he was forced to flee from Saul," say some commentators, "and so it might be dangerous to entertain him." But it seems evident that Ahimelech knew nothing of the circumstances that David was in, or of Saul's enmity to him, and determined purpose to destroy him. But, as David was the king's son-in-law, he was surprised to see him without any attendants, and suspected that there must be some extraordinary cause of his coming in such a manner. Why art thou alone?—It appears from Ver. 4, 5, and from Mark ii. 25, that David had some persons with him, probably servants, whom Jonathan had sent to meet him some where, and accompany him; yet David had left these at another place, as he himself affirms, Ver. 2, and he was now alone, as he was when he fled to Achish. He who had been suddenly advanced to the highest honour, is as soon reduced to the desolate condition of an exile. Such are the changes which are frequently happening in this world, and so uncertain are its smiles.

Ver. 2. The king hath commanded, &c.—This is a plain lie, extorted from him by fear, and one that was very pernicious to all the priests there. Whence David afterwards declares his repentance for it, Ch. xxii. 22, and prays against the sin of lying, Psal. cxix. 29. To such and such a place.—To certain places which, he insinuates, it was not proper to mention, because the whole business required concealment.

Ver. 3, 4. What is under thine hand?—He desires to know what he was able to do for him to supply his wants. And particularly he requests some bread for himself and servants. Or what there is present—That is, any other victuals. There

thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is † present.

4 And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is <sup>c</sup> hallowed bread; <sup>d</sup> if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.

5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the <sup>e</sup> vessels of the young men

† Heb. found.

<sup>c</sup> Exod. 25. 30.  
<sup>d</sup> Lev. 24. 5.  
<sup>e</sup> Matt. 12. 4.  
<sup>f</sup> Exod. 19. 15. Z. ch. 7. 4.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Thes. 6. 4.

is hallowed bread—Here in the tabernacle. Doubtless, Ahimelech had other provisions in his house; but David was in great haste, and in fear of Doeg, whom he saw and knew, and therefore would not stay till any thing could be fetched from thence. There seemed to be a double impediment to Ahimelech's giving David and his servants this bread: 1, Its sacredness in itself, which he intimates; and, in answer to which David pleads his great necessity; an answer with which Ahimelech appears to have been satisfied. "Cases of necessity, as the Jews themselves allow, often superseded the observance of the ritual laws; and this compliance of Ahimelech is urged with great force by our Saviour, in vindication of a similar infringement, Mark ii. 25," Dodd. 2, It was requisite that all who eat of the holy bread, should have observed the same purity which was required of the priests, particularly in the instance of abstinence from all women; and Ahimelech suspected that David or his servants might possibly want this qualification, and therefore enquires concerning it. But out of respect to David he does not name him, but asks only concerning the young men. David's answer, however, shews that he was intended to be included in the enquiry.

Ver. 5. About these three days—As long as the law required, Exod. xix. 15. And so long, it seems, David and his men had hid themselves for fear of Saul, whereby they were kept both from their wives and from food convenient for them. The vessels of the young men are holy—That is, 1, Either their garments, or other utensils for their journey; or, 2, Their bodies. The bread (Heb. *וְהוּ*, *vehu*, and this) is in a manner common; that is, the bread which had been taken away from before the Lord, to make room for new bread to be placed there. For though, for a season, while it stood before the Lord, it was so holy that the priest himself might not eat it; yet afterwards it was eaten by the priest and his whole family, and David pleads that it might be eaten by him and his young men in their necessitous circumstances. Yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel—This translation renders the passage obscure. The Hebrew may be translated, as by Le Clerc and in some other versions, Furthermore, or, forasmuch as it (viz. bread) is sanctified this day in the vessel; that is, there was new bread-sanctified to be set before the Lord; and therefore this, which had been taken away from before him, was, in some degree, become

A. M. 2949.  
B. C. 1062. are holy, and *the bread is* in a manner common, || yea, though it were sanctified this day <sup>f</sup> in the vessel.

Or, especially when this day there is other sanctified in the vessel.  
f Lev. 5. 26.  
g Matt. 13. 2, 4.  
Mark 9. 28, 36.  
Luke 6. 7, 9.  
h Lev. 24. 8, 9. 6 So the priest <sup>g</sup> gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, <sup>h</sup> that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

i Ch. 29. 9.  
Ps. 52.  
title. 7 ¶ Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, detained before the LORD; and his name *was* <sup>i</sup>Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul.

8 ¶ And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.

9 And the priest said, The sword

common. For the law ordained, Lev. xxiv. 8, 9. that the *shew* or hallowed bread, should be removed every Sabbath-day from the table before the Lord, and fresh set on.

Ver. 7. *Detained before the Lord*—That is, at the tabernacle. It is not to be imagined that he was detained here by force, but by his own choice he stayed there that day, either because it was the Sabbath-day, on which he might not proceed on his journey, or for the performance of some vow, or other religious duty, to which he had obliged himself. *His name was Doeg, an Edomite*—His native country was Edom; but he was proselyted to the Jewish religion.

Ver. 8, 9. *The king's business required haste*—He pretended to Ahimelech, that the reason why he had not brought his sword or any weapon with him was, because he had not time to go to his house; the king pressing him to go immediately about his business. *Wrapt in a cloth behind the ephod*—That is, behind that holy place allotted for the keeping of the sacred, or priestly garments; all which are here comprehended under the *ephod*; which, as the chief, is put for all the rest. Here it was laid up as a sacred monument of God's power and goodness. *There is none like it*—Because it not only served him for his use, for he was a strong and tall man, and one that could wield that sword; but it was also a pledge of God's favour to him. Whenever he looked upon it, it would be a support to his faith, by reminding him of what God had already done.

Ver. 10. *David arose and fled—to Achish*—A miserable condition, to be forced to flee to those for protection who were naturally his bitter enemies. For this was the city of Goliath whom he had slain, and whose sword he had now about him. But it must be considered that Saul's rage was so great, and his power and diligence also in hunting after

A. M. 2949.  
B. C. 1062.  
k Ch. 17. 3.  
50.  
l Ch. 31. 16. of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in <sup>k</sup> the valley of Elah, <sup>l</sup> behold, it *is here* wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take *it*: for *there is* no other save that here. And David said, *There is none like that*; give it me.

10 ¶ And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to || Achish the king of Gath.

Or, Abimelech,  
Ps. 34,  
title.  
m Ps. 56,  
title. 11 And <sup>m</sup> the servants of Achish said unto him, *Is not this David the king of the land?* did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, <sup>n</sup> Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

n Ch. 18. 7.  
& 29. 5.  
Ecclesi. 47. 6.  
o Luke 2. 19. 12 And David <sup>o</sup> laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

p Ps. 34,  
title. 13 And <sup>p</sup> he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and || scab-

him, that he despaired of escaping any other way; and a desperate disease requireth a desperate remedy. Perhaps indeed he thought he should not be known: or, being now in disgrace with Saul, he thought the Philistines might take him for Saul's enemy, and so receive him gladly. The king elect is here an exile: anointed to the crown, and yet forced to run his country! So do God's providences sometimes run counter to his promises, for the trial of our faith, and the glorifying of his name in accomplishing his counsels, notwithstanding the difficulties which lie in the way.

Ver. 11. *King of the land*—Of Canaan. They call him king, either more generally for the governor, the most eminent captain and commander, or, as the king elect, the person designed to be king: for, by this time, the fame of Saul's rejection, and David's destination to the kingdom, was got abroad among the Israelites, and from them, probably, to the Philistines. *Did they not sing, &c.*—And therefore consider what to do; and now our great enemy is in thy hand; be sure thou never let him go alive.

Ver. 12. *David laid up these words in his heart*—It is probable he had been at first well received, but this discourse deeply affected him, and made him think himself not safe there. For, when he found that his fame was spread among them, as having slain such numbers of the Philistines, he concluded that they would be instigated to take revenge on him now they had him in their power. *And was sore afraid*—Lest either their revenge or policy should prompt them to kill him. Perhaps he was the more apprehensive, because he wore Goliath's sword, which was, probably, well known at Gath.

Ver. 13. *He feigned himself mad*—That he might escape out of their hands. And herein he shewed great sagacity and

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bled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

Or, play-  
th the  
mad man.

14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man || is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me?

15 Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?

CHAP. XXII.

David escapes to the cave of Adullam, where many resort to him, ver. 1, 2. Lodges his parents with the king of Moab, ver. 3, 4. Comes to the forest of Hareth, ver. 5. Saul complains of his servants as unfaithful to him, ver. 6-8. On the

penetration. How great danger he was in, appears plainly from the 34th and 56th Psalms, which he composed upon this occasion. And he had indeed need to consider it, as he does in the first of those Psalms, as a wonderful deliverance wrought for him by God himself. He now learned by experience what he afterwards taught us, Psalm cxviii. 9, *That it is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in princes.*

Ver. 15. *Have I need of mad men?*---It is highly probable, that Achish was aware this madness was counterfeit. But being desirous to preserve David, he spoke as if he thought it real.

CHAP. XXII. Ver. 1. *To the cave of Adullam*---Which was a strong hold in the tribe of Judah, 1 Chron. xi. 15; Josh. xv. 35. This place, fortified by nature, is so fitted for the security of persons in distress, according to Dr. Delaney, that it hath frequently given a refuge from the Turks to the Christians, who fled thither with their families, flocks, and herds. As it was in the tribe of Judah, and David belonged to that tribe, he might, perhaps, flee to it in hopes of finding some friends in those parts. *And his brethren, &c. went down thither to him*---Either to comfort him, or to secure themselves from the fury of Saul, who, they thought, might probably wreak upon them his hatred to David.

Ver. 2. *Every one that was in distress*---מְצוּקִים וְשֹׂאֵם, *ish matsok, the man straitened or oppressed* *And every one that was in debt*, אֲשֶׁר לוֹ נוֹשֶׁעַ, *asher lo noshee, the man that had a creditor*---Probably poor debtors, whom their creditors were obliged to spare, Exod. xxii. 25. And others, whose lands and goods their creditors might seize when their persons were with David. It must be observed that the Jews frequently used their debtors with great severity, (See Nehem. v. 5,) taking forcible possession of their lands and vineyards, and bringing their children into bondage. *Every one that was discontented*---Heb. מַר נֶפֶשׁ, *mar nephesh, the man bitter of soul*, aggrieved in his mind, made uneasy and discontented, "probably," says Dr. Dodd, "with Saul's tyrannical government, and his implacable persecution of David, who, by this

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information of Doeg, he orders the priests of Nob to be slain, and their city destroyed, ver. 9-19. David is informed of this by Abiathar, ver. 20-23.

A.P. 57.  
title, &  
143, title.  
B Sam. 23.  
13.

DAVID therefore departed thence, and <sup>a</sup>escaped <sup>b</sup>to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down thither to him.

2 <sup>c</sup>And every one *that was* in distress, and every one that <sup>d</sup>was in debt, and every one *that was* <sup>e</sup>discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

c Judg. 11. 2.  
† Heb. had a creditor.  
† Heb. bit-ter of soul.

3 ¶ And David went thence to

time, must have been well known to have been the intended successor of Saul." It does not appear, from this description, that these were men of abandoned characters and profligate principles, as some have thought, who joined themselves to David, purposely to cheat their creditors, and for the sake of the plunder they were in hopes of getting under him. Indeed, had this been the case, David would not have been able to have kept them under that strict order and discipline under which we find he did keep them, but we should have read of their plundering, and murdering, and committing other outrages. Nor would they have continued with him so long, and abode with him in dreary forests, destitute of most of the conveniences and comforts of life; or have followed him whithersoever he was disposed to lead them. This is not the temper or behaviour of men of profligate principles. And, therefore, there is reason to conclude, that they were persons who were brought into distress and poverty by other causes, such as, in the course of divine providence, are frequently permitted to afflict the best of men, for their trial, humiliation, or correction. But if they were not virtuous when they resorted to David, that they became so by his discipline, influence, and example, is sufficiently evident from their subsequent behaviour. *And he became a captain over them*---Being forced to take this course in his own defence, that he might not be suddenly surprised. But David did not take these men into his service, till by information from Jonathan, and by many other certain proofs, it evidently appeared that his life was in imminent danger. And then he neither assaulted any place with them, nor sought for an occasion to fight, but avoided it by seeking for secret and secure places of retreat, sometimes in the deserts, sometimes in foreign nations, always taking care not to hurt his countrymen, and never allowing his men to make incursions upon any but the enemies of Israel.

Ver. 3. *David went from thence to Mizpeh*---For the Moabites were at difference with Saul, Chap. xiv. 47. *Let my father and my mother be with you*---David, perhaps, the rather hoped for this kindness to be shewn to his aged parents,

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Mizpeh of Moab : and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, *and be with you, till I know what God will do for me.*

4 And he brought them before the king of Moab : and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.

d 2 Sam. 24.  
11.  
1 Chron.  
21. 9.  
2 Chron.  
30. 25.

5 ¶ And the prophet <sup>d</sup>Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold ; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.

Or, grove  
in a high  
place.

6 ¶ When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeath under a ¶ tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants *were* standing about him ;)

7 Then Saul said unto his servants

that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites ; will the son of Jesse <sup>e</sup>give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds ;

8 That all of you have conspired against me, and *there is* none that † sheweth me that † my son hath † made a league with the son of Jesse, and *there is* none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day ?

9 ¶ Then answered <sup>e</sup>Doeg the Edomite, which was set over the servants of Saul, and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to <sup>h</sup>Ahimelech the son of <sup>i</sup>Ahitub.

10 <sup>k</sup>And he enquired of the LORD for him, and <sup>l</sup>gave him victuals, and

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e Ch. 8. 14.

† Heb. un-  
covereth  
mine ear,  
Ch. 20. 3.  
† Ch. 15. 3.  
& 20. 30.e Ch. 21. 7.  
Ps. 59.  
title, &  
Ver. 1, 2.  
3.h Ch. 21. 1.  
i Ch. 14. 3.  
k Numb. 27.  
21.l Ch. 21. 6.  
9.

who were not able to travel up and down, as he was likely to be obliged to do, because he was descended from Ruth, a Moabitess. The filial tenderness of David here deserves our admiration, who makes it his first care to fix his parents in a place of safety and ease, not being able to bear their being exposed to the dangers and hardships which the necessity of his affairs obliged him to undergo. His address to the king manifests his great tenderness to his parents ; and his entire submission to the *will of God. Till I know what God will do for me*—He expresses his hopes very modestly, as one that had entirely cast himself upon God, and committed his way to him, trusting not in his own arts or arms, but in the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

Ver. 4. *All the while David was in the hold*—In holds ; the singular number being put for the plural ; as is frequent ; that is, as long as David was forced to go from place to place, and from hold to hold, to secure himself : for it concerned David especially to secure his father, and he did doubtless secure him for all that time ; and not only while he was in the hold of Mizpeh, or of Adullam, which was but a little while.

Ver. 5. *The prophet Gad said unto David*—We read nothing of this prophet before ; and it is likely God raised him up at this time, on purpose for the support and direction of David. *Abide not in the hold*—That is, do not shut up thyself here : for he did not merely intend any particular strong place, where David might now be, but in general all those places where he kept himself concealed. *Get thee into the land of Judah*—As one that confides in God, and in the uprightness of his intentions. Go, show thyself to the people, that thou mayest publicly put in thy claim to the king-

dom, after Saul's death ; and that thy friends may be invited and encouraged to appear in thy behalf. Hereby also God would exercise David's faith, wisdom, and courage ; and so prepare him for the kingdom.

Ver. 6—8. *Having his spear in his hand*—It seems as an ensign of Majesty, for in old times kings carried a spear in stead of a sceptre. *Ye Benjamites*—You that are of my own tribe and kindred, from whom David designs to translate the kingdom to another tribe. Will he distribute profits and preferments among you Benjamites, as I have done ? Will he not rather prefer those of his own tribe before you ? *That all of you have conspired against me*—To conceal David's designs from me, if not to assist him in them. See the nature of jealousy and its arts of flattering and wheedling to extort discoveries of things which have no existence ! *That my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse*—He suspects Jonathan had made a league with David, but did not certainly know it, much less what the league was. His jealousy even carried him so far as to make him suspect that Jonathan not only sided with David, but had encouraged him to take up arms, and to appear openly, as having many friends and supporters. For since Saul threw the javelin at Jonathan, it is likely the latter had absented himself from court ; or did not appear so frequently ; or looked discontented when he came into his father's presence.

Ver. 10. *He enquired of the Lord for him*—Some think Doeg slandered Ahimelech in this, because we read nothing of it in the foregoing chapter ; and David, in the Psalms, speaks of his false tongue. But whether or not, he was guilty of great wickedness in concealing part of the truth, which, in this case, he ought to have declared for Ahime-

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gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

11 ¶ Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that *were* in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

12 And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, † Here I am, my lord.

13 And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who *is so faithful* among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and

goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

15 Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute *any* thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, † less or more.

16 And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house.

17 ¶ And the king said unto the † footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king <sup>m</sup> would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD.

18 And the king said to Doeg,

A. M. 2942.  
B. C. 1062.† Heb. little  
of great† Or, guard.  
† Heb. turn  
back.m Exod. 1.  
17.

lech's just defence; namely, the artifice whereby David had deceived him, making him believe that he was going on the king's business; so that the service which Ahimelech did to David, was designed in honour of Saul. *And gave him victuals, &c.*—Very innocently, as Doeg very well knew. But he represented these as acts whereby Ahimelech had aided and abetted David in a conspiracy; which are the lies that David lays to his charge, nothing being farther from the truth.

Ver. 11. *The king sent to call Ahimelech—and all his father's house*—The priests of the house of Eli, whom God had threatened to cut off, Chap. ii. 31; and which threatening, by a strange chain of providences, was now about to be fulfilled.

Ver. 14. *Ahimelech—said, Who is so faithful, &c.*—Or rather, *Who was so faithful, &c.*; for, it cannot be supposed, after Saul had just accused David of a conspiracy against him, that the high priest would say he was then faithful. His apology, which sufficiently shews his innocency, as to the things of which Saul accuses him, is, that since David had been held by all to be a most loyal subject, as well as a person of great honour, and in high favour with the king, having married his daughter; what could he think but that David was sent by the king, as he said he was, upon some business of public concern. Thus he does not take upon him to determine the difference between Saul and David, nor affirm what David now was; but only declares what David had formerly been, and what he was still, for any thing he knew to the contrary.

Ver. 15. *Did I then begin to enquire of God for him?*—These words do not necessarily imply that Ahimelech had enquired of God for David. Doeg indeed charged him with doing it, but as the sacred historian has made no mention of

any such thing, it is probable that he charged him falsely, and maliciously, and with a view to heighten the king's resentment against the priests. Ahimelech's words may be very naturally so interpreted, as Dr. Dodd has observed, as to imply an absolute denial of the charge. "*Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? Be it far from me.*" I never did it before, nor did I begin to do it now." The verb *hechel* (from *chelel*), which we render *begin*, is frequently a mere expletive, denoting not the first beginning of an action, but the action itself as begun and finished. "This vindication was honest and sufficient; but what was the effect of it? A resolution worthy the tyrant that made it."—Chandler. *Thy servant knew nothing of all this*—Of any design against thee.

Ver. 16, 17. *Thou shalt surely die—thou and all thy father's house*—A cruel resolution; for what had the rest of the priests done to deserve such a bloody execution? *The servants of the king would not, &c.*—In this undoubtedly they were praise-worthy; but had been more so had they courageously taken the part of these innocent persons, and remonstrated to Saul against his cruelty, as contrary to all the laws of God and man. And, if their reasons and prayers had proved ineffectual, they should have treated this command as the dictate of Saul's melancholy or evil spirit, and have given the priests some opportunity to escape out of his hands, instead of standing tamely to see them fall, contrary to all laws divine or human, by the hands of a ruffian, the minister of a tyrant's cruelty.

Ver. 18. *Doeg the Edomite turned and fell upon the priests*—The country of Doeg is very properly here mentioned, and again repeated to wipe off the stain of this butchery from the Israelitish nation, and to shew why he was so ready to do it; because he was one of that nation which had an implacable



A. M. 2042.  
B. C. 1062. Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod.

Ch. 2. 31.

Ver. 9, 11.

19 ° And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

Ch. 23. 6.

20 ¶ And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

Ch. 2. 33.

21 And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the LORD's priests.

22 And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would

surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house.

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23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.

1 Kings 9  
20.

### CHAP. XXIII.

*David saves Keilah from the Philistines, ver. 1—6. His danger there, and deliverance from it, ver. 7—13. He remains in the wilderness of Ziph, and is visited by Jonathan, ver. 14—18. Saul pursues him, ver. 19—25. His narrow escape, ver. 26—29.*

THEN they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshing-floors.

a Job. 15.  
44.

2 Therefore David enquired of

b Ver. 4, 6,  
9, Ch. 30.  
b. 2 Sam.  
b. 19, 23.

hatred against all Israelites, and against the priests of the Lord. *And slew on that day fourscore and five persons—*“The massacre of these innocent men was so outrageous, so bloody, and so horrible, that it paints the character of Saul in the blackest colours, and exposes him as a warning, not only to tyrannical monarchs, but likewise to private persons, who give a loose to the instigations of jealous suspicions, and intemperate wrath.”—Chandler. *That did wear a linen ephod*—That is, ministered unto the Lord; but we are not to understand by the ephod such a garment as the high priest wore, for this is distinguished from the high priest's ephod by the matter of it, which was merely linen. The priests had probably all put on this habit on account of appearing before the king.

Ver. 19. *Both men and women, children and sucklings—*In all the life of Saul, there is no wickedness to be compared to this. He appears now to be wholly under the power of that evil spirit which had long tormented him. And this destruction could not but go to the heart of every pious Israelite, and make them wish a thousand times they had been content with the government of Samuel. Josephus, in relating this, reflects on the depravity of human nature, which, when it is in a private station, often strictly and willingly confines itself within the bounds of right and justice; but when it has gained an uncontrollable power, thinks it has a right to trample upon all laws, as well divine as human. We ought, therefore, to pray, as Justin Martyr says, *that kings and rulers, together with a royal power, may be found having a sober mind.* Or, as Le Clerc observes, we ought never to put such a power into any persons' hands, as to enable them to trample upon all laws, and the common rights of mankind. Whether the Israelites assisted in the execution upon the inhabitants of Nob, does not appear; or whether it was performed by Doeg the Edomite and the rest of Saul's hirelings.

8

But it was sufficiently shameful to the Israelites that they did not even stand up to prevent such a cruel massacre.

Ver. 20. *Abiathar escaped and fled after David*—He, by his father's death, was now high priest, and is the person referred to, Mark ii. 26, where we find him described by an office which he did not bear till after the event alluded to, Ahimelech, as we have seen, being high priest when David took the shew-bread.

In what has been just related we have a remarkable instance of God's turning the worst devices of the wicked to the purposes of his providence; for in all this was fulfilled the threatening denounced by the Lord against the house of Eli; *because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not:* See Chap. ii. 31, and iii. 13.

CHAP. XXIII. Ver. 1. *Then they told*—Or rather, *Now they had told David.* For it is evident from Ver. 6, that David had received the information here referred to, and had even delivered the inhabitants of Keilah before Abiathar came to tell him of the slaughter of the priests. *The Philistines fight against Keilah*—Probably the Philistines were encouraged to make this inroad into the land of Israel by hearing that David was forced to flee his country, and that God had departed from Saul. When princes begin to persecute God's people and ministers, let them expect nothing but vexation on all sides. Keilah was a city in the tribe of Judah, Jos. xv. 44. *They rob the threshing floors*—Which were commonly without their cities, for the convenience of wind, to separate the chaff from the corn. See Ruth iii. 2.

Ver. 2. *David enquired of the Lord*—In what way he made enquiry is not certain, as it seems from Ver. 6, that Abiathar had not yet brought to David the sacred ephod, with all things belonging to it, that were made use of in consulting God. *Shall I go and smite these Philistines?*—We have here

5 I 2

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the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.

3 And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?

4 Then David enquired of the LORD yet again. And the LORD answered him and said, Arise, Go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

5 So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cat-

a remarkable instance of David's love to his country; unto which he did not become an enemy when he was banished from it. On the contrary, he hastened to its assistance unsolicited. This action of David's, in going to the relief of Keilah, is one of the most extraordinary ones recorded in history. "Another man, in David's place, would have rejoiced at this invasion, and perhaps encouraged it; and this both from self-preservation and policy; first, because he had nothing to fear for himself, whilst Saul had such an enemy upon his hands; and, secondly, because the distress of his country was the likeliest means to bring Saul to reason, and force him to recal, and be reconciled to his best champion. But David was governed by other than these narrow views; nor safety, nor honour was desirable to him, purchased by the distress of his country and his friends. His bosom beat with an eager desire to relieve Keilah; but it was not an adventure to be unadvisedly undertaken; and therefore he enquired of God, saying, *Shall I go and smite these Philistines?* This is one of those passages of Scripture that give evidence of their own truth. None but a hero could put the question; and none but God could resolve it: *And the Lord said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.*" Delaney.

Ver. 3, 4. *David's men said, Behold, we are afraid here in Judah*—"They had more than difficulty enough to defend themselves against Saul where they were; and could it be less than madness to provoke more and greater enemies? Doubtless Saul would send forces to beat off the Philistines, and then they should be pent in between two hostile armies. And yet, notwithstanding all this, David undertook and achieved the adventure; which it was impossible he should, against such fears, and such reasonings of his forces, from any motive, other than the assurance of divine protection and aid. Which fully confirms the Scripture-account of this matter, that he did not undertake it until he had, for the fuller satisfaction of his associates, again consulted, and was again assured of success by the divine oracle."

Ver. 5. *So David and his men went to Keilah, &c.*—His success on this occasion, was very extraordinary; he saved the city, and the inhabitants; he delivered the country

tle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.

7 ¶ And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.

8 And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

9 And David knew that Saul se-

all around from the ravages of the enemy; he smote the Philistines with great slaughter, and brought away their cattle, by which means he was enabled to subsist himself, and his forces, without being a burden to his country. One would have imagined that this extraordinary success and deliverance of so great a city, might have secured David a safe retreat among the men of Keilah; but it was not so; such is the nature of man, present dangers quickly obliterate past obligation! Gratitude is, without question, a most lovely virtue, but seldom lives in the extremes either of adversity or success! It is like those fine colours which storms and sunshine equally deface."—Delaney.

Ver. 6. *He came down with an ephod*—Rather, with the ephod, viz. the high-priest's ephod, wherein were the Urim and Thummim. For Abiathar being left, it is probable, to keep the sanctuary, while his father Ahimelech and the rest of the priests went to wait upon Saul, as soon as he heard of their slaughter, he took this principal vestment of the high-priest, and carried it to David. Thus God, in the course of his providence, gave him an opportunity, whilst Doeg, the butcher, was killing his brethren, both of escaping himself, and of bringing to David the ephod, of which now Saul was justly deprived.

Ver. 7. *Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand*—David, who judged of other men's generosity by his own, hoped he should be protected in Keilah; and, Saul, who judged in the same manner of their baseness, believed he should not; and therefore he rejoiced upon receiving the news of David's being shut up there, persuaded he should now get possession of his person. But it was strange he should imagine, that God had taken measures to bring an innocent and pious man into his power, who was a contemner of God, a breaker of his commandments, and one that trampled on all laws, human and divine.

Ver. 9—11. *Bring hither the ephod*—Which, doubtless, Abiathar put on; otherwise he could not have enquired of the Lord by it. *The Lord said—He will come down*—He purposeth to come if thou continue here. For still both David's question and God's answer are conditional, upon

A. M. 2943.  
B. C. 1061. cretely practised mischief against him; d Num. 27.  
21. Ch.  
30. 7. and <sup>d</sup> he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod.

e Ch. 22. 19. 10 Then said David, O LORD God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, <sup>e</sup> to destroy the city for my sake.

11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the LORD said, He will come down.

f Heb. shut  
"p." 12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah <sup>f</sup> deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, They will deliver *thee* up.

g Ch. 22. 9.  
25. 13. 13 Then David and his men, <sup>g</sup> which were about six hundred, arose

and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth.

A. M. 2943.  
B. C. 1061. 14 ¶ And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in <sup>h</sup> a mountain in the wilderness g Ps. 11. 1.  
h Josh. 15.  
55.  
i Ps. 51. 3, 4. of <sup>h</sup> Ziph. And Saul <sup>i</sup> sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.

15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David *was* in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

16 And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.

17 And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father

supposition. As David's being there, was the only motive for Saul's coming; so, if he departed, Saul could have no inducement to come. And accordingly we find he laid aside his design so soon as he was informed that David had escaped. It seems probable from this place, that God's answer by Urim and Thummim was not by any change in the colour or situation of the precious stones in the breast-plate of the ephod, but by a voice or suggestion from God to the High priest.

Ver. 12. *The Lord said, They will deliver thee up*—God saw the base and cowardly disposition of the inhabitants of Keilah, who, though they had been so lately delivered by David, yet would have given him up, had he stayed among them, at the first appearance of Saul's army coming against them. "And here, methinks," says Delaney, "is an event that will easily solve that hard question, about the consistency of the divine prescience with human free-will. A good politician, who was let into the course of Saul's secret practices with the men of Keilah, and had fair opportunities of sifting their dispositions upon the point, might fairly pronounce upon the event; how much more, then, that all-seeing God, who searcheth the secrets of the heart, and seeth the thoughts afar off, seeth them in all their secret workings, tendencies, and temptations, and through all their mazes and masks." To explain this a little further: the inhabitants of Keilah acted freely, just as their own hearts dictated to them; they were at liberty to behave faithfully to David, had he stayed among them, as well as to betray him. God did not, therefore, pronounce that they would deliver him up to Saul, because he had laid them under any absolute necessity of so doing; but because he saw Saul's secret designs, on the one hand, and the secret workings of their minds, and their tendency to fear and baseness, on the other. And, therefore, when David enquired of him, he pronounced,

*They will deliver thee up.* If any person could have known as much of their hearts as God, he might have pronounced the same concerning them. It is, however, the property of God only to see the secrets of the heart. And as this power in him extends to every man that cometh into the world, as fully as it did to the people of Keilah, we may easily conceive how God foreknows all the changes of events in this world from the beginning to the end, though he leave the human mind to act of itself freely; and only by his superintending wisdom directs all, to bring about his gracious purposes, and to educe good from evil.

Ver. 13, 14. *Which were about six hundred*—His forces were increased 200 since his famous victory over the Philistines at Keilah. *Whithersoever they could go*—To the first convenient place of safety to which a way lay open. *In the wilderness of Ziph*—A mountainous wilderness, within the precincts of the tribe of Judah, and upon the confines of Edom, Josh. xv. 2. It was not far from Maon and Carmel, Ver. 25, Chap. xxv. 5. *God delivered him not into his hand*—Saul confidently pronounced, when he found David had entered into Keilah, that *God had delivered him into his hand*. And, therefore, to shew the vanity of that ill-grounded confidence, the sacred writer makes use of the very same expression reversed, and declares *God delivered him not into his hand, though Saul sought him every day*.

Ver. 16. *Jonathan—went and strengthened his hand in God*—He comforted and supported him against all his fears, by considerations on the divine goodness and power, and by reminding him of God's faithful promises made to him, and of his singular providence, which hitherto had been, and still would be with him.

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt be king—and I shall be next unto thee*—Or hold the second place in the kingdom; which words import thus much: I do not look to be king myself,

A.M. 2942.  
B.C. 1061.A.M. 2942.  
B.C. 1061.

shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and <sup>k</sup> that also Saul my father knoweth.

18 And they two <sup>l</sup> made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

19 ¶ Then <sup>m</sup> came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is † on the south of ¶ Jeshimon?

20 Now, therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and <sup>n</sup> our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand.

21 And Saul said, Blessed be ye of the LORD; for ye have compassion on me.

22 Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know, and see his place where † his haunt is, and who hath seen him there: for it is told me that he dealeth very subtilly.

23 See therefore, and take know-

ledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah.

24 And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness ° of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.

25 ¶ Saul also and his men went to seek him. And they told David: wherefore he came down ¶ into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon.

26 And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them.

27 But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and

as by my birth I might expect, but that thou shalt be king, God having so appointed, and I but in a secondary place, inferior to thee. The first part of this sentence Jonathan might well speak, as he had the promise of God for it, which must stand; but the other he spoke in human confidence, and the event shewed how little is to be built on that. He ought, as we ought all to do with respect to what is future and only in expectation, to have spoken in the language of St. James: "If the Lord will, I shall be next unto thee." And that also my father knoweth—For he could not but remember what Samuel told him, Chap. xv. 28, and, from David's wonderful successes, he probably inferred that he was the person of whom Samuel spake.

Ver. 18. They two made a covenant before the Lord—We have reason here to admire the sincere friendship of Jonathan, which remained so unshaken to David in all events, as well in his adversity and dangers, as in his prosperity and successes. It is to be observed, that, after making this covenant, they never came together again, that we find, in this world.

Ver. 19—22. Then came the Ziphites to Saul—They were of David's own tribe, though for this unnatural carriage to him he calls them strangers. Saul said, Blessed be ye of

the Lord—Saul, notwithstanding all his injustice and cruelty to David, still supposes himself to be the injured person, and his cause the right one. Thus too often do men let their passions blind them so as to persuade themselves that the most unjust things are equitable. Go, I pray you, prepare yet—Or rather, Make yourselves more certain of this, as the words may be translated, and more agreeably to what follows.

Ver. 24, 25. But David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon—Having heard what the Ziphites had undertaken, David disappointed their design by going into another place; with which, it is likely, they were not so well acquainted. For Maon was a distant wilderness from Ziph, though both were in the tribe of Judah. Saul also and his men went to seek him—Hearing, it is likely, by the Ziphites, whither he was gone. Therefore he came down into a rock—Some craggy, desolate place, where he thought Saul would not find him; or rather into a cave which was in the rock, where, at first he might think to hide himself; but, on farther consideration, he removed from thence upon Saul's approach.

Ver. 27, 28. There came a messenger unto Saul—See the providence of God! His wisdom is never at a loss for ways and means to preserve his people. Nothing could be more

Ch. 34. 30.

Ch. 18. 3.  
& 20. 16.  
62. 2 Sam.  
21. 7.Ch. 30. 1.  
P. 51.  
title.Heb. on  
the right  
hand.  
Or, the  
wilderness.

Ps. 51. 3.

Heb. foot  
shall be.Josh. 15.  
65. Ch.  
25. 2.Or, from  
the rock.

Ps. 31. 22.

Ps. 17. 9.

2 Kings  
19. 9.

A.M. 2913.  
B.C. 1061.

† Heb.  
spread  
themselves  
upon, &c.

† That is,  
the rock  
of divisions.

2 Chron.  
20. 2.

come; for the Philistines have † invaded the land.

28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place || Sela-hammalekoth.

29 ¶ And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at En-gedi.

CHAP. XXIV.

Saul pursues David to En-gedi, ver. 1, 2. David cuts off his skirt, ver. 3-7. He reasons with Saul, ver. 8-15. Saul owns his fault, and returns home, ver. 16-22.

a Ch. 23. 99.

† Heb.  
after.

AND it came to pass, a when Saul was returned from † following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi.

2 Then Saul took three thousand

distressful, nothing more hopeless than the situation of David at this time. He was surrounded on all sides, and there seemed no way left for escape; but as we learn from the fifty-fourth psalm, composed by him on this occasion, he addressed himself in prayer to his almighty Saviour, who soon shewed him that he can deliver at all times, and in all circumstances, however dangerous and distressing. They called that place [סֵלָה הַמַּלְאָכֹת] Sela-hammalekoth—That is, the rock of divisions. Because God, by this interposition of the Philistines invading the land just at this time, separated Saul from David, and in a manner pulled him away when the latter was now almost within his reach.

CHAP. XXIV. Ver. 2. Upon the rocks of the wild goats—Which the wild goats used to delight in and climb over. These same rocks are exceeding steep, and full of precipices, and dangerous to travellers, as an eye-witness hath left upon record. And yet Saul was so transported with rage as to venture himself and his army here, that he might take David, who, as he thought, would judge himself safe, and therefore be secure in such inaccessible places.

Ver. 3. Where was a cave—This cave being near the highway, and in the most frequented place of the wilderness, viz. near the sheep-cotes, to which the shepherds and herdsmen resorted to feed and milk their flocks, it is likely David made choice of it as being a place most unlikely to be suspected. Or perhaps he was pressed so near by Saul that he had no other way of escaping. That his distress and danger were very great, may be gathered from the 57th and 142d psalms, which, it is supposed, he composed in commemoration of his deliverance. Saul went in to cover his feet—To take some rest in sleep. Being a military man, it is proba-

ble chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to d cover his feet: and e David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

4 f And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of † Saul's robe privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that g David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6 And he said unto his men, h The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's

ble he used to sleep with his soldiers upon the ground. And it is not improbable, that being weary with his eager and almost incessant pursuit, first of David, then of the Philistines, and now of David again, he both needed and desired some sleep; God also disposing him thereto, that David might have this eminent occasion to demonstrate his integrity to Saul, and to all Israel. In the sides of the cave—For that there were vast caves in those parts is affirmed, not only by Josephus, but also by heathen authors; Strabo writes of one which could receive four thousand men.

Ver. 4. The men of David said unto him, &c.—The cave being very large, and David and his men at the farther end of it, they might see Saul by the light of the entrance, without his seeing them, and might whisper together what follows without being heard. The Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver, &c.—We do not read any where that God said these very words, or made a promise to deliver Saul into David's hands. But they put this construction on what Samuel had said about taking the kingdom from Saul and giving it to David, and on those promises which God had made to him of delivering him from all his enemies, and carrying him through all difficulties to the throne. These promises, they conceived, laid him under an obligation of taking all opportunities which God put into his hands for their accomplishment. Add to this, that, having a desire to return to their own habitations, and also to have preferment under David, they wished him to seize this occasion which now presented itself of destroying his enemy and advancing himself. Then David arose and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily—Which he might easily do, as he was asleep.

Ver. 5, 6. David's heart smote him—His intention in cutting off Saul's skirt was only to give certain proof that he did

A.M. 2913.  
B.C. 1061.

b Ps. 35. 19.

c Ps. 141. 6.  
d Judg. 3.  
e Ps. 97.  
title. &  
142. title.

f Ch. 26. 6.

† Heb. the  
robe  
which  
was  
Saul's.

g 2 Sam. 24.  
10.

h Ch. 26. 11.

A. M. 2913.  
B. C. 1061.

anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD.

† Heb. cut  
off.  
i Ps. 7. 4.  
Matt. 5.  
41. Rom.  
12. 17, 19.

7 So David †<sup>i</sup> stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.

8 ¶ David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

k Ps. 141. 6.  
Prov. 16.  
28. & 17. 9.

9 And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and *some* bade me kill thee: but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine

not seek his life, in that he had spared it when it was wholly in his power; yet no sooner had he done it, but the consideration how Saul might be affected by it, whether it might not enrage him the more, and how the action might be esteemed by others, troubled him greatly. *And he said to his men*—When he returned to them, and they again pressed him, as is probable, to kill Saul, *The Lord forbid, &c.*—He considers Saul now, not as his enemy, and the only person that stood in the way of his preferment, (for then he would have been induced to hearken to the temptation) but as his *master*, to whom he was obliged to be faithful, and as *the Lord's anointed*, whom God had appointed to reign as long as he lived, and who, as such, was under the particular protection of the divine law.

Ver. 7, 8. *And suffered them not to rise against Saul*—He not only would not do this ill thing himself, but he would not suffer those about him to do it. Thus did he render good for evil to him, from whom he had received evil for good; and was herein both a type of Christ, who saved his persecutors, and an example to all Christians, not to be *overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good*. *David also went out of the cave and cried after Saul*—A bold attempt this, to adventure to come into the presence of such an enraged enemy. But his innocence, and confidence in God, emboldened him, especially having so strong an evidence to give of his integrity.

Ver. 10—12. *Mine eye spared thee*—A phrase signifying the taking pity on those whom we have it in our power to

hand against my lord; for he *is* the LORD's anointed.

A. M. 2913.  
B. C. 1061.

11 Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that *there is* <sup>1</sup>neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou <sup>m</sup>huntest my soul to take it.

i Ps. 7. 5. &  
28. 7.

m Ch. 26. 20.

12 <sup>n</sup>The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

n Gen. 16. 5.  
Judg. 11.  
27. Ch. 26.  
10. Job  
5. 8.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked; but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

14 After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? <sup>o</sup>after a dead dog, after <sup>p</sup>a flea.

o Ch. 17. 45.  
2 Sam. 9.  
R.  
p Ch. 26. 20.

15 <sup>q</sup>The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and

q Ver. 12.

hurt. The eye is said to spare, because it affects the heart, and induces a person to spare. *Moreover, my father*—Such he was through David's marriage of his daughter. *The Lord avenge me of thee*—Rather, *will avenge me*; that is, vindicate and deliver me from thy violent and unjust persecution. For he does not, in these words, pray God to punish Saul for the injuries he had done him, but to justify, clear, and protect himself. *But mine hand shall not be upon thee*—He was resolved not to return evil for evil, or to avenge himself, but to leave it to God to do him right.

Ver. 13. *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked*—That is, men may be known by their actions; wicked men will do wicked actions; among which, this is one, to kill their sovereign lord and king; and, therefore, if I were so wicked a person as I am represented by thy courtiers to be, I should now have shewn it, I should have made no conscience of laying violent hands upon thee.

Ver. 14, 15. *After whom is the king of Israel come out?*—David here employs every persuasive art to move Saul. He represents himself in as contemptible a light as possible; that he might convince Saul it was not for his honour to take so much pains to kill him, if he could do it. *The Lord, therefore, be judge*—He thought he could not repeat this too often, that as he had done hitherto, so he still resolved hereafter, to leave it to God to judge which of them was in the right, and not to avenge himself.

Ver. 16. *Is this thy voice, my son David?*—He knew his voice, though, being at a great distance from him, he could

<sup>A. M. 2013.</sup> <sup>R. C. 1061.</sup> see, and <sup>†</sup> plead my cause, and <sup>†</sup> deliver me out of thine hand.

<sup>16 ¶</sup> And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, <sup>†</sup> Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lift up his voice, and wept.

<sup>17</sup> <sup>u</sup> And he said to David, Thou art <sup>x</sup> more righteous than I: for <sup>y</sup> thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

<sup>18</sup> And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when <sup>x</sup> the LORD had <sup>†</sup> delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

<sup>19</sup> For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

<sup>20</sup> And now, behold, <sup>a</sup> I know

well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

<sup>21</sup> <sup>b</sup> Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, <sup>c</sup> that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

<sup>22</sup> And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto <sup>d</sup> the hold.

## CHAP. XXV.

*Samuel's death, ver. 1. The character of Nabal, ver. 2, 3. David's requests to him, ver. 4—9. His churlish answer, ver. 10—13. David's purpose to destroy him told to Abigail, ver. 13—17. She pacifies David, ver. 18—31. His answer, ver. 32—35. The death of Nabal, ver. 36—38. David marries Abigail and Ahinoam, ver. 39—44.*

**A**ND <sup>a</sup> Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and <sup>b</sup> lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And

not discern his face. *Saul lift up his voice and wept*—Being overcome with David's kindness, in sparing his life when he could have taken it away, and conscious of his base carriage towards him. He speaks as one that relented at the sight of his own folly and ingratitude. "David's kindness," says Samuel Clark, "drew tears from hard-hearted Saul, as Moses fetched water out of the flinty rock," Deut. viii. 15. Perhaps, however, he was also affected with a sense of his sins against God. But it does not appear from his future conduct that he was a true penitent, for he did not bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Ver. 17—19. *Thou art more righteous than I*—He ingenuously acknowledges David's integrity and his own iniquity. *If a man find his enemy, will he let him go?*—That is, he will certainly destroy him to save himself. Thy behaviour, therefore, shews that thou hast no enmity to me. *Wherefore the Lord reward thee good*—Because he thought himself not able to recompense so great a favour, he prays God to recompense it.

Ver. 20, 21. *And now I know well that thou shalt surely be king*—These wonderful dispensations of divine providence over David, and David's no less wonderful virtue, at last convinced Saul that God designed him to be the king of his people, and that none could hinder his establishment. *That thou wilt not destroy my name, &c.*—As it was usual for kings to do in those days, generally destroying the families of those to whose thrones they were advanced.

Ver. 22. *David and his men gat them up unto the hold*—Of Engedi, Ver. 1. For having had so frequent experi-

ence of Saul's inconstancy, he would trust him no more. It is indeed dangerous to trust a reconciled enemy: and the son of Sirach advises, "Never trust thine enemy: though he humble himself, yet take good heed, and beware of him." Before we close our notes on this chapter we beg leave to add one general remark, which is, that there is something so noble and generous in David's whole behaviour, as related in it, that it is above all encomiums. We cannot say any thing in commendation of it, but what the relation itself far exceeds.

CHAP. XXV. Ver. 1. *And Samuel died*—According to the best chronologers, he governed Israel after the death of Eli 16 years or upwards, and lived about 40 years after in the reign of Saul. *And all the Israelites lamented him*—It is no wonder that so wise and holy a man, so righteous a ruler, so just a judge, and so enlightened a prophet, should be uncommonly and universally lamented; especially when the wisdom and equity of his government, compared with Saul's tyranny and extravagance, made his memory more dear, and his loss more regretted. "Those have hard hearts," says Henry, "that can bury their faithful ministers with dry eyes, and are not sensible of the loss of them who have prayed for them, and taught them the way of the Lord." *And buried him in his house in Ramah*—Where, it is likely, there was a burying-place for his family in some part of his garden, or some field adjacent. For they had then no public places of interment. He was now attended by all Israel to his grave; and his remains, many centuries after, were re-



A.M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.  
David arose, and went down <sup>c</sup> to the wilderness of Paran.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. 21.  
21. Para.  
180. 5.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. 23. 24.  
<sup>||</sup> Or, *business*.  
2 And ¶ And there was a man <sup>d</sup> in Maon, whose || possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings: and he was of the house of Caleb.

4 ¶ And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did <sup>f</sup> shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and † greet him in my name:

6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, <sup>e</sup> Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast.

7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we † hurt them not, <sup>h</sup> neither was there ought miss-

A.M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.  
ing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

8 Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in <sup>i</sup> a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.

9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and † ceased.

10 ¶ And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, <sup>k</sup> Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.

11 <sup>l</sup> Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my † flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?

12 So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

13 And David said unto his men, Gird you on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; And David also girded on

<sup>f</sup> Gen. 36.  
13. & Sam.  
13. 24.

† Heb. ask him in my name of peace.  
Ch. 17. 22.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Chron.  
12. 16.  
Ps. 127. 7.  
Luke 10. 4.

† Heb. shamed.  
<sup>h</sup> Ver. 26.  
21.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. 9. 10.  
Esther 9. 19.

† Heb. rested.

<sup>k</sup> Judg. 9. 28. Ps. 78. 7. S. R. 132. 3. 4.

<sup>l</sup> Judg. 8. 6.

† Heb. slaughter.

moved with incredible pomp, and almost one continued train of attendants, from Ramah to Constantinople, by the emperor Arcadius, A. D. 401.

Ver. 2. *Whose possessions were in Carmel*—In some part of this wilderness Israel wandered, when they came out of Egypt. The place would bring to David's mind God's care over them, which he might now improve for his own encouragement.

Ver. 3. *The name of his wife was Abigail*—That is, the joy of his father: yet he could not promise himself much joy of her, when he married her to such an husband: it seems, by enquiring, (no unfrequent thing), more after his wealth, than after his wisdom. *He was of the house of Caleb*—This is added to aggravate his crime, that he was a degenerate branch of that noble stock of Caleb, and, consequently, of the tribe of Judah, as David was.

Ver. 4. *Nabal did shear his sheep*—Which times were celebrated with feasting. *That liveth in prosperity*—In the Hebrew it is only, *To him that liveth*: but the word life

in Scripture, often signifies happiness, as death signifies misery. By speaking thus, David both congratulates Nabal's felicity, and tacitly intimates to him the distress in which he and his men were.

Ver. 7, 8. *We hurt them not, &c.*—This, considering the licentiousness of soldiers, and the necessities David and his men were exposed to, was no small favour, which Nabal was bound, both in justice, and gratitude, and prudence, to requite. *We come in a good day*—That is, in a day of feasting and rejoicing; when men are most cheerful and liberal; when thou mayest relieve us out of thy abundance without damage to thyself; when thou art receiving the mercies of God, and therefore obliged to pity and relieve distressed and indigent persons. *Give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand*—Most obliging words and full of respect, mixed with strong arguments; and they did not desire delicacies, but any thing that was at hand, which he could spare.

Ver. 10. *Who is David?*—*There be many servants, &c.*—He reproaches them all as a company of fugitives and vaga-

A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060. his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred <sup>m</sup> abode by the stuff.

m Ch. 30. 91. 14 ¶ But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he † railed on them.

† Heb. flew upon them.  
n Ver. 7.  
† Heb. thanica. 15 But the men *were* very good unto us, and <sup>u</sup> we were not † hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields:

o Exod. 16.  
22.  
Job 1. 10. 16 They were <sup>o</sup> a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

p Ch. 20. 7.  
q Deut. 13.  
13. Judg.  
19. 20. 17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for <sup>p</sup> evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is *such* a son of <sup>q</sup> Belial; that a man cannot speak to him.

r Gen. 32.  
13. Prov.  
14. 16. &  
21. 14. 18 ¶ Then Abigail made haste, and <sup>r</sup> took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of

A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060. parched corn, and an hundred || clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid *them* on asses.

† Or, lump.  
Gen. 32.  
16. 20. 19 And she said unto her servants, <sup>s</sup> Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.

20 And it was *so*, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them.

† Eclus. 18.  
1.  
s Ps. 109. 5.  
Prov. 17.  
13. 21 Now David had said, <sup>t</sup> Surely in vain have I kept all that this *fel-* low hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *per-* tained unto him: and he hath <sup>u</sup> re- quited me evil for good.

r Ruth. 17.  
Ch. 3. 17.  
& 30. 13.  
16.  
y Ver. 34.  
z 1 Kings  
14. 10. &  
21. 21.  
3 Kings  
9. 8. 22 <sup>x</sup> So and more also do God <sup>x</sup> unto the enemies of David, if I <sup>y</sup> leave of all that *pertain* to him by <sup>y</sup> the morning light <sup>z</sup> any that pisseth against the wall.

z Josh. 15.  
15. Judg.  
1. 14. 23 ¶ And when Abigail saw David, she hastened, and <sup>a</sup> lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face,

bonds; and, in effect, taxes David with infidelity to his master Saul; a most rude and brutish answer to such a civil message and humble request.

Ver. 14—17. *But one of the young men told Abigail, &c.*—One of those belonging to Nabal. Who can help admiring the wisdom and fidelity of this shepherd, who admonished his mistress of the danger her family was in; as he rationally concluded, from the rude abuse that had been put upon David, whose merits he honestly set forth before her. *They were a wall unto us*—This servant says more than David's men had said of themselves; that they not only did them no harm, but were a guard to them against robbers and against wild beasts. *A man cannot speak to him*—But he flies into a passion. Nabal must have been a most brutish, churlish man, to extort such a character of himself from his own servants.

Ver. 18, 19. *Then Abigail—took two hundred loaves, &c.*—This shews he was a great man who had plenty of provisions in his house. Abigail did this of her own accord, without her husband's leave, because it was a case of apparent necessity, for the preservation of herself and husband, and all the family from imminent ruin. *She said unto her servants, Go on before me, &c.*—They carried the present, that David, beholding it, might be a little mitigated before she came to him.

Ver. 21. *Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath*—Though David justly thought he had no right to take

any part of the flock of Nabal by way of plunder; yet, when he and his men had taken the trouble of defending them for some time from all damage, which, probably, they otherwise could not have escaped; he concluded, with much reason, that he and his men, when reduced to necessity, had cause to expect something by way of gratuity from Nabal, for the services they had done him.

Ver. 22. *So and more also do God unto the enemies of David*—That is, unto David himself. But because it might seem ominous to curse himself, therefore, instead of David, he mentions David's enemies. See Ch. xx. 16. The meaning seems to be that he wishes God might bless his enemies, and pour evil upon himself, if he did not destroy Nabal and all the males of his family before the morning. But is this the voice of David? Can he speak so unadvisedly with his lips? Has he been so long in the school of affliction, and learned no more patience therein? Lord, *what is man!* And what need have we to pray, *Lead us not into temptation!* David's wrath, though perhaps justly moved, here carried him to a pitch that, if executed, would have filled him with remorse, sorrow, and shame, as it could, by no means, have been reconciled to the laws of that God who was his defender, and whom alone he confided in for support under, and deliverance out of, his troubles. In which laws, too, he was well instructed, and therefore ought to have been governed by them, and not by his furious resentment.

A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.

and bowed herself to the ground,

24 And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine † audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.

† Heb. ears.

25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, † regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; † Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

† Heb. lay it to his heart.

† That is, fool.

b 2 Kings 9. 2.

26 Now therefore, my lord, <sup>b</sup>as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from † avenging thyself

c Gen. 20. 6. Ver. 33.

† Heb. saying thyself.

a Rom. 19. 19.

Ver. 24. *Upon me, my lord, let this iniquity be, &c.*—Impute Nabal's sin to me, and, if thou pleasest, punish it in me, who here offer myself as a sacrifice to thy just indignation. This whole speech of Abigail shews great wisdom. By an absolute submitting to mercy, without any pretence of justification of what was done, (but rather with aggravation of it), she endeavours to work upon David's generosity, to pardon it. And there is hardly any head of argument, whence the greatest orator might argue in this case, which she doth not manage to the best advantage.

Ver. 25. *Let not my lord regard this man of Belial, &c.*—She represents him as a man that offended out of folly, rather than malice; which might, in some degree, excuse his rudeness. *For as his name is, so is he*—Nabal in the Hebrew signifies a fool, though not one by nature, but rather through pride and insolence.

Ver. 26. *Seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood*—Nothing could possibly be spoken to David with more effect, to turn away his wrath, than thus to insinuate such an opinion of his goodness and clemency, as already to conclude she had diverted him from his purpose; or, rather, that God had interposed by his good providence, to hinder him from shedding blood. *Now let thine enemies—be as Nabal*—Let them be as contemptible as Nabal is, and will be for this odious action; let them be as unable to do thee any hurt as he is; let them be forced to yield to thee, and implore thy pardon, as Nabal now doth by my mouth: let the vengeance thou didst design upon Nabal and his family, fall upon their heads, who, by their inveterate malice against thee, do more deserve it than this fool for this miscarriage; and much more than all the rest of our family, who, as they are none of thine enemies, so they were no way guilty of this wicked action. And therefore spare these, and execute thy vengeance upon more proper objects.

Ver. 27. *Now this blessing*—That is, this present or gift. The same phrase is used, Chap. xxx. 26; 2 Kings v. 15. A

with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.  
c 2 Sam. 19. 22.

27 And now this † blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that † follow my lord.

Gen. 28. 11. Chap. 20. 26. 2 Kings 6. 15. Or, present. † Heb. walk at the feet of, &amp;c. Ver. 48. Judg. 4. 10.

28 I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord <sup>b</sup>fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.

c 2 Sam. v. 11. 17. 1 Kings 9. 8. 1 Chron. 17. 10. 25. h Ch. 19. 17. i Ch. 29. 11.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD

present is termed a *blessing*, not only because the matter of it comes from God's blessing, but also because it is given with a blessing, or with a good will. *Let it be given unto the young men*—As being unworthy of David's own acceptance: Thus humbly she speaks of the noble present she had brought.

Ver. 28. *Forgive the trespass of thine handmaid*—That is, the trespass which I have taken upon myself, and which, if it be punished, the punishment will reach to me. *Sure house*—Will give the kingdom to thee, and to thy house for ever, as he hath promised thee. And therefore let God's kindness to thee, make thee gentle and merciful to others; do not sully thy approaching glory with the stain of innocent blood; but consider, that it is the glory of a king, to pass by offences: and that it will be thy loss to cut off such as will shortly be thy subjects. *My lord fighteth the battles, &c.*—For the Lord, and for the people of the Lord against their enemies; especially the Philistines. And, as this is thy proper work, and therein thou mayest expect God's blessing; so it is not thy work to draw thy sword in thy own private quarrel against any of the people of the Lord; and God will not bless thee in it. *Evil hath not been found in thee, &c.*—Though thou hast been charged with many crimes, by Saul and others; yet thy innocency is evident to all men: do not therefore by this cruel act, justify thine enemies' reproaches, or blemish thy great and just reputation.

Ver. 29. *A man hath risen to pursue thee*—Saul, though no way injured. *To seek thy soul*—To take away thy life. *Bundle of life*—Or, in the bundle: that is, in the society, or congregation of the living; out of which, men are taken, and cut off by death. The phrase is taken from the common usage of men, who bind those things in bundles, which they are afraid to lose. The meaning is, God will preserve thy life; and therefore it becomes not thee, unnecessarily to take away the lives of any; especially of the people of thy God. *With the Lord*—That is, in the custody of God, who by his watchful providence, preserves this bundle, and all that are

A. M. 2911.  
B. C. 1060.  
k Jer. 10.  
18.  
† Heb. *in the midst of the bow of a sling.*

thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he <sup>k</sup> sling out, † *as out of the middle of a sling.*

30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel;

† Heb. *no staggering, or stumbling.*

31 That this shall be † no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

1 Gen. 24.  
27. Exod.  
15. 10.  
Ps. 41. 13.  
& 72. 14.  
Luke 1. 68.

32 ¶ And David said to Abigail, <sup>l</sup> Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

m Ver. 26.

33 And blessed *be* thy advice, and blessed *be* thou, which hast <sup>m</sup> kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.

n Ver. 24.

34 For in very deed, *as* the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath <sup>n</sup> kept me back from hurting thee,

A. M. 2914.  
B. C. 1040.  
o Ver. 22.

except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had <sup>o</sup> not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

p Ch. 20. 42.  
2 Sam. 15.  
9. 2 Kings  
5. 19.  
Luke 7.  
40. & 8.  
48.  
q Gen. 19.  
21.

35 So David received of her hand *that* which she had brought him, and said unto her, <sup>p</sup> Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have <sup>q</sup> accepted thy person.

r 2 Sam. 16.  
24.

36 ¶ And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, <sup>r</sup> he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.

37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became *as* a stone.

38 And it came to pass about ten days *after*, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.

in it; and thee in a particular manner, *as* being *thy* God in a particular way, and special covenant. The Jews understand this, not only of the present *life*, but of *that which is to come*, even the happiness of separate souls; and therefore use it commonly, as an inscription on their grave-stones. "Here we have laid the body, trusting the soul is *bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord.*" *Them shall he sling out*—God himself will cut them off suddenly, violently, and irresistibly; and cast them far away; both from his presence, and from thy neighbourhood, and from all capacity of doing thee hurt.

Ver. 31. *This shall be no grief unto thee*—Thy mind and conscience will be free from all the torment which such an action would cause in thee. By which, she insinuates, what a blemish this would be to his glory, what a disturbance to his peace, if he proceeded to execute his purpose: and withal implies, how comfortable it would be to him to remember, that he had, for conscience towards God, restrained his passions. *Shed blood causeless*—Which, she signifies would be done if he should go on. For though Nabal had been guilty of abominable rudeness, and ingratitude, yet he had done nothing worthy of death, by the laws of God or of man. And whatsoever he had done, the rest of his family were innocent. *Or that my lord hath avenged himself*—Which is directly contrary to God's law, Lev. xix. 18; Deut. xxxii. 35.

Then—When God shall make thee king, let me find grace in thy sight.

Ver. 32, 33. *Blessed be the Lord, &c.*—Who, by his gracious providence so disposed matters, that thou shouldst come to me. He rightly begins at the fountain of this deliverance; and then proceeds to the instruments. *Who hast kept me from coming, &c.*—Which I had sworn to do. Hereby it plainly appears, that oaths, whereby men bind themselves to any sin, are null and void: and, as it was a sin to make them, so it is adding sin to sin to perform them.

Ver. 35, 36. *I have accepted thy person*—That is, shewed my acceptance of thy person by my grant of thy request. *Behold, he held a feast*—As the manner was upon those solemn occasions. Sordid covetousness, and vain prodigality were met together in him. *Told nothing*—As he was then incapable of admonition, his reason and conscience being both asleep.

Ver. 37, 38. *His heart died*—He fainted away through the fear and horror of so great a mischief, though it was past. As one, who having in the night galloped over a narrow plank, laid upon a broken bridge, over a deep river; when, in the morning he came to review it, was struck dead with the horror of the danger he had been in. *The Lord smote Nabal*—God either inflicted some other stroke upon him, or increased his grief and fear to such an height, as killed him.

A. M. 2911.  
B. C. 1060.

\* Ver. 32.

† Prov. 23.  
23.\* Ver. 26,  
34.x 1 Kings 2.  
44. Ps. 7.  
16.

39 ¶ And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, <sup>s</sup> Blessed be the LORD, that hath <sup>t</sup>pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath <sup>u</sup>kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath <sup>x</sup>returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

41 And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* <sup>y</sup>thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

42 And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went <sup>†</sup>after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

43 David also took Ahinoam <sup>z</sup> of Jezreel; <sup>a</sup> and they were also both of them his wives.

44 ¶ But Saul had given <sup>b</sup>Michal his daughter, David's wife, to <sup>||</sup>Phalti the son of Laish, which *was* of <sup>c</sup>Galim.

Ver. 39. *Blessed, &c.*—This was another instance of human infirmity in David. *David sent*—But this doubtless was not done immediately after Nabal's death, but some time after it; though such circumstances be commonly omitted in the sacred history; which gives only the heads, and most important passages of things.

CHAP. XXVI. Ver. 1, 2. *Doth not David hide himself with us?*—The number of men whom David supported, would not allow him to continue long in the same place, and therefore he was often obliged to shift his quarters for subsistence. We now find him again in the wilderness of Ziph. How much time had elapsed between his marriage of Abigail and his going thither, we are not informed, nor is it easy to determine, but it is probable it was considerable. *Then Saul arose*—Probably he would have pursued David no more if these Ziphites had not thus excited him.

Ver. 5. *David*—came to the place where Saul had pitched

## CHAP. XXVI.

A. M. 2911.  
B. C. 1060.

*The Ziphites inform Saul of David, who pursues him again, ver. 1—3. David sends out spies, and views his camp, ver. 4, 5. Comes to him, being asleep, and takes his spear and cruse of water, ver. 6—12. Reasons with him upon it, ver. 13—20. Saul again owns his fault, and promises to pursue him no more, ver. 21—25.*

AND the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, <sup>a</sup>Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon.

2 Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

4 David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 ¶ And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and <sup>b</sup>Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the <sup>||</sup>trench, and the people pitched round about him.

6 Then answered David and said

—Within sight of it; where he might observe how he lay. *Saul lay in the trench*—Heb. במעגל *bammanggal*, in the carriage, or rather, within the circle of the carriages, that he might be safe from any sudden attack.

Ver. 6, 7. *Ahimelech the Hittite*—A valiant man of that nation, who was a proselyte to the Jewish religion; and not only followed David, but was always near to his person. *Abishai*—Brother to Joab, the son of Zeruiah, David's sister. His father is not named; either because he was now dead; or, because, he was an obscure person. *Abishai said, I will go*—Either Ahimelech declined it, as too hazardous an enterprise; or Abishai, being a forward young man, offered himself while the other stood deliberating. *David and Abishai, came to the people by night*—A bold attempt for two men to come into the midst of an army of three thousand chosen men. But it should be considered, 1, That David had a particular assurance that God would preserve him to the kingdom; and, 2, That he probably had a particular impression,

a Ch. 23. 19.  
Paul. 54.  
title.b Ch. 14. 56.  
and 17. 35.Or, midst  
of his car-  
riages.  
Ch. 17. 30.

A. M. 2914.  
B. C. 1060.e 1 Chron.  
2. 16.d Judg. 7.  
10.

to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai <sup>e</sup>the son of Zeruah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will <sup>d</sup>go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

f Heb. shad  
up. Ch.  
24. 15.

8 Then said Abishai to David, God hath <sup>f</sup>delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not *smite* him the second time.

g Ch. 24. 6.  
7. 2 Sam.  
1. 16.

9 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: <sup>g</sup>for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?

h Ch. 25. 38.  
Ps. 94. 1,  
2, 25.  
Luke 15.  
7. Rom.  
19. 19.i Gen. 47.  
29. Deut.  
31. 14.j Job 7. 1.  
& 14. 6.k Ps. 37. 13.  
l Ch. 31. 6.m Ch. 24. 6.  
12.

10 David said furthermore, *As* the LORD liveth, <sup>h</sup>the LORD shall smite him; or <sup>i</sup>his day shall come to die; or he shall <sup>j</sup>descend into battle, and perish.

11 <sup>k</sup>The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at

his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw *it*, nor knew *it*, neither awaked: for they *were* all asleep; because <sup>k</sup>a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

n Gen. 2.  
21. & 15.  
19.

13 ¶ Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill afar off; a great space *being* between them:

14 And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who *art* thou *that* criest to the king?

15 And David said to Abner, *Art* not thou a *valiant* man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.

16 This thing *is* not good that thou hast done. *As* the LORD liveth, ye *are*, <sup>l</sup>worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear *is*, and the cruse of water that *was* at his bolster.

o Heb. the  
word of  
death.  
2 Sam.  
15. 6.

from God, exciting him to this work, and, possibly, God might reveal to him that he had cast them into this deep sleep, in order that David might have this second opportunity of manifesting his innocency towards Saul.

Ver. 8, 9. *Now, therefore, let me smite him*—Although David would not kill him himself, when he had the like opportunity, Chap. xxiv. 4; yet Abishai thought he might give him leave to do it; and he pledged himself to nail him to the ground with his spear at one thrust, so that he should make no noise by crying out. *And David said—destroy him not*—Saul having been made king by God's special appointment, David looked upon it as a high crime, to offer any violence to him: q. d. Though he be a tyrant, yet he is our lord and king; and, I, although designed king, am yet his subject; and therefore I cannot kill him without sin, nor will I consent that thou shouldst do it.

Ver. 10, 11. *The Lord shall smite him, &c.*—David leaves it to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, to put an end to

Saul's life when he saw best; either by a sudden stroke, or in the course of nature, or by causing him to fall in battle. *Take the spear*—Which will shew where we have been, and what we could have done. *And the cruse of water*—Set there either for Saul to drink, if he were thirsty, or to wash himself, as was prescribed to the Israelites by the law, for many accidental pollutions.

Ver. 13, 14. *And stood on the top of an hill*—On such a rock or precipice that there was no coming to him but by taking a circuit round. So that it might be said, in respect of the way whereby only they could come to him, that he stood *afar off*, and that there was a great distance between them; and yet, though his person might thus be out of their reach, his voice might be distinctly heard, which in a clear air, and in the silence of the night, it might be at a considerable distance. *David cried to the people*—It is probable this was early in the morning.

Ver. 15—17. *Wherefore hast thou not kept, &c.*—Observ-

A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.

1 Ch. 24. 16.

17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, <sup>1</sup>Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, *It is my voice, my lord, O king.*

in Ch. 24. 9,  
11.

18 ¶ And he said, <sup>m</sup>Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil *is* in mine hand?

19 Now, therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD have

u 8 Sam. 16.  
11. & 24.

1.

† Heb.

smell.

Gen. 8.

21.

Lev. 26.

31.

e Deut. 4.

29. Psal.

120. 5.

† Heb.

clearing.

p 2 Sam. 14.

16. &amp; 20.

19.

<sup>n</sup>stirred thee up against me, let him † accept an offering: but if *they be* the children of men, cursed *be* they before the LORD; <sup>o</sup>for they have driven me out this day from † abiding in the <sup>p</sup>inheritance of the LORD, saying, Go, serve other gods.

q Ch. 24. 14.

20 Now, therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD: for the king of Israel is come out to seek <sup>q</sup>a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains,

21 ¶ Then said Saul, <sup>r</sup>I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was <sup>s</sup>precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.r Ch. 15. 26.  
& 24. 17.

s Ch. 18. 30.

22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.

23 <sup>t</sup>The LORD render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee into *my* hand to-day, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed.

Ps. 7. 9. &  
18. 30.

24 And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

25 Then Saul said to David, Blessed *be* thou, my son David:

ad better military discipline for the preservation of the king's person? *There came one of the people*—Into the king's camp, and had a fair opportunity to destroy him. *Because ye have not kept your master*—Guarded him better from any danger. It is probable they despised David's small forces, and, therefore, were so negligent. *It is my voice, my lord, O king*—He still acknowledges Saul's authority, and the allegiance he owed him, though he had done him so many injuries.

Ver. 19. *If the Lord hath stirred thee up against me*—If he hath by the evil spirit which he hath sent, or by his secret providence, directed thy rage against me for the punishment of thine, or my sins. *Let him accept an offering*—Let us offer up a sacrifice to him to appease his wrath against us. *They have driven me*—From the land which God hath given to his people for their inheritance, and where he hath established his presence and worship. *Saying, Go, serve other gods*—This was the language of their actions. For by driving him from God's land, and the place of his worship, into foreign and idolatrous lands, they exposed him to the peril of being either ensnared by their counsels, or examples; or forced by their power to worship idols.

Ver. 20. *Before the face of the Lord*—The Lord seeing it, and being the avenger. Remember if thou dost it, God the judge of all men observes, and will call thee to account for it, though I will not avenge myself. *Is come out to seek a flea*—Is come out for a purpose beneath him, and not of importance enough to deserve his trouble. *As when one doth hunt a partridge*—The Hebrew word *קור* *kore*, does not seem to be rightly translated *partridge* here. Rabbi Salomon

renders it *cuculus, cuckoo*, so called from its crying. It certainly must be the name of a bird of no value for food, or any other use; and therefore the pursuing it on the mountains, through difficult places, was a useless and insignificant labour.

Ver. 21. *Then said Saul, I have sinned*—This second instance of David's tenderness wrought more upon Saul than the former. He owns himself melted, and quite overcome by David's kindness to him. *My soul was precious in thine eyes*, which I thought had been odious. He acknowledges he had done very ill to persecute him: I have acted against God's law; *I have sinned*: and against my own interest; *I have played the fool*, in pursuing thee as an enemy, who wast, indeed, one of my best friends. And herein *I have erred exceedingly*, have wronged both thee and myself. Nothing can be more full and ingenuous than this confession: God surely now touched his heart. And he promises to persecute him no more: nor does it appear that he ever attempted it afterwards.

Ver. 22—24. *Behold the king's spear, &c.*—He did not think it proper to put himself in Saul's power by going and presenting it himself to him. *The Lord render to every man his righteousness*—In these words David shews the assurance he had, that, however Saul dealt by him, the Lord would vindicate his cause on account of his integrity and righteous dealing. *So let my life be much set by, &c.*—He prays that God would spare his life as he had spared Saul's, and shew him similar mercy, and then he trusted that he should be delivered out of all his troubles.

Ver. 25. *Blessed be thou, my son David*—Saul perceived



A. M. 2944.  
B. C. 1060.  
a Gen. 32.  
28. thou shalt both do great *things*, and also shalt still <sup>u</sup>prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

## CHAP. XXVII.

*David retires to Gath, ver. 1—4. Achish gives him Ziklag, ver. 5—7. David destroys the Canaanites, ver. 8, 9. Persuades Achish he fought against Judah, ver. 10—12.*

cir. 1059.

† Heb. be consumed.

**A**ND David said in his heart, I shall now †perish one day by the hand of Saul: *there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.*

that it was in vain to contend any longer against David, whom he saw God intended for great things. And so strong was his conviction now of this, as well as of his own sin and folly, that he could not forbear blessing him, foretelling his success, applauding him, and condemning himself, even in the hearing of his own soldiers. And this, it seems, was their last interview. After this they saw each other no more.

CHAP. XXVII. Ver. 1. *I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul*—David, says Delaney, “weary of wandering, weary of struggling with Saul’s implacable spirit, weary of the unequal conflict between too dangerous generosity, and too relentless malice; weary of subsisting by the spoils of his enemies, or bounty of his friends, resolves at last to quit his country, and throw himself, once more, under the protection of its enemies. This resolution is, I think, universally censured by commentators, on account of his neglecting to consult God, either by his priest, or by his prophet, before he fixed upon it. God had commanded him to go into the land of Judah, Chap. xxii. 5. And surely he should not have left that to go into a heathen country, without a like divine command, or at least permission. Therefore most writers ascribe this resolution to want of grace, and a proper confidence in the protection of that God who had so often and so signally delivered him in the greatest exigencies.” Add to this, that David not only shewed, by forming and executing this resolution, great distrust of God’s promise and providence, and that after repeated demonstrations of God’s peculiar care over him; but he voluntarily run upon that rock, which he censured his enemies for throwing him upon, Chap. xxvi. 19, and upon many other snares and dangers, as the following history will shew. And he also deprived the people of God of those succours which he might have given them in case of a battle. God, however, permitted

VOL. I. N<sup>o</sup>. XXVI.

A. M. 2946.  
B. C. 1058.  
a Ch. 25. 13.  
b Ch. 21. 10. 2 And David arose, <sup>a</sup>and he passed over with the six hundred men that <sup>b</sup>were with him unto Achish, the son of Maoch, king of Gath.

3 And David dwelt with Achish, at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, *even David* <sup>c</sup>with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal’s wife.

4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

5 ¶ And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

him to be thus withdrawn from the Israelites, that they might fall by the hand of the Philistines, without any reproach or inconvenience to David.

Ver. 2. *Unto Achish the son of Maoch*—“Most writers agree that this Achish, to whom David now fled, was not the Achish, by whom he was so inhospitably received, and from whom he so narrowly escaped, when he was before at Gath. His being here called *Achish the son of Maoch*, sufficiently implies him to have been another person; for those words can, in the nature of the thing, have no use but to distinguish this Achish from another of the same name. And indeed this Achish seems as well distinguished from the other by the rest of his character, as by that of *the son of Maoch*. But this, by the way, is a fair proof that this book was written at the time that it is said to have been written; insomuch as this distinction was information enough to the people of that age, but could neither be given or received as such either by any writer or reader of any subsequent age.”—Delaney.

Ver. 5. *Let them give me a place*—This was a prudent request of David, who hereby intended to preserve his people, both from the vices to which conversation with the Philistines would have exposed them, and from that envy and malice which a different religion, and his appearing like a prince with so many men under his command, might have caused. For in a private town he might more freely worship the true God, and use the rites of his own religion without offence to the Philistines, who worshipped other gods, and might, with less notice and interruption, exercise his authority over his soldiers, and also more conveniently make incursions against the enemies of Israel. *Why should thy servant dwell in the royal city?*—Which is too great an honour for me, too burdensome to thee, and may be an occasion of offence to thy people.

Ver. 6. *Achish gave him Ziklag*—Not only that he might

5 L

A.M. 2948.  
B.C. 1056.

6 Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore <sup>d</sup> Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

† Heb. the number of days.  
7 And † the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was † a full year and four months.

† Heb. a year of days: Ch. 29, 3. till 1056.  
e Josh. 13, 2.  
f Josh. 16, 10. Judg. 1, 29.  
† Or, Gerzites.  
g Exod. 17, 16. Ch. 15, 7, 8.  
h Gen. 25, 13.  
8 ¶ And David and his men went up, and invaded <sup>e</sup> the Geshurites, <sup>f</sup> and the † Gezrites, and the <sup>g</sup> Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, <sup>h</sup> as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep and the

A.M. 2949.  
B.C. 1056.  
oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

10 And Achish said, † Whither have ye made a road to-day? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of <sup>i</sup> the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of <sup>k</sup> the Kenites.

11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

12 And Achish believed David,

inhabit it for the present, but possess it as his own in future. This Achish did, either out of his royal bounty, or on condition of some service which David was to perform. Or perhaps he thought hereby to lay the greater obligations on David, whom he knew to be so able to serve him. In the division of the country it was first given to the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 31; and afterwards to that of Simeon, who had a portion out of the land given to Judah, Josh. xix. 5. But the Philistines kept possession of it, so that neither of them enjoyed it, till now, by the gift of Achish, it became the peculiar inheritance of David and his successors. *Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day*—This and such clauses were evidently added after the substance of the books in which they are contained was written.

Ver. 8. *David and his men—invased the Geshurites, &c.*—These were some remains of the Amorites, and other ancient inhabitants of the country; whom God, for their inveterate and incorrigible wickedness, had commanded to be extirpated. And they “were not confederate with Achish, but in a state of hostility with him; particularly the Amalekites, whom we find soon after making great depredations upon the Philistine territories, Chap. xxx. 16. David, therefore, did not act in the least dishonourably by him, but in reality for his service in the attack he made on them. It is farther to be remarked, that, as those people were on the south of Judah, they made frequent incursions into the land, and were the avowed enemies of the Hebrews. This is certain, at least, of the Amalekites, the remnant of those whom Saul destroyed, Chap. xv. who had retired into remote and distant places. Of these, frequent mention is made in the books of the Old Testament, as engaged in many expeditions to plunder the country and destroy the inhabitants. David, therefore, had a right to cut off those nations; as deserving the character of a man after God’s own heart, he was called upon to do it, and in doing it he served his country, without injuring his protector and friend.”—Chandler. But it has been objected, that it was unjustifiable in David, being a private man, to act thus without a warrant from Achish or

from God; which it does not appear that he had. In answer to this, it must be observed, that he did not act as a private man, but as one elected and anointed to the kingdom. And “the same Spirit of God which once inspired Saul with all regal virtues, was now gone over to David, and rested on him, and it were very strange if David, as king-elect of Israel, could have any guilt in doing that which Saul, as a king in possession, was deposed for not doing.”—Delaney.

Ver. 9. *And left neither man nor woman alive*—In that part where he came; but there were many of the Amalekites yet left in another part of that land.

Ver. 10. *David said, Against the south of Judah, &c.*—David expressed himself thus ambiguously that Achish might suppose he had assaulted the land of Judah; whereas he had only fallen upon those people who bordered on that land. His words, therefore, though not directly false, all those people actually dwelling on the south of Judah, yet being ambiguous, and intended to convey an erroneous idea, were very contrary to that simplicity which became David, both as a prince, and as an eminent professor of the true religion. The fidelity of Achish to him, and the confidence he put in him, aggravates his sin in thus deceiving him; which David seems peculiarly to reflect on, when he prays, “Remove from me the way of lying.”

Ver. 11. *To bring tidings to Gath*—Our translation has here put in the word *tidings*, which entirely perverts the sense of this place. For, in the Hebrew it is, *he saved neither man nor woman alive to bring to Gath*; that is, he brought no prisoners thither; and the reason was, because it would then have appeared that they were not Israelites that David had spoiled, as Achish supposed. But the words, *to bring tidings to Gath*, occasions the reader to make a very wrong conclusion, viz. that these people were in alliance with Achish, and that they would have sent messengers to have complained of David’s behaviour, but that he cruelly butchered them on purpose to prevent this. Whereas it is certain, there is no sort of reason to believe that these people were in any kind of alliance with Achish, but quite the contrary.

A. M. 2915.  
B. C. 1056.

† Heb. to  
stink.

saying, He hath made his people Israel †utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

CHAP. XXVIII.

*The conference between Achish and David, ver. 1, 2. The preparation of the Philistines, and the distress of Saul, ver. 3—6. He applies to a woman that had a familiar spirit, to raise Samuel, ver. 7—11. Samuel appears, and foretells his defeat and death, ver. 12—19. Saul faints, and is with difficulty persuaded to take any sustenance, ver. 20—25.*

a Ch. 20. 1.  
cir. 1056.

**A**ND <sup>a</sup>it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, There-

CHAP. XXVIII. Ver. 1. *The Philistines gathered their armies together*—Sir Isaac Newton judges that they were recruited about this time by vast numbers of men driven out of Egypt by Amasis. This probably was one reason why they resolved on a new war with Israel, to which, however, Samuel's death, and David's disgrace were doubtless additional motives. *Achish said to David—Thou shalt go out with me to battle*—Achish formed this resolution in consequence of his knowledge of David's merit, and the thorough confidence he had in his fidelity.

Ver. 2. *David said—Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do*—He answered ambiguously, as he did before. *Achish said—Therefore will I make thee keeper of my head*—That is, he promised to make him captain of his life-guard, which, we find by the sequel, he accordingly did. Achish evidently understood David as promising that he would do his best to serve him. Delaney thinks that David gave Achish a doubtful answer, because he would not resolve upon so extraordinary a step without consulting God, either by his priest or his prophet. And that, as he proceeded so far as to attend Achish to Aphek, the place appointed for the assembling of the Philistine forces, there is no reason to doubt that he went thither with honest intentions towards his protector, and that he did it by the divine permission.

Ver. 3. *Now Samuel was dead, &c.*—This was observed before, Chap. xxv. 1, but is repeated here again to shew that Saul was now sensible of his loss, wanting his advice in a time of great distress. *Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits*—According to the divine command, Lev. xx. 27; which perhaps he had executed in the beginning of his reign, when he was directed by Samuel.

Ver. 5. *His heart greatly trembled*—When he saw their

fore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

A. M. 2918.  
B. C. 1056.

3 ¶ Now <sup>b</sup>Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away <sup>c</sup>those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

b Ch. 25. 1.

c Ver. 9.  
Exod. 22.  
18. Lev.  
19. 21.  
& 20. 27.  
Deut. 18.  
10, 11.

4 ¶ And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in <sup>d</sup>Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in <sup>e</sup>Gilboa.

d Josh. 19.  
15. 2 Kings  
4. 8.

e Ch. 31. 1.

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was <sup>f</sup>afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

f Job 18. 11.

6 And when Saul enquired of the LORD, <sup>g</sup>the LORD answered him not, neither by <sup>h</sup>dreams, nor <sup>i</sup>by Urim, nor by prophets.

g Ch. 14. 27.  
Prov. 1.  
28. Lam.  
2. 9.  
h Num. 12.  
6.

7 ¶ Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a

i Exod. 28.  
30. Num.  
27. 21.  
Deut. 28.  
6.

numbers, their orders, and their appointments, he judged himself to be greatly overpowered, and fell into great terror upon the prospect. Had he kept close to God he needed not to have feared all the armies of the Philistines.

Ver. 6. *When Saul enquired of the Lord*—This seems to contradict what is affirmed, 1 Chron. x. 14, that *he did not enquire of the Lord*, which is assigned as the reason why the Lord slew him. But Rabbi Kimchi, and others, thus reconcile these two places. That since he did not continue to enquire of him, but went to a diviner, it was all one as if he had not enquired at all; for he did it faintly, coldly, and indifferently. A learned Jew, Samuel Ianiado, remarks here: "He whose heart is perfect with God, lifts up his eyes unto him, and fixes them on him; hoping in him, though he doth not presently hear him; and perseveres in his expectation and confidence, firmly setting a resolution to wait upon him. But so did not Saul, who was remiss and negligent, saying in his heart, If God will not hear me, I will go and consult a familiar spirit." *The Lord answered him not*—Nor is it to be wondered that he should not answer a man of such a disposition. *Neither by dreams*—By which perhaps he prayed that God would inform him. *Nor by Urim*—It appears by this, that, Abiathar having fled to David and taken the ephod with him, Saul had set up another high priest, and made an ephod in imitation of the sacred one, not considering the peculiar sanctity of that which God had appointed, and by which alone he had promised to manifest himself. *Nor by prophets*—A school of whom, no doubt, was still remaining at Ramah, over which Samuel had presided.

Ver. 7. *Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit*—That converses with evil spirits, or hath power to call up,

A. M. 9948.  
B. C. 1056.

familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.

8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and <sup>k</sup>he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me *him* up, whom I shall name unto thee.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. 10.  
11.  
1 Chron.  
10. 13.  
Isa. 6. 10.

9 ¶ And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath

done, how he hath <sup>l</sup>cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee. And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice:

A. M. 9948.  
B. C. 1056.  
Ver. 8.

or make to appear, the spirits of dead persons, in order to answer questions, or give information of what may be enquired of them. See on Deut. xviii. 10, 11. Saul mentions a *woman* rather than a *man*, because the weaker sex were most addicted to these practices. In this he acted like a distracted man, who now approved what he had before condemned. He had partly cut off, and partly frightened away wizards, sorcerers, and such as had, or professed to have, these familiar spirits, and now he seeks unto them! What will not fear and folly force men to! How such a practice as this came to be used at first, and on what pretence, we cannot now say; but it appears to have been very ancient, because we find express laws against it in the books of Moses. It is probable it had its rise in Egypt, where an over-strained search after, and pretence to knowledge, made many fall into the strangest absurdities and impieties, that ever entered into the human heart. And in all likelihood, not only the Israelites, but the heathen, who, we find, in general used this practice, were first infected with it from thence. In all probability, those who pretended to this power were generally impostors, who only deceived those who consulted them by delusive tricks; yet we may draw this important conclusion from it, that it has always been a prevailing notion among all people, that the soul of man still subsists in another state after the body is dead; for this practice evidently supposes, and indeed was built on this belief.

Ver. 8. *Saul disguised himself*—Both because he was ashamed to be known, or thought guilty of this practice, and because he suspected the woman, if she knew him, would not practise her art before him. *And he went*—In all haste that very night, stripped off his regal apparel, and attended only by two companions. How nearly allied is infidelity and impiety to superstition; and what will not they do who will not confide in and obey God! But a few hours before he was too haughty to profess himself the servant of the living God, and to observe his laws, and now he is the slave of his fears and follies! “The most infidel man,” says Delaney, “that I ever conversed with, was, by the accounts of those who best knew him, the most superstitious.”

Ver. 11. *He said, Bring me up Samuel*—As he had formerly experienced Samuel’s kindness and compassion, so now he expected in his deep distress.

Ver. 12. *And when the woman saw Samuel*—The particle *when*, which our translators have inserted here, and which is not in the original text, embarrasses the sense, and is calculated to give the reader a wrong idea of this transaction, leading him to think, that some space of time intervened between Saul’s request and Samuel’s appearance, during which the woman was employed in practising her art. Whereas the Hebrew implies no such thing. It is literally, *And he (Saul) said, Bring me up Samuel; and the woman saw Samuel, and cried with a loud voice, &c.*—The true state of this affair seems to have been, that as soon as Saul had signified whom he wished to have brought up, the woman was about to proceed to her charms and incantations, “designing,” says Dr. Dodd, “either to put some trick upon Saul, by producing an accomplice to represent Samuel; or, may we not believe that evil spirits really assisting on such occasions, might, and did come in to the aid of execrable wretches, sold to their service like this woman!” Be this, however, as it may, contrary to all her expectation, the moment Saul had mentioned the name of Samuel, the woman saw a venerable figure before her, which made her shriek out with astonishment, *Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.* She knew this appearance was not owing to any contrivance of her own, or her associates. It was what she in no wise expected; and she immediately concluded, that it could be no less a person than the king of Israel that this venerable person was really sent to. From all the circumstances of the relation, it appears that the woman herself was convinced, as the Egyptian magicians were upon another occasion, that *this was the finger of God.* To suppose that the woman herself, by her familiar spirit or spells, raised Samuel, or any evil spirit that personated him; or that she put a trick upon Saul, by causing one of her associates to appear as Samuel, is so contrary to reason, and the circumstances of the story, that no unprejudiced mind can well, upon an attentive perusal, take it in any such light. Indeed, the credit of the historian is implicated in this relation. He expressly says *the woman saw Samuel*, and if we believe that she did not see Samuel, but only an evil spirit personating him, we must call in question either the ability or integrity of the sacred writer: we must conceive either that he did not know what he wrote about, or that he designed to deceive his readers. Supposing then that both the woman

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1056. and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw <sup>m</sup> gods ascending out of the earth.

m Exod. 29. 25.  
† Heb. What is his form?  
‡ Ch. 15. 27.  
‡ Kings 2. 9. 13.  
• Eccles. 40. 20. 14 And he said unto her, † What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with <sup>a</sup> a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was <sup>o</sup> Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1056. 15 ¶ And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, <sup>p</sup> I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and <sup>q</sup> God is departed from me, and <sup>r</sup> answereth me no more, neither † by prophets nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

‡ Heb. by the hand of prophets.  
‡ Ch. 19. 12. r Ver. 6.  
‡ Prov. 5. 11, 13, 15. & 14. 14.  
• Eccles. 46. 20. 16 <sup>s</sup> Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

and Saul might be deceived by an impostor in Samuel's guise; yet we ask, was this author deceived? Or did he mean to deceive us, when he gives us to understand, that the woman saw Samuel, and was frightened at the sight!

Ver. 13. *The woman said—I saw gods ascending*—The original word here used is *elohim*; and is with equal propriety rendered *God, a god, or gods*; when spoken of Jehovah it is translated *God* in the Scriptures; but when meant of the false gods of the heathen, of angels or of magistrates, which it sometimes is, it is generally rendered in the plural number. As it is plain the woman saw and spoke only of one person, it should evidently be translated a *god* here, that is, a divine or glorious person, full of majesty and splendour, exceeding not only mortal men but common ghosts. Dr. Waterland renders it a *venerable person*, and Mr. Locke says, it here signifies an angel or a judge, and that in the singular number. The same word certainly means magistrates, Psal. lxxxiii. 1—6.

Ver. 14. *An old man coming up*—Although this appearance of Samuel is represented by the woman as coming up out of the earth, there is no reason to think that it did so in fact. Rather, the woman spoke according to the prevailing notion of both Jews and heathens of those days, that the place of abode of separate souls was under the earth. This opinion was the foundation of necromancy, or divining by the dead, and from a foolish supposition that they could call the dead from their sepulchres to consult them, it is that the Jews in the time of Isaiah, are accused of *having sacrificed in the gardens*, and of *remaining among the graves*, for their sepulchres were in gardens, Isai. lxxv. 3, 4, and xxix. 4. *Covered with a mantle*—The usual habit of prophets, and particularly of Samuel, Chap. xv. 27. *And Saul perceived that it was Samuel*—But if it was not he, but another person, this declaration of the sacred writer is not true. It may be observed further, that the word *perceived*, here rendered *perceived*, properly signifies to *know*, and sometimes to *see*. And the pronoun *hu*, *himself*, which our translators have left out, is also added after the name Samuel. So that the words, literally translated, are, *Saul knew that it was Samuel himself*.

Ver. 15. *Why hast thou disquieted me?*—“Houbigant

observes very justly, that Samuel complains not of the woman, but of Saul, for disquieting him; from whence it follows that Samuel was not raised up by her magick arts, but by the will of God. Samuel's disquiet plainly arose from Saul's hardened impenitence. It was this that grieved and provoked him; and so it should be translated; *Why hast thou provoked me, to make me rise up? Why dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee?* But is it probable, say some, that God, who had refused to answer Saul by all the accustomed methods, would, as it were, submit himself to the superstition of this prince, and, to satisfy him, raise up Samuel to apprise him of his destiny? We answer, 1, That Saul had not consulted God, either by Urim, or by prophets; for the Urim was with David; and there was probably no prophet then alive, to whom God communicated himself either by vision or in any other way; and that, in the methods he had employed, he had conducted himself hypocritically, and without any right impression of religion. 2, We answer, that Saul, in danger, and anxious about the event of it, applies to a Pythoness, to assist him by her incantations, and to call up the spirit of Samuel; but before she begins one word of her spells or charms, the prophet interposes, frightens her, and pronounces Saul's doom; and she herself witnesses the truth of his appearance. If the thing is singular, if the event is extraordinary, it does not follow that it is false, much less that it is impossible. God is not so tied down to his own institutions, that he cannot at any time depart from them. That God should manifest himself by his prophets, to encourage or countenance what he himself had forbidden, is indeed very unlikely, or, to speak more justly, very absurd to suppose. But that he should interpose to reprove that practice, which was the case at present, is doubtless no way incredible or improbable.” Delaney and Dodd.

*Saul answered and said, I am sore distressed, &c.*—Finding that God would give no answer to him, and being almost in despair, he seems to have foolishly flattered himself, that he might be able to obtain some answer to his petitions by means of that holy prophet, whom he knew to have had a sincere regard for him in his life time. But the prophet in his answer, in the next verse, gives him to know how incapable he was of doing him any service, seeing that the Lord was de-

A. M. 9948.  
B. C. 1056.

Or, for himself, Prov. 16. 4.

Ch. 15. 28.  
Heb. mine hand.

Ch. 15. 9.  
1 Kings 20. 49.  
1 Chron. 10. 15.  
Jer. 48. 10.

17 And the LORD hath done || to him, <sup>t</sup>as he spake by <sup>†</sup>me : for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, *even* to David :

18 <sup>u</sup>Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

parted from him and become his enemy. From hence we may see the vanity and absurdity of invoking saints, &c. as their intercession can no ways avail us, when by our wickedness we have made God our enemy. One would think this reply of Samuel would be sufficient to convince any Christian of the folly of any such application. *Therefore, I have called thee, &c.*—Happy had it been for him, if he had called Samuel sooner, or, rather, the God of Samuel ! It was now too late : destruction was at hand, and God had determined it should not be stayed.

Ver. 17, 18. *The Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, &c.*—Here the prophet foretels that Saul should that day be stript of the kingdom, and that it should be given to David. Then follows what nothing but infinite, unerring prescience could predict ; an exact, minute, precise account of all the circumstances of the then depending event ! *Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord*—Saul's sin in killing the Lord's priests, and in seeking to kill David, is not here mentioned, because the decree of taking the kingdom from him was passed before those sins were committed. Delaney asks here, "Would an impostor," (for such this apparition must have been, if it were not Samuel) "have been so very zealous for a strict observance of the law and commands of God ; and so rigid in pronouncing divine vengeance upon the violation of them ? And in the depth of his cunning, have limited that vengeance to time, place, and person ? and all this at no greater distance than the next day ? These suppositions are too wild to be seriously confuted ; they are the very reverse of what should and would have been done on such an occasion, had imposture interfered in it. Every one knows, the business of impostors is to *flatter*, to *delude*, to *deceive*, to answer *doubtfully* ; to promise good, and put off the evil ; it was this woman's business in a particular manner to act thus. Had she promised Saul victory, and the success had answered, she was sure of considerable advantage. He, who could have no benefit from priests, or from prophets, would, doubtless, have had her in high honour, and with good reason. If he died in the battle, all was safe ; and even if he escaped, and was worsted, what she said, would at least have been taken for an indication of good-wishes to the king and to his people ; and so would be more likely to escape any after enquiry. Whereas, if she prognosticated evil to the royal race, she was sure of destruction, if the event did not at once justify and save her."

Ver. 19. *Moreover the Lord will also deliver, &c.*—Samuel here predicts three things, 1, That the Lord would deliver Israel, with Saul, into the hand of the Philistines. 2, That Saul and his sons (viz. the three that were with him in the

19 Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines : and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons *be* with me : the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul <sup>†</sup>fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Sa-

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Heb. made haste and fell with the fullness of his stature.

camp) should be *with him*, that is, should like him, be in the state of the dead, or in another world. 3, That this should take place on *the morrow*. Now as no evil spirit or impostor of any kind could possibly know these particulars, which were all exactly accomplished next day, nor even Samuel himself, unless he had been divinely inspired with the knowledge of them, it is surprising that any person should imagine that this appearance of Samuel was either an human or diabolical imposture : for it is evident it could only proceed from the omniscient God. And if we consider the whole attentively, we may see a peculiar propriety in it. When Samuel denounced God's judgments upon Saul, he was clad in a mantle, which Saul tore on that occasion. He now came to repeat and to ratify the sentence then denounced : and, to strike him with fuller conviction, he appears in the same dress, the same mantle, in which he denounced that sentence. And since he now again denounced a rending of the kingdom from Saul's posterity, why may we not presume that the mantle shewed now the same rent which was the emblem of that rending ? Is it irrational to suppose that, when he spoke of this, he held up the mantle and pointed to the rent ? It is well known the prophets were men of much action in their speaking, and often illustrated their predictions by emblems. It may be observed further, that although Samuel in his life time often reproved Saul for his guilt ; and told him, that God had given away his kingdom from him for that guilt ; yet he never told him to whom, nor when the sentence should be executed upon him. How proper, then, to raise from the dead the same prophet, who predicted that sentence, to confirm it ; to tell him that the kingdom should be taken from him that day ; and, to name the very person to whom it should be given ; to shew, by whom, and where, and how the sentence should be executed ; and that the execution of it was instant, and should be deferred no longer. Was not this an occasion worthy of the divine interposition ? The son of Sirach, who probably had as much wisdom, penetration, and piety, as any critic that came after him, is clearly of opinion, with the sacred historian, that it was Samuel himself who foretold the fate of Saul, and his house, in this interview. And it is no ill presumption that his judgement was also that of the Jewish Church upon this head. It has been a question with some, whether the Jews had any belief in the immortality of the soul ? This history is a full decision upon that point, and perhaps the establishment of that truth, upon the foot of sensible evidence, was not the lowest end of Samuel's appearance upon this occasion. See Delaney.

Ver. 20. *Then Saul fell straightway along upon the earth*—Struck to the heart, as if the archers of the Philistines had



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muel : and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

x Judg. 19.  
s. Ch. 19.  
s. Job 18.  
14.

21 ¶ And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have <sup>x</sup> put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.

22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

24 And the woman had a fat calf

in the house; and she hasted and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof :

25 And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

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## CHAP. XXIX.

*The princes of the Philistines object against David's going with them to the battle, ver. 1—5. He is dismissed by Achish, ver. 6—11.*

**N**OW <sup>a</sup>the Philistines gathered together all their armies <sup>b</sup>to <sup>b</sup>Aphek : and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands; but David and his men passed on in the rereward <sup>c</sup>with Achish.

3 ¶ Then said the princes of the

c Ch. 28. 1.  
2.

already hit him, at the hearing this dreadful sentence pronounced upon himself, his family, and people; and overcome with astonishment and terror. *And was sore afraid because of the words of Samuel*—Observe, reader, *the words of Samuel*, says the inspired historian, and not the words of Satan, or any evil spirit personating Samuel. These words, which he now fully believed, and which were the more awful as being pronounced by a departed spirit, sent from the invisible world on purpose to pronounce them, even the spirit of a great and holy prophet, whom he had once highly revered, and to whom, under God, he had owed all his elevation;—these words so operated upon his mind, weakened and oppressed with guilt; and upon his body, exhausted with fatigue and fasting, that *no strength, or power of motion, was left in him*; and he fell at his full length as dead upon the floor. Unhappy Saul! he now reaps the bitter fruits of forsaking God, and of being therefore forsaken by him, and of his many great and aggravated crimes. Vengeance, which had long hovered over him, and waited in long-suffering for his repentance, now advances with large and rapid strides, and his doom approaches. He is deeply sensible of it, and is overwhelmed with horror and dismay on the account thereof.

Ver. 25. *They arose up and went away that night*—“What remorse,” says Delaney, “what desolation of mind, what horrors of guilt, what terrors and anticipations of divine wrath haunted him by the way, may no reader ever learn from his own experience!” Some have expressed an hope, that as, no doubt, his past sins were now brought to his remembrance, he felt contrition for them. Of this, however,

the Holy Ghost is silent, and considering that at last he was guilty of self-murder, we have no reason to think he experienced any repentance that was of any service to his immortal interests.

CHAP. XXIX. Ver. 1, 2. *The Philistines gathered—the Israelites pitched*—Or rather, *had gathered—had pitched*; for we are informed in the foregoing chapter that the Philistines were come to Shunem, and it is probable David's departure from their army was prior to Saul's consulting the woman at Endor. *The lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, &c.*—When they took a view of their army, the great men appeared, some at the head of an hundred, some of a thousand soldiers. *David and his men passed on—with Achish*—Who seems to have been the general of the army, and to have made David and his men his life-guard, according to his resolution, Chap. xxviii. 2. From this we may learn how dangerous a thing it is to deviate from truth, and what inconveniences it often brings us into. The pretences which David made to Achish (as related Ch. xxviii.) of his inveteracy to the Israelites, and of the damage he had done them in making incursions upon them, were the inducements that prompted Achish to make David and his men his life-guard; whereby David was brought into the grievous strait of either fighting against his own countrymen, or betraying his benefactor.

Ver. 3. *Then said the princes*—The lords of the other eminent cities, who were confederate with Achish in this expedition. *These days, or years*—That is, Did I say days?



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Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here*? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me

d Ch. 27. 7. <sup>d</sup> these days, or these years, and I  
e Dan. 6. 5. <sup>e</sup> have <sup>e</sup> found no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day?

4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, <sup>f</sup> Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest <sup>g</sup> in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? *should it not be* with the heads of these men?

f 1 Chron.  
12. 19.

g Ch. 14. 21.

5 *Is* not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, <sup>h</sup> Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

h Ch. 18. 7.  
& 21. 11.

6 ¶ Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and <sup>i</sup> thy going out and thy coming

i 2 Sam. 3.  
25.  
2 Kings 19.  
27.

in with me in the host *is* good in my sight: for <sup>k</sup> I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless <sup>†</sup> the lords favour thee not.

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k Ver. 8.

7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou <sup>†</sup> displease not the lords of the Philistines.

† Heb. thou art not good in the eyes of the lords.  
† Heb. do not evil in the eyes of the lords.

8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been <sup>†</sup> with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

† Heb. before thee.

9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, <sup>l</sup> as an angel of God: notwithstanding <sup>m</sup> the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

l 2 Sam. 14.  
17. 30. &  
19. 27.  
m Ver. 6.

10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

11 So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to

I might have said *years*. He hath now been with me a full year and four months, Chap. xxvii. 7. *Since he fell*—revolted, or left his own king to turn to me.

Ver. 4. *Make this fellow return—to his place*—To Ziklag, which they were content he should possess. *For wherewith should he reconcile, &c.* *Should it not be with the heads of these men?*—That is, of the Philistines. They reasoned wisely, according to the common maxims of prudence and true policy; for by such a course great enemies have sometimes been reconciled together. But the Divine Providence was no doubt concerned in suggesting these prudential considerations to their minds; for by this means David was delivered from that great strait and difficulty into which he had brought himself; and from which no human wisdom could have extricated him; either of being an enemy to, and fighting against his country (as before observed), or being false to his friend and to his trust. And by the same providential incident, he was sent back time enough to recover his wives, and the wives and children of his men, and his all, from the Amalekites, which would have been irrecoverably lost if he had gone to this battle. And the kindness of God to David was the greater, because it would have been most just for God to have left him in those distresses into which his own sinful counsel had brought him.

Ver. 6. *Achish—said—Surely, as the Lord liveth*—He swears by Jehovah, whom David worshipped, that he might be the more believed by him. Or perhaps he had learned something from David of the true God, though he worshipped other gods with him.

Ver. 8, 9. *David said, But what have I done?*—This was deep dissimulation and flattery in David, no way to be justified. But who, that has not experienced it, can know how strong a temptation they who attend on great men are under to compliment them and dissemble. David, no doubt, heartily rejoiced at this dismissal; but as he did not know how much longer he might be obliged to stay in the land of the Philistines, he seems to have yielded to a temptation that prudence required him to carry it fair towards them, and to pretend to have that concern upon this occasion which he certainly did not feel.

Ver. 9. *Achish said—Thou art good in my sight as an angel of God*—In whom nothing is blame-worthy. The heathens acknowledged good spirits, which also they worshipped as an inferior sort of deities, who were messengers and ministers to the supreme God; Achish had learned the title of angels from the Israelites his neighbours, and especially from David's conversation.

Ver. 10, 11. *With thy master's servants*—This intimates

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1056. return into the land of the Philistines. <sup>n</sup> And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

## CHAP. XXX.

*Ziklag plundered: David and his men distressed, ver. 1—6. Encouraged of God, he pursues them, ver. 7—10. He gains intelligence from a straggler, ver. 11—15. Routs the enemy, and recovers all they had taken, ver. 16—20. Makes an order for dividing the spoil, ver. 21—25. Sends presents to his friends, ver. 26—31.*

**A**ND it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the <sup>a</sup>Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

<sup>2</sup> And had taken the women captives, that *were* therein; they slew not any, either great or small, but carried *them* away, and went on their way.

<sup>3</sup> ¶ So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, *it was* burned with fire; and their wives,

that the lords of the Philistines would not trust them, because they looked on them still as Saul's subjects. *David and his men rose up early*—David did not then know how necessary this was for the relief of his own city. But God knew it well, and sent him thither accordingly. On how many occasions may we say, *What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter!*

CHAP. XXX. Ver. 1, 2. *The Amalekites had invaded the south*—Namely, the southern part of Judah, and the adjacent country. This, probably, they had done to revenge themselves for David's invading their country, mentioned Chap. xvii. 8. *And smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire*—Which they might easily do when David and his men were absent, and but a small, if any, guard left in the place. *And had taken the women captives*—And among the rest David's two wives. *They slew not any, but carried them away*—Towards their own country. Being a poor and very covetous people, they doubtless intended to sell them for slaves, and make money of them. How great must have been the surprise, and how inexpressible the grief of David and his men, when they came to the town to find it utterly desolated, and burnt down to the ground, and all the persons and property left therein taken away!

Ver. 4. *David and his people—lift up their voice and wept*—As was natural, they thus gave way to the first transports of their grief on this sad sight. "It is no disparagement,"

and their sons, and their daughters, A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1056. were taken captives.

<sup>4</sup> Then David and the people that *were* with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

<sup>5</sup> And David's <sup>b</sup>two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

<sup>6</sup> And David was greatly distressed; <sup>c</sup>for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was <sup>†</sup>grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: <sup>d</sup>but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

<sup>7</sup> <sup>e</sup>And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

<sup>8</sup> ¶ <sup>f</sup>And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them?

says Henry, "to the boldest, bravest spirits to lament the calamities of friends or relations."

Ver. 6. *The people spake of stoning him*—As the cause of this calamity, by coming to Ziklag at first, by provoking the Amalekites so grievously as he had done, and by his forwardness in marching away with Achish, and leaving the town, their wives and children unguarded. *But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God*—Who had never failed him in his greatest distresses; and in whom he still had confidence. *He encouraged himself*—By believing that this all-wise, and all-powerful Lord, was his God by covenant and special promise, and fatherly affection, as he had shewed himself to be in the whole course of his providence towards him. It is the duty of all good men, whatever happens, to encourage themselves in the Lord their God, assuring themselves that he both can and will bring light out of darkness.

Ver. 7. *Bring hither the ephod*—And put it on thyself that thou mayest enquire of God according to his ordinance. David was sensible of his former error, in neglecting to ask counsel of God by the ephod, when he came to Achish, and when he went out with Achish to the battle; and his necessity now brings him to his duty, and his duty meets with success.

Ver. 8. *He answered*—Before, God answered more slowly and gradually, Chap. xxiii. 11, 12; but now, he answers speedily, and fully at once, because the business required haste. So gracious is our God, that he considers even the degree of our necessities, and accommodates himself to them.

A. M. 2915.  
B. C. 1056. And he answered him, Pursue : for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*.

9 ¶ So David went, he and the six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.

Ver. 21. 10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: <sup>s</sup>for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.

11 ¶ And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;

h Judg. 15.  
19. Ch.  
14. 27. 12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and <sup>b</sup>when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, three days and three nights.

13 And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1026. art thou? And he said, *I am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick.

14 We made an invasion *upon* the south of <sup>i</sup>the Cherethites, and upon *the coast* which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of <sup>k</sup>Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.

Ver. 16.  
2 Sam. 6.  
18.  
1 Kings  
1. 38, 44.  
Ezek. 25.  
16. Zeph.  
3. 5.  
Josh. 14.  
12. & 15.  
15. 15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

16 ¶ And when he had brought him down, behold, *they were* spread abroad upon all the earth, <sup>l</sup>eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

17 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening

Ver. 9, 10. Where those that were left behind stayed— Those that were left to look after the stuff, Ver. 24; who were so tired, that they were not able to march any further. *David pursued, he and four hundred men*—A small number for such an attempt; but David was strong in faith, giving God the glory of his power and faithfulness.

Ver. 12, 13. Three days and nights— One whole day, and part of two others, as appears from the next verse, where he says, *Three days ago I fell sick*; but in the Hebrew, it is, *This is the third day since I fell sick. A young man of Egypt*—God of his providence so ordering it that he was not one of the race of the Amalekites, devoted to destruction, but an Egyptian that might be spared. *And my master left me*—In this place and condition; a barbarous act this, to leave him there to perish, when they had good store of camels for the carriage of men, as well as of their spoil, Ver. 17. But this inhumanity cost them dear; for, through it, they lost their own lives, and David recovered what they had taken at Ziklag. Such is the wonderful providence of God, ordering or over-ruling every thing for his own glory and the good of those that trust in him, even the thoughts and desires, the counsels, works, and ways of men, both the good and the bad! So that there is no fighting against him, who can make the smallest actions serviceable to the production of the greatest effects.

Ver. 14. Upon the south of the Cherethites— That is, of the Philistines; for it is explained, Ver. 16, to have been

*the land of the Philistines.* Hence it appears that the Amalekites were enemies to the Philistines. So that David did not act against the interests of his benefactor, Achish, in making incursions upon those people. *And upon the south of Caleb*—We read no where else of this land; but, in all probability, it was that south part of Judah which was given to Caleb, and which his posterity inherited, Josh. xiv. 13.

Ver. 15. Nor deliver me into the hand of my master— It is likely his master had been cruel to him, and therefore he had no mind to serve him any longer. *I will bring thee down to this company*—For, it is probable, his master had told him whither they intended to go, that he might come after them as soon as he could.

Ver. 16, 17. They were spread upon all the earth— Secure and careless, because they were now come almost to the borders of their own country, and the Philistines and Israelites both were otherwise engaged, and David, as they believed, with them. So they had no visible cause of danger; and yet then they were nearest to destruction! *David smote them from the twilight*—The word signifies both the morning and evening twilight. But the latter seems here intended, partly because their eating, and drinking, and dancing, was more proper work for the evening than the morning; and partly because the evening was more convenient for David, that the fewness of his forces might not be discovered by the day-light. It is probable, that, when he came near them, he reposed himself and his army in some secret place, whereof

A. M. 2946.  
B. C. 1036.  
† Heb. *la'asf*  
*merrov.*  
of † the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.

18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

m Ver. 8.  
19 And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: <sup>m</sup> David recovered all.

20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drave before those *other* cattle, and said, This is David's spoil.

a Ver. 10.  
1036.  
21 And David came to the <sup>n</sup>two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David came near to the people, he || saluted them.

† Or, asked  
them how  
they did.  
Judg. 18.  
1b.

there were many in those parts, for a convenient season; and then marched on so as to come to them at the evening time.

Ver. 20. *David took all the flocks*—Which had been taken by the Amalekites from the Philistines and others. *Which they drave before those other cattle*—His soldiers drave them before those cattle that belonged to Ziklag, which the Amalekites had taken from David and his men. *And said, This is David's spoil*—Not that he claimed it all to himself. But the soldiers, who lately were so incensed against him, that they spake of stoning him; now, upon this success, magnify him, and triumphantly celebrate his praise; and say, concerning this spoil, David purchased it by his valour and conduct, and he may dispose of it as he pleaseth.

Ver. 21, 22. *He saluted them*—He spoke kindly to them, and did not blame them because they went no further with them. *We will not give them ought of the spoil*—This was the resolution of such as feared not God, nor regarded man; and it was as ungenerous and unjust, as it was unkind; for their brethren had stayed behind, not from choice, but from mere necessity, being unable to travel further.

Ver. 23—25. *Ye shall not do so, my brethren*—He uses his authority to over-rule their intention; but manages the matter with all sweetness, though they were such wicked and unreasonable men, calling them brethren; not only as being of the same nation and religion with him, but as his fellow-

A. M. 2946.  
B. C. 1036.  
o Dent. 12.  
13. Judg.  
19. 21.  
† Heb. *men.*  
22 ¶ Then answered all the wicked men and *men* ° of Belial, of † those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart.

23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.

24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but <sup>p</sup>as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.

p Num. 31.  
27. Josh.  
23. 6.  
2 Mac. 8.  
22.

25 And it was so from that day † forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

† Heb. *and forward.*

26 ¶ And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to his friends,

soldiers. *With that which the Lord hath given us*—As much as to say, When God hath been so good to us, we ought not to be unkind to our brethren, nor, what he hath freely imparted, ought we churlishly and injuriously to withhold from them. *For who will hearken unto you?*—No disinterested person, he tells them, would be of their opinion, if the matter were referred to them. *They shall part alike*—A prudent and equitable constitution, and therefore practised by the Romans, as Polybins and others note. The reason of it is manifest; because they were exposed to hazards, as well as their brethren; and were a reserve to whom they might retreat in case of a defeat; and they were now in actual service, and in the station in which their general had placed them. *And it was so from that day forward*—This law, concerning the division of the spoil taken from an enemy, seems to have continued to the time of the Maccabees, as appears from the second book of their history, Chap. viii. 28, 30.

Ver. 26. *He sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah*—Partly in gratitude for their former favours to him; and partly in policy to engage their affections to him. *Behold a present for you*—In the Hebrew, a *blessing*. So he calls the present, because it was a token that he wished all prosperity to them, who had been kind to him in his banishment, and had helped to maintain and protect him. *Of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord*—The success of David in this pursuit of the Amalekites, will, upon examination, appear so ex-

A. M. 3948.  
B. C. 1056.  
† Heb. blessing,  
Gen. 33.  
11. Ch.  
25. 27.

saying, Behold a † present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD;

q Josh. 19. 8.  
r Josh. 15. 49.

27 To *them* which were in Beth-el, and to *them* which were in <sup>a</sup> south Ramoth, and to *them* which were in <sup>r</sup> Jattir,

s Josh. 13. 16.  
t Josh. 16. 50.

28 And to *them* which were in <sup>a</sup> Aroer, and to *them* which were in Siphmoth, and to *them* which were in <sup>t</sup> Eshtemoa,

u Ch. 27. 10.  
x Judg. 1. 34.

29 And to *them* which were in Rachal, and to *them* which were in the cities of <sup>u</sup> the Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which were in the cities of the <sup>x</sup> Kenites,

y Judg. 1. 17.

30 And to *them* which were in <sup>y</sup> Hormah, and to *them* which were in Chorashan, and to *them* which were in Athach,

31 And to *them* which were in

A. M. 3948.  
B. C. 1056.  
z Josh. 14. 13.  
2 Sam. 7. 1.

<sup>z</sup> Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

## CHAP. XXXI.

*Israel overthrown, and Saul, his three sons, his armour-bearer, and all his men slain, ver. 1—6. The Israelites forsake their cities, ver. 7. The camp plundered, and the dead bodies insulted, ver. 8—10. But rescued by the men of Jabesh-Gilead, ver. 11—13.*

NOW <sup>a</sup> the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down <sup>||</sup> slain in mount <sup>b</sup> Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew <sup>c</sup> Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons.

3 And <sup>d</sup> the battle went sore

traordinary, that it is not easy to account for it, otherwise than from the peculiar superintendence of Providence over David and his concerns. Indeed the interposition of Providence is seen in every circumstance of this adventure; the number, the perseverance, the issue. That they might not think their number did the work, God reduced them to four hundred, as he did Gideon's company to three, Judges vii. Many others have been as fortunate in surprising, and as successful in slaughtering their enemies; but to have strength both for the slaughter and pursuit, for so many hours together, is altogether extraordinary. But what is yet more remarkable is, that he should recover all the captives unhurt, out of the hands of a people so abandoned, and so execrable as the Amalekites! We have intimated that these Amalekites, being poor, spared their captives from a prospect of profiting greatly by the sale of them. Others, however, perhaps with as much reason, think they only respited their cruelty to execute it to more advantage at their leisure. How beautiful a contemplation is it to observe the signal goodness of God and malignity of man co-operating to the same end!—See Delaney.

CHAP. XXXI. Ver. 1. *Now the Philistines fought against Israel*—That is, gave them battle. As they began the quarrel (Chap. xxix. 1.) so they seem to have begun the fight. It must be observed, that the foregoing chapter is a digression, to relate what happened to David at this time. The sacred writer now resumes the thread of the narrative in regard to Saul, relating what befel him upon his return from Endor. And it seems he was scarce returned, before the Philistines attacked his camp, and, after some resistance, broke into it. Delaney thinks that they were encouraged to this attempt by some secret information of Saul's having stolen out of the

camp the evening before, with his general Abner (who is supposed to have been one of his attendants) and another person. Certainly intelligence of that kind could not be hard to be obtained, and if obtained, would be a strong encouragement to such an attack. And if this were the case, Saul's applying to the enchantress was the immediate cause of his destruction. See 1 Chron. x. 13, where one cause of his death is stated to be his applying for counsel to one who had a familiar spirit.

Ver. 2. *The Philistines slew Jonathan*—David's dear friend; God so ordering it for the farther exercise of David's faith and patience; and that David might depend upon God alone for his crown, and receive it solely from him, and not from Jonathan; who, doubtless, had he lived, would have speedily settled the crown upon David's head. There was also a special providence of God, in taking away Jonathan, (who, of all Saul's sons, seems to have been the fairest for the crown) for preventing divisions, which might have happened amongst the people concerning the successor; David's way to the crown being by this means made the more clear. *Abinadab*—Called also *Ishui*, Chap. xiv. 49. *Ish-bosheth* was not here, being possibly at home for the management of affairs there. Thus the prediction of Samuel was fulfilled: but who can forbear dropping a tear over the faithful, the amiable, the excellent Jonathan? "There are few characters among men more lovely, or more extraordinary than his: fortitude, fidelity, magnanimity! a soul susceptible of the most refined friendship, and superior to all the temptations of ambition and vanity! and all these crowned with the most resigned submission to the will of God."—Delaney.

Ver. 3. *The archers hit him*—Heb. *וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּהוּ* *jinshauhu*, found him. Houbigant renders it, *rushed upon him*. It seems by this that the Philistines gained the battle, chiefly by

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1056.

† Heb. shooters, men with bows.

† Heb. found aim.

• So Judg. 9. 54.

† Ch. 14. 6. & 17. 96.

Or, mock me.

† 2 Sam. 1. 14.

h 2 Sam. 1. 10.

against Saul, and the † archers † hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

4 ° Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest † these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and † abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; ° for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and † fell upon it.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

7 And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were

dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to † publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people.

10 † And they put his armour in the house of † Ashtaroth: and † they fastened his body to the wall of † Beth-shan.

11 ¶ ° And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard † of that, which the Philistines had done to Saul;

12 † All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1056.

2 Sam. 1. 90.

† Ch. 91. 9.

1 Judg. 9. 12.

2 Sam. 91. 12.

2 Josh. 17. 11. Judg. 1. 27.

Ch. 11. 3. 9. 11.

Or, concerning Aim.

Ch. 11. 1-11.

2 Sam. 9. 6-7.

the advantage of their archers. Probably these were some hired troops, for we meet with no mention, before this, of any archers in any of the Philistines' armies or battles; and it seems to have been a way of fighting that Saul and the Israelites were not prepared for, and therefore they were soon thrown into confusion by it. "The use of the bow, however," says Dr. Dodd, "was not unknown. Jonathan is celebrated for his skill and dexterity in it; and so were some of the worthies who resorted to David; but it seems not yet to have been brought into common practice, if as has been collected from 2 Sam. i. 18, David, after this battle, had the Israelites taught the use of it."

Ver. 4. *Lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me*—He was afraid they might put him to some ignominious death, or make sport with him, as they did with Samson. *But his armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid*—He dreaded to think of killing his king. *Saul took a sword, and fell upon it*—"A truly brave man," says Delaney, "would have died fighting, as Jonathan did, or would, at worst, have gloried at being abused, and even tortured, for having done his duty! Saul then died, not as a hero, but a deserter. Self-murder is demonstrably the effect of cowardice: and it is as irrational and iniquitous, as it is base. God, whose creatures we are, is the sole arbiter, as he is the sole author of our life: our lives are his property; and he hath given our country, our family, and our friends, a share in them. And, therefore, as Plato finely observes in his Phædo, God is as much injured by self-murder, as I should be by having one of my slaves killed without my consent. Not

to insist on the injury done to others, in a variety of relations, by the same act."

Ver. 5. *He (his armour-bearer) fell likewise upon his sword*—The same sword, on which Saul had fallen, which was the sword of the armour-bearer. This will appear evident to any one that reads these two verses, (the 4th and 5th) in the original. Now it is the established tradition of the Jewish nation, that this armour-bearer was Doeg, which is not at all unlikely; and if so, then both Saul and his executioner fell by that very weapon, with which they had before massacred the priests of God!

Ver. 7—10. *They on the other side Jordan*—Or, rather, *on this side Jordan*; for the Hebrew word signifies either side. And there was no occasion for those beyond Jordan to flee. *Saul and his three sons*—"The Scripture," as Mr. Henry well observes, "makes no mention of the souls of Saul and his sons, what became of them after they were dead: secret things belong not to us." Ver. 9. *They cut off his head*—As the Israelites did by Goliath, and fastened it in the temple of Dagon, 1 Chron. x. 10. *In the house of their idols*—To give them the glory of this victory. And by this respect shewn to their pretended deities, how do they shame those who give not the honour of their achievements to the living God? *They fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan*—To expose it, as we do the bodies of great malefactors, to public shame and reproach. And thus, as appears by Ver. 12, they did with the bodies of his sons.

Ver. 11, 12. *The inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead*—They lived on the other side of Jordan; for the people on this side were

A. M. 9948.  
B. C. 1056.

Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and <sup>q</sup>burnt them there.

<sup>q</sup> Chron. 10. 14.  
Jer. 34. 5.  
Amos 6. 10.

fled. *All the valiant men arose, and went all night*—To avoid discovery. *And took the body of Saul, &c.*—They had been delivered by Saul in the beginning of his reign from the Ammonites, when they were in danger of losing their lives, Ch. xi; and therefore they now shewed their gratitude towards him, by not suffering his corpse to want the honour of burial. *And came to Jabesh and burnt them there.* It was not the custom of the Hebrews to burn their dead, but to bury them; but, perhaps, they burned these bodies for fear, if they buried them, the Philistines might take them up again to fasten them in the same ignominious manner to their walls.

Ver. 18. *And fasted seven days*—To testify their sorrow for the loss of Saul, and of the people of God; and to intreat God's favour to prevent the utter extinction of his people. But we must not understand this word of fasting strictly, as if they eat nothing for seven whole days; but in a more large sense, as it is used both in sacred and profane writers; that they did eat but little, and that but mean food, and drank only water for that time. This book began with the birth

13 And they took their bones, and <sup>r</sup>buried *them* under a tree at Jabesh, <sup>s</sup>and fasted seven days.

A. M. 9948.  
B. C. 1056.  
r 3 Sam. 2. 4, 5, & 21.  
19, 13, 14.  
s Gen. 50. 10.

of Samuel, and ends with the death of Saul: The comparing these together will teach us to prefer the honour that comes from God, before all the honours of the world. The reader will do well to observe also that in this book we have two such examples of piety and virtue in Samuel and David as we cannot too frequently make the subject of our consideration. On the other hand, in the example of Saul, we have a picture of the miserable state of that man who forgetteth God, and turneth aside from his commandments. May God, through Jesus Christ, send down his grace into our hearts, that, through our whole lives, we may be inclined to imitate the first, and may always dread to fall into the state of the latter, and, as the only way to escape it, make it our chiefest study and delight to please God, and do his will; for this is the whole of man: in which all his happiness, all his peace consists. For that there is no peace to the wicked, hath been pronounced by him who knoweth the nature and frame of man; by the Lord himself, who cannot lie: "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest: There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," Isaiah lvii. 20, 21.



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THE  
**SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL,**

OTHERWISE CALLED, THE

**SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.**

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**ARGUMENT.**

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*In this Book is contained the History of the reign of David. It gives an account of his triumphs and of his troubles. I. His triumphs over the house of Saul, Chap. 1—4. Over the Jebusites and Philistines, Chap. 5. In the bringing up of the ark, Chap. 6, 7. Over the neighbouring nations, Chap. 8—10. II. His troubles; the cause of them, his sin in the matter of Uriah, Chap. 11, 12. The troubles themselves, from the sin of Amnon, Chap. 13. The rebellion of Absalom, Chap. 14—19. And of Sheba, Chap. 20. From the famine, Chap. 21. And the pestilence, for his numbering the people, Chap. 24. His song we have, Chap. 22. And his words and worthies, Chap. 23. In many instances throughout this Book, he appears as a great and a good man. Yet it must be confessed he had great vices: So that his honour shines brighter in his psalms than in his annals. The whole period comprehended in this Book is about forty years, from the beginning of David's reign, in the year of the world 2949, to the end of it in 2989. The conspiracy, however, of his son Adonijah, and his own death, are not here inserted, but are set down at the beginning of the following Book. Although the former part of the First Book of Samuel, as likewise the Books of Ruth and Judges, were, in all probability, compiled by Samuel himself; yet the latter part of that, and this called The Second Book of Samuel, were, doubtless, written by other holy persons, inspired of God, such as Nathan, Gad, and others. Abarbinel says, according to Mr. Locke, that the Books of Samuel were most probably written by Jeremiah, from memoirs left by Samuel, Nathan, and Gad.*

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A. M. 2949.  
B. C. 1056.

CHAP. I.

*David receives an account of the death of Saul and Jonathan, ver. 1—10. He mourns over them, ver. 11, 12. Puts the man to death, who boasted he had killed Saul, ver. 13—16. His elegy upon Saul and Jonathan, ver. 17—27.*

a 1 Sam. 30.  
17, 26.

**N**OW it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from <sup>a</sup>the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;

2 It came even to pass on the third

day, that, behold, <sup>b</sup>a man came out of the camp from Saul <sup>c</sup>with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

A. M. 2949.  
B. C. 1056.

b Ch. 4. 10.  
c 1 Sam. 4.  
19.

3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.

4 And David said unto him, †How went the matter? I pray thee, tell

† Heb. what  
was, &c.  
1 Sam. 4.  
16.

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CHAP. I. Ver. 1, 2. *David had abode two days in Ziklag*—Which, it appears from this, the Amalekites had not so burned down that David and his men could not lodge in it.

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*On the third day*—From David's return to Ziklag. *With his clothes rent*—As the manner of deep mourners was.

A. M. 2919.  
B. C. 1056.

me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

d 1 Sam. 31.

e 1 Sam. 31.  
2, 3, 4.

6 And the young man that told him, said, As I happened by chance upon <sup>d</sup> mount Gilboa, behold, <sup>e</sup> Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

† Heb. be-  
hold me.

7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, † Here *am* I.

8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I *am* an Amalekite.

i Or, my  
coat of  
mail, or,  
my em-  
broidered  
coat hin-  
dereth  
me, that  
my &c.

9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for *anguish* is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.

Ver. 6. *Behold Saul leaned upon his spear*—Endeavouring to run it through his body. It is plain, that what this Amalekite told David was a made story; for it is expressly said, in the foregoing chapter, that Saul fell upon his sword. Who this Amalekite was does not appear; but, as Delaney observes, there are always a great number of strollers that follow camps, and this lad probably was one of them. Their business is pillage and stripping the dead. This youth, it seems, knew his business, and got the start of the Philistines in the pillage of Saul. Having met with his body, he robbed it of its royal ornaments, and made the best of his way to David with them, in order to ingratiate himself with him as he was likely to succeed to the throne: and he made up a story of such circumstances as he imagined would appear plausible, and gain David's favour.

Ver. 9. *For anguish is come upon me*—The Hebrew word שָׁבַט *shabats*, here rendered anguish, seems to be wrong translated in this place. It is rendered *ocellata chlamys*, by Buxtorf, a wrought, embroidered, or speckled coat of mail: a translation which is countenanced by Exod. xxviii. 4, and Psalm xlv. 14, where words of the same derivation are rendered *broidered coat* and *ruiment of needle-work*. The sense of the sentence seems to be, my coat of mail hinders the spear from entering far enough to produce instant death, though my wound is mortal. Thus it is understood by many interpreters. This Amalekite pretended therefore that Saul desired him to draw out the spear from his wound, and to

10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

A. M. 2948.  
B. C. 1026.  
(Judg. 9.  
24.

11 ¶ Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that *were* with him:

g Ch. 3. 31.  
& 13. 31.

12 And they mourned and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

13 ¶ And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I *am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.

14 And David said unto him, <sup>h</sup> How wast thou not <sup>i</sup> afraid to <sup>k</sup> stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?

h Num. 12.  
8.  
i 1 Sam. 31.  
4.  
k 1 Sam.  
24. 6. &  
26. 9. Pe.  
108. 15.  
1 Ch. 4. 19.  
14.

15 And <sup>l</sup> David called one of the

run it through his body with force where the coat of mail would give it a passage.

Ver. 10. *So I stood upon him and slew him*—Saul, according to the true history, was afraid of being slain by the uncircumcised: and how was the matter mended by desiring to die by the hand of an Amalekite? *And I took the crown that was upon his head*—“Possibly the serious reader,” says Delaney, “may not think it an observation altogether unworthy of his regard, that an Amalekite now took the crown from Saul's head, which he had forfeited by his disobedience in relation to Amalek.”

Ver. 12. *They mourned and wept, and fasted*—This is an evident instance of the disinterestedness and tenderness of David's heart, in that he could not forbear bewailing this melancholy end of Saul, though he was his bitter enemy, and sought his life.

Ver. 13, 14. *The son of a stranger*—This expression signifies one who resided among the Israelites, and had embraced their religion, though not admitted into their communion. *David said—How wast thou not afraid—to destroy the Lord's anointed?*—Who possibly might have recovered, and been carried off by some of his own men; the Philistines, by some extraordinary providence of God being diverted from the pursuit. It was the greater presumption in this young man to do it, since none of Saul's own servants durst venture upon such an act.

Ver. 15. *He smote him that he died*—Abarbinel thinks

A. M. 2048.  
B. C. 1066. young men, and said, Go near, *and* fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.

16 And David said unto him, Thy blood *be* upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.

17 ¶ And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jo-

nathan his son :

18 (° Also he bade them teach the children of Judah *the use of the bow* : behold, *it is written* <sup>p</sup> in the book <sup>p</sup> of Jasher.)

19 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places : <sup>q</sup> how are the mighty fallen !

20 <sup>r</sup> Tell *it* not in Gath, publish <sup>r</sup> *it* not in the streets of Askelon ; lest

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o 1 Sam. 11. 3.

p Josh. 10. 23.

q Or, of the upright.

r Ver. 27. 1 Mac. 9. 21.

r 1 Sam. 31. 9. Mic. 1. 10. Judg. 16. 22.

that, as the man was an Amalekite, David supposed that he had killed Saul out of revenge for the slaughter he had made of the Amalekites. But, if not; if the fact were as this Amalekite stated, and Saul hid him despatch him, "David rightly judged, that Saul had no power over his own life; and, consequently, should not have been obeyed in such a command: God and the state had as much right to his life when he was weary of it, as when he most loved it. And, besides all this, it behoved David to vindicate his own innocence to the world, by so public an execution: he might otherwise, perhaps, have been branded with the guilt of employing that wretch to murder his persecutor. David also, doubtless, had it in view to deter others by this example. He consulted his own safety in this as Cæsar is said, by restoring the statues of Pompey, to have fixed his own. This was a wise lecture to princes, and many of them have unquestionably profited by it." Delaney.

Ver. 17. *David lamented with this lamentation*—He and his servants had lamented over Saul and Jonathan before, Ver. 12. But now he composed a song for a public and universal lamentation, than which there is nothing more elegant and passionate to be found in all antiquity. The bursts of sorrow are so strong, so pathetic, so short, so various, so unconnected, that no grief was ever painted in such living and lasting colours. And it is one sure sign and beautiful effect of this sorrow, that David's heart was so softened and melted by it as to lose all traces of Saul's cruelty to him. He remembered nothing now but the brave man, the valiant leader, the magnificent prince, the king of God's appointment, his own once indulgent master, his Michal's and his Jonathan's father. In the mean time there is the utmost decency and propriety in the concern which David discovers, and in the encomiums respectively passed on Saul and Jonathan; nothing but what became the character of both, and suited the situation of him who penned it. Saul he celebrates for his former victories, his swiftness, and strength, and sheds a tear over him for his defeat, and the indignities which were offered to him after his death; which humanity would draw from the eye, even over an enemy that was otherwise brave, and died fighting for his country; but without the least expression of sorrow for him on his own account; and, what deserves to be mentioned to his honour, without a single reflection upon his past injustice and cruelty towards himself. But as to Jonathan, how just and warm is the grief he manifests! *I am distressed for thee, &c.*—Delaney and Chandler.

Ver. 18. *And bade them teach the children of Judah*—Among whom he now was, and over whom he first reigned, *the use of the bow*. While he made lamentation for the dead,

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he did not neglect the living: that they might be provided with better means to defend themselves, as the king designed of God to reign over them, he ordered that they should immediately learn to be skilful in the use of bows and arrows, by which principally the Philistines had gained this victory. The Israelites seem hitherto to have chiefly used slings, spears, and swords; but were now taught to shoot with bows and arrows. As, however, the words, *the use of*, are not in the original, but, literally translated it is, *He bade them teach the children of Judah the bow*; many learned men are of opinion that it was not *the use of the bow* which they were to learn, but this song of David, termed *The Bow*. There does not appear, however, to be any proof that this song bore any such title, nor is any sufficient reason given why it should bear any such. It seems much more probable, for the reason just named, that our translators have given us the true interpretation of the passage. *Behold, it is written in the book of Jasher*—That David enjoined the use of the bow to be taught. It is more largely and particularly described there. Or, if *The Bow* meant this song, the sense is, that the song was recorded in that book, which some think to have been a book of odes and hymns, in which were recited the successes or misfortunes of the Israelites in battle.

Ver. 19. *The beauty of Israel*—Heb. הַצִּיּוֹן, *hatsiyyon*; the honour, glory, flower, or ornament, meaning Saul and Jonathan, and their army. Delaney understands the expression only of Jonathan, and observes, as Jonathan's death touched him nearest, it was natural he should be the first object of his lamentation; and, to put it out of all doubt that Jonathan is meant, he varies the expression in a subsequent verse—*Jonathan slain in thy high places!* The word rendered *slain*, חָלַל, *chalal*, properly means *stabbed*, and does not appear any where to bear the sense that Dr. Kennicott would put upon it, who would understand it as a noun, and not as a participle, and translate it a *warrior*. How moving a circumstance is this here noticed. Jonathan's *falling on his own high places!* those in which he might naturally have expected safety; those in which he delighted; those in which he had long enjoyed peace and pleasure. Or *thine*, O land of Israel. *How are the mighty fallen*—How untimely and lamentably Jonathan! How sadly and shamefully Saul by his own hand! How strangely! how unexpectedly! how universally the army! This solemn, noble, and pathetic exclamation of sorrow was probably repeated at the close of every verse of this mournful song.

Ver. 20. *Tell it not in Gath, &c.*—Such a lamentable misfortune and disgrace, David would, if possible, have concealed from all the enemies of Israel. And he finely insi-

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the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of <sup>1</sup>the uncircumcised triumph.

21 Ye <sup>u</sup> mountains of Gilboa, <sup>x</sup>let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.

22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, <sup>z</sup>the bow

of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan were lovely and || pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were <sup>a</sup>stronger than lions.

24 Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.

nuates in these words what matter of triumph it would be to the Philistines, and seems scarce able to bear the thought of it, especially as it would be greatly to the dishonour both of God and his people. *Lest the daughters, &c.*—He mentions these, because it was the custom of women in those times and places to celebrate with triumphal songs and dances those victories which their men obtained.

Ver. 21. *Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, &c.*—This is not an imprecation, but a passionate expression of the sorrow and horror which he felt at this public disgrace and loss, which was such as if he thought every person or thing which contributed to it, ought to bear tokens of the divine displeasure, such as the earth does when it is deprived of the influence of dew and rain. *Nor fields of offerings*—That is, fertile fields, which may produce fair and goodly fruits fit to be offered to God. *For there the shield of the mighty is vilely* (that is, dishonourably) *cast away*—“Throwing away the shield was a matter of the highest reproach in all the accounts of antiquity. And this in the practice of so brave a prince as Saul was an example of terrible consequence, and therefore must not go unreproved, especially in a song which soldiers were to learn. David could not censure Saul, he was his prince and his enemy; the infamy, however, must fall somewhere; let the place in which it happened be accursed. Poetry justifies this, and we need not scruple to say, it is the most masterly stroke the science will admit. And with what inimitable address has he conducted this reproach! For at the same time that the mountains are cursed for it, he hath contrived to turn it into praise upon Saul: *There the shield of the mighty was cast away; no hint by whom.*”

Ver. 22. *The bow of Jonathan returned not back*—Without effect. The arrows shot from his bow did not miss their mark, but pierced deep into the fat and flesh, the heart and bowels, and shed the blood of the mighty. *The sword of Saul returned not empty*—Always did great execution (as we now speak) upon those with whom he fought.

Ver. 23. *Saul and Jonathan were lovely*—Heb. *וְהָאֲהָבִים*, *hannechabim*, were loved, viz. by each other, and by the people. *And pleasant in their lives*—Amiable and obliging in their carriage and conversation, both towards one another and towards others: for, as for Saul's fierce behaviour towards Jonathan, it was only a sudden passion, by which his ordinary temper was not to be measured; and as for his carriage towards David, it proceeded from that jealousy, and

those reasons of state, which too often engage even well-natured princes in similar hostilities. *And in their death they were not divided*—They were united in life and death; in life by the same common affection; in death by the same common fate. This is just what David intends to express. He does not, by any means, appear to design a commendation of their lives in any other respect. Nor does he speak a word of Saul's piety; he only commends him for those qualities which he really possessed; a fit pattern for all preachers in their funeral commendations. Dr. Lowth has beautifully expressed David's meaning:—

“Nobile par, quos junxit, amor, quos gloria junxit,  
Una nunc fato jungit acerba dies.”

We will not attempt to give our readers a translation of this elegant couplet, but we will present them below with a paraphrase not inferior, perhaps, in elegance or spirit, on this and two or three of the other stanzas of this elegy, from a poetical version of it by Thomas Roberts, Esq. late of Bristol, with which he has kindly favoured us, and in which both the beauty and force of the original seem to be well imitated. We wish the narrow limits of our work would admit of our inserting the whole.

*They were swifter than eagles*—In pursuing their enemies, and executing their designs; which is a great commendation in a prince, and a requisite quality in a warrior. *They were stronger than lions*—Or rather, more courageous than lions. According to Agur's observation, Prov. xxx. 30, the lion never betakes himself to flight, but faces his foe to the last. Courage then seems the most remarkable property of the lion. And since David uses the same word here in speaking of Saul and Jonathan which Agur uses in speaking of this property of the lion, he evidently means to celebrate the courage of his heroes rather than their strength; and to say, that, in facing the enemy and braving of danger, they were undaunted as lions.

Ver. 24. *Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep over Saul*—“Nothing,” says Dr. Dodd, “can be more elegant than this verse: while the warriors of Israel lamented their chiefs, the divine poet calls upon the women of the land to shed their tears over the ashes of princes, whose warlike exploits had so often procured them those ornaments which are most pleasing to the sex, and had enriched them with the spoils of their enemies.” *Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights*—The word *other* seems to be unnecessarily supplied

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25 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.

26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: <sup>b</sup>thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

27 <sup>c</sup>How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

## CHAP. II.

David goes up to Hebron and is crowned there, ver. 1—4. Thanks the men of Jabesh-gilead, ver. 5—7. Ish-bosheth is set up in opposition to

here by our translators, there being nothing for it in the Hebrew, which, literally rendered, is, *Who clothed you in scarlet with delights*; that is, *in scarlet*, wherewith you are so much delighted. For this seems to have been the colour in which the Israelitish women delighted.

Ver. 25. *O Jonathan—slain in thine high places*—He says *thine*, for they were in Jonathan's country; and, had not his father disinherited him by his sins, in his dominions. Thus David's grief, which began with Jonathan, naturally ends with him. It is well known, that we lament ourselves in the loss of our friends; and David was no way solicitous to conceal this circumstance. *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan*—In the former part of this lamentation David celebrates Jonathan as a brave man, in the latter he laments him as a friend. And in this respect he had certainly as great obligations to him as ever man had to another. For, as he here observes, Jonathan's love to him was indeed wonderful, passing the love of women. *And the weapons of war perished*—All military glory gone from Israel! "It may be the work of fancy in me," says Dr. Delaney, "but to me, I own, this last stanza is the strongest picture of grief I ever perused. To my ear, every line in it is either swelled with sighs, or broken with sobs. The judicious reader will find a break in the first line of it very probably so left in the original, the writer not being able to find an epithet for Jonathan answering to the idea of his distress." Our translators have supplied the interjection *Oh! Oh Jonathan, stabbed in thy high places!* "To conclude: Few have ever perused this lamentation with so little attention as not to perceive it evidently animated with a spirit truly martial and magnanimous! It is the lamentation of a brave man over brave men. It is, in one word, a lamentation equally pathetic and heroic. To this may be added, it is not less generous. For in the most noble spirit David passes over in entire silence all the ill treatment which he, and his friend Jonathan, on his account, had received from Saul; he does not make the most distant allusion to it, but seems, through the whole song, to strive to conceal every thing that might cast any reflection upon him. The lines we promised are as follows:—

"Mid-the throng'd phalanx, where the battle press'd,  
The bow of Jonathan, infuriate, burn'd;  
Nor e'er, from slaughter's sanguinary feast,  
The sword of Saul unsatiated return'd!

him, ver. 8—11. An encounter between David's men and Ish-bosheth's, in which the latter are beaten, ver. 12—17. Asahel is killed by Abner, ver. 18—23. Joab sounds a retreat by the advice of Abner, who retires to Mahanaim, ver. 24—29. The loss on each side, ver. 30, 31. Asahel buried, ver. 32.

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AND it came to pass after this, that David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto <sup>b</sup>Hebron.

2 So David went up thither, and his <sup>c</sup>two wives also, Ahinoam the

a Judg. 1.  
1. 1 Sam.  
23, 2, 4, 9.  
& 30, 7, 8.b 1 Sam. 30.  
31. Ver.  
11. Ch. 5.  
1, 2.  
1 Kings  
2, 11.  
c 1 Sam. 30.  
5.

All eyes, all hearts, admir'd the lovely pair,  
The princely parent, and the pious son:  
Whom life united, not divided are  
In death, whose dire catastrophe is one.

With rapid pinion through the aerial plain  
The light'ning eagle flies, but swifter they;  
Strong is the Monarch of the wood's domain,  
But more their might indignant o'er the prey.

Ye weeping nymphs, attune the mourning lyre  
To solemn strains of sympathetic woe;  
Daughters of Israel, who the brave admire,  
Bid for the brave the lay funeral flow!

'Twas Saul returning from the battle's toils,  
Triumphant Chief! amidst his warriors bold,  
Who crown'd your beauties with Philistia's spoils,  
Who deck'd your charms with diamonds and gold."

For the rest, see the *Arminian Magazine*, for June 1811.

CHAP. II. Ver. 1. *David enquired of the Lord*—By Urim. When he had given a due time to his grief and mourning for Saul and Jonathan, he applied himself to God, who had appointed him to the kingdom, to know by what means he should best be put in possession of it. He did not enquire whether he should take the kingdom; for God had already signified his appointment of that, and David would not offend him, nor dishonour his ordinance by unnecessary enquiries; but only *where*, and *at what time* he should enter upon it; whether in Judah, as he supposed, because of his relation to that tribe, and his interest in it; or, in some other tribe; for he does not limit God, but resolves exactly to follow his instructions. Thus David begins at the right end, and lays his foundation in God's counsel and assistance. Thus, in all our affairs, we ought to apply to God, by prayer and supplication, for his direction and aid.

*He said, Unto Hebron*—Which, next to Jerusalem, (part whereof the Jebusites now possessed), was the chief city of the tribe of Judah, a city of the priests, and situated in the very centre of that tribe, to which all the people might speedily resort when need required. It stood on the top of a ridge of high mountains, equally famed for fruits, herbage, and honey. According to Mr. Sandys, who seems to have surveyed the whole region round it with uncommon rapture, and the very learned and accurate Dr. Shaw, who also considered it with singular care and attention, it was not only

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Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. 27. 2, 3. & 30. 1. 1 Chron. 12. 1. cir. 1055. 3 And <sup>d</sup> his men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.

<sup>e</sup> Ver. 11. Ch. 5. 5. 1 Mac. 2. 27. 4 <sup>e</sup> And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, *That* <sup>f</sup> the men of Jabesh-gilead *were they* that buried Saul.

f 1 Sam. 31. 11, 12.

5 ¶ And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and

delightfully pleasant but admirably fitted for olives and vineyards, and, in many parts for grain and pasture. It seems therefore to have been a region peculiarly fitted for the reception of David and his men, with less inconvenience to the country than in most other places; for here they might have bread to the full, and be refreshed with springs of excellent water. Add to this, that it was a patriarchal city, venerable for the sepulchres of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which would remind David of the ancient promises. See Delaney and Shaw's Travels.

Ver. 3. *They dwell in the cities of Hebron*—That is, the cities or towns belonging to Hebron, which was the metropolis. For in Hebron itself there was not space for them all, because it was filled with priests, and with David's court.

Ver. 4. *The men of Judah came and anointed David king*—This they did on just grounds, because not only the sovereignty had been promised to that tribe, but David was designed and had been appointed by God; and, at his express command, anointed by Samuel to the regal office. This had long ceased to be a secret. Jonathan had known it perfectly. Saul himself had been no stranger to it: and Abner, the general of his army, was not ignorant of it, as appears by his words to Ish-bosheth, Ch. iii. 8, 9, and his message to the elders of Israel: and it was now universally known, at least to the men of Judah, and was the avowed reason why they advanced David to the throne. And it was reason sufficient, God's will being obligatory upon all, and all being indispensably bound to obey it. This had been the sole foundation of Saul's title to the kingdom, and, on this ground only, the Israelites had accepted him for their king. But this ground of claim Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, had not, for he had not been appointed by God, nor anointed by Samuel, or any other prophet. Indeed, properly speaking, he had no ground of claim at all, as the crown was never made hereditary in Saul's family, but remained entirely at God's disposal, who was the supreme king and governor of Israel. The men of Judah, therefore, were resolved to comply with the will and appointment of God, and not to neglect their duty, although they saw that the other tribes would neglect theirs. Yet they act with modesty: they make him king of Judah only, and not of all Israel. "Whether they did this with more despatch," says Delaney, "to influence the determinations of the other tribes in his favour; or, whether

said unto them, *Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him.*

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Ruth 2. 20. &amp; 3. 10. Ps. 115. 15.

6 And now <sup>h</sup> the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

h 2 Tim. 1. 16, 18.

7 Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and <sup>†</sup> be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

† Heb. be ye the sons of valour.

8 ¶ But <sup>i</sup> Abner the son of Ner, <sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 14. 50.

it was delayed until their dispositions were sounded upon the point, is no where said. This, however, is certain, that one tribe's acting separate and independant of the rest, was of dangerous example; nor could any thing but the divine authority justify it; and therefore it is not probable that this step was taken until all other expedients for an unanimous election had failed. And here began the division of the kingdom, so lately predicted by Samuel;" as also, in part, the accomplishment of the prophecy delivered by Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10, that the sceptre should be settled in Judah.

Ver. 5—7. *That ye have shewed this kindness*—This respect and affection. For as it is an act of inhumanity to deny burial to the dead; so it is an act of mercy and kindness to bury them. *The Lord shew kindness and truth unto you*—That is, true and real kindness; not in words only but also in actions, as you have done to your king. *I also will requite you*—So far am I from being offended with you for this kindness to my late enemy. This shews the great generosity of David's spirit, who expressed such affection and gratitude to those who had honoured the dead body of one that hated and sought to kill him. *Let your hands be strengthened*—Be not afraid, lest the Philistines should punish you for this act, but take courage. *For, &c.*—Or rather, *though your master Saul be dead*—And so your hearts might faint, as if you were now as sheep without a shepherd. *The house of Judah have anointed me king*—This he mentions, that they might not be discouraged on the ground of their wanting one to head them, for, he intimates, that being invested with the royal dignity, by the tribe of Judah, he would look upon himself as bound to protect them also.

Ver. 8. *Abner—took Ish-bosheth*—Abner was not only Saul's general but his near kinsman also, and, in this instance, his interest and ambition, and perhaps also envy, strongly influenced him. He knew that Ish-bosheth, if advanced to the sovereignty, would only have the name of king, while he himself had the power. It appears, however, sufficiently from the sequel of his history, that he was well acquainted with David's divine designation to the throne; but should he now submit to it, he must no more hope for the chief command of the army. Joab was in possession of that under David, and well deserved to be so: and it was not

A. M. 3049.  
B. C. 1055.† Heb. the  
best which  
was Saul's.  
cir. 1055.Or, Esh-  
baal.  
1 Chron.  
5. 28. & 9.  
30.

captain of † Saul's host, took || Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim ;

9 And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel.

10 Ish-bosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

† Ch. 1. 4.  
1 Kings 9.  
11.  
† Heb.  
number  
of days.

11 And <sup>k</sup> the † time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

1 Josh. 19.  
28.

12 ¶ And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to <sup>l</sup> Gibeon.

13 And Joab the son of Zeruah,

and the servants of David, went out, and met † together by <sup>m</sup> the pool of Gibeon : and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise.

15 Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.

16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side ; so they fell down together : wherefore that place was called || Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.

17 And there was a very sore bat-

A. M. 9951.  
B. C. 1053.cir. 1053.  
† Heb. them  
together.  
Jer. 41.  
19.That is,  
the field  
of strong  
men.

probable he would displace him, a tried friend and a near kinsman, (being the son of Zeruah, David's sister,) to make way for an inveterate enemy newly reconciled. Nor was this all: Ish-bosheth was Abner's near kinsman; whom, if he did not support, the interest of his tribe and of his family, must fall with his own. Add to all this, that Abner commanded under Saul in all the expeditions he made against David; and it appears sufficiently from the history that David was greatly an over-match for him in all military conduct. Thus envy, ambition, interest, and personal pique led him to espouse the cause of Ish-bosheth, whom he brought over Jordan with him to Mahanaim, a place in the tribe of Gad, Josh. xiii. 26, which he chose for his residence, the better to gain that part of the country to his interest, to be more out of the reach of David's and the Philistines' incursions, and to have the better opportunity of recruiting his army among a people, not only brave and courageous, but well affected to the cause he had espoused. See Delaney.

Ver. 9—11. *He made him king over Gilead*—Over all the tribes on the other side Jordan, which are comprehended under this name. *Over the Ashurites*—That is, the tribe of Asher, as the Chaldee paraphrast and others understand it. *Over Jezreel*—A large and rich valley, situate in the borders of the tribes of Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali, and so put for them all. *And over all Israel*—All the tribes on this side Jordan, save only the tribe of Judah. *Ish-bosheth—was forty years old*—Being born in the year that Saul was made king; for Saul reigned forty years, Acts xiii. 41. *And reigned two years*—Before there was any hostility between him and David, which after 't began, continued five years and an half, during which time David resided in Hebron, and was king over the tribe of Judah, and Ish-bosheth reigned

over Israel, or rather Abner, for that general had the power, and left him only the name of a king.

Ver. 12, 13. *Abner—and the servants of Ish-bosheth went out—to Gibeon*—They passed over Jordan into the country of Benjamin, where Gibeon was, Josh. xviii. 25, to fight with Judah, and to bring them into subjection to Saul's son. It ought to be remarked, that David did not begin any hostility, but waited to see how God would dispose of things in his favour. *And Joab and the servants of David went out*—To oppose the designs of the Israelites, Joab being the chief commander of David's forces. *And met together by the pool of Gibeon*—Where the two opposite armies put themselves in a posture for battle.

Ver. 14. *Abner said—Let the young men now arise, and play before us*—That is, shew their prowess and dexterity in fighting together, or make trial of their courage and strength, that we may see which of us has the braver soldiers. He speaks like a vain-glorious and cruel man, and a soldier of fortune, that esteemed it a sport to see men wounding and killing one another. So this he designed, partly for their mutual recreation, and trial of skill; and partly, that by this occasion they might be engaged in a battle. But he is unworthy the name of a man who is thus prodigal of human blood.

Ver. 15—17. *There went over—twelve of Benjamin*—Ish-bosheth's men were still most forward to begin hostilities. *They caught, &c.*—That is, each of the servants of David last mentioned, or every one of both sides caught the man that was his opposite, by the head—That is, by the hair of the head, which they wore very long in those days. *And thrust his sword into his fellow's side*—Killed his opponent. *So they fell down together*—Either all the twelve men of



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B. C. 1053.

tle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

a 1 Chron.  
2. 16.

18 ¶ And there were <sup>a</sup> three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was <sup>o</sup>as light † of foot † <sup>p</sup>as a wild roe.

o 1 Chron.  
19. 8.† Heb. of  
his feet.† Heb. as  
one of the  
roes that  
is in the  
field.p Ps. 19. 35.  
Cant. 9.  
17. & 8. 14.† Heb.  
from after  
Abner.

19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left † from following Abner.

20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, *Art* thou Asahel? And he answered, *I am*.

21 And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his || armour. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.

i Or, spoll.  
Judg. 14.  
19.

22 And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?

23 Howbeit he refused to turn

Benjamin, slain by the servants of David, or else the whole four and twenty fell down dead together. *That place was called Helkath-hazzurim—Or, The field of rocks, that is, of men who stood like rocks immovable, each one dying on the spot where he fought. There was a sore battle that day—The men of Israel, it seems, enraged at the loss of their valiant men, began a general battle.*

Ver. 18, 19. *Three sons of Zeruiah—She was David's sister, and therefore these were his nephews. Asahel was light of foot as a wild roe—He was a gallant man, and one of David's twelve captains, remarkably valiant, but more remarkably swift. Asahel pursued after Abner—Being desirous of the glory, either of taking or killing the greatest man in Israel.*

Ver. 21, 22. *Abner said—Turn thee aside, &c.—If thou art ambitious to get a trophy or mark of thy valour, desist from me who am an old and experienced captain, and go to some young and raw soldier; try thy skill upon him, and take away his arms from him. Abner was very unwilling to kill Asahel, which he knew he was able to do, and therefore he endeavoured, by fair speeches and motives, to induce him to desist from his design of attacking him. How should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?—Who was a fierce man, and who, Abner knew, would study revenge.*

Ver. 23. *He fell down there and died—So Asahel's swiftness, which he presumed on so much, only forwarded his*

aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him

A. M. 2951.  
B. C. 1053.

<sup>q</sup>under the fifth *rib*, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, *that* as many as came to the place, where Asahel fell down and died, stood still.

q Ch. 2. 27.  
& 4. 6. &  
20. 10.

24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that *lieth* before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

25 ¶ And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill.

26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?

27 And Joab said, *As* God liveth,

fate: with it he ran upon his death, instead of running from it. *As many as came to the place—stood still—Ceased from the pursuit; fearing, perhaps, the same fate if they followed further; or staying out of respect to Asahel, that his body might not be exposed to any indignity.*

Ver. 26. *Bitterness in the latter end—It will produce dreadful effects. In civil wars, as Cicero speaks, (Familiar Epist. lib. iv.) all things are miserable, and nothing more miserable than victory itself, which makes the conqueror do many things against his will, to satisfy those by whom he conquers. Joab seems to have been very sensible of this, from his withdrawing his forces so readily from the pursuit. From following their brethren—By nation and religion; descended from one common ancestor of Israel, and worshipping one and the same God. How forcible is this argument, even if applied to all men, and how ought it to induce all kings and princes to avoid all wars as much as possible, forasmuch as all mankind are brethren, and made of one blood.*

Ver. 27. *Unless thou hadst spoken, &c.—Made the motion that they should fight, giving a rash challenge; surely in the morning the people had gone up—The armies had parted in peace, without any act of hostility: It was thou, not I, that gave the first occasion of this fight. This plainly shews that Joab's instructions were not to begin hostilities, and that Abner was the sole cause of the war. Had it not been for him, all things might have been settled by an amicable agree-*

A. M. 9951.  
B. C. 1033.  
Ver. 14  
Prov. 17.  
14.  
Heb.  
from the  
morning.  
Or, gone  
away.

unless <sup>r</sup> thou hadst spoken, surely then † in the morning the people had || gone up every one from following his brother.

28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

29 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.

30 ¶ And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel.

31 But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and threescore men died.

32 ¶ And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

ment that very morning. Some, however, understand Joab's words differently: they consider him as swearing solemnly, that inasmuch as Abner had given the challenge, and proposed fighting, if he had not also begun the parley for cessation, he and his men would have pursued him and Ish-bosheth's vanquished army the whole night.

Ver. 28, 29. *So Joab blew a trumpet*—Caused a retreat to be sounded. *Neither fought they any more*—Neither at that time, nor probably at any other, in a pitched battle. *And Abner and his men walked all that night*—He made the best of his way to Jordan; crossed it, and rested no where until he came to Mahanaim, that he might get out of the reach of David's forces.

Ver. 30. *There lacked of David's servants nineteen men*—This renders it probable that the twelve men of Judah, who in the beginning of the fight, engaged in combat with as many men of Benjamin, were not killed; for if they were, then there would have been no more than seven men killed in the subsequent battle; which is not likely.

Ver. 32. *They took up Asahel and buried him in the sepulchre of his father*—The rest they buried in the field of battle. Thus are distinctions made on earth, even between the dust of some and of others! But in the resurrection, no difference will be made, except between good and bad, which will remain for ever. *Joab and his men went all night*—

A. M. 9951.  
B. C. 1033.

CHAP. III.

David's success and sons, ver. 1—5. Abner's quarrel with Ish-bosheth, ver. 6—11. His treaty with David, 12—16. He undertakes to bring Israel over to David, ver. 17—21. Joab murders Abner, ver. 22—27. David's concern and mourning over him, ver. 28—39.

NOW there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

2 ¶ And <sup>a</sup> unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his first-born was Amnon, <sup>b</sup> of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess:

3 And his second, || Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai king <sup>c</sup> of Geshur;

4 And the fourth, <sup>d</sup> Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;

5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

a 1 Chron. 3. 1—4

b 1 Sam. 25. 44.

Or, Daniel, 1 Chron. 3. 1.

c 1 Sam. 27. 8. Ch. 12. 37. d 1 Kings 1. 6.

Having carried Asahel to Bethlehem and buried him there, they marched all the next night towards Hebron, Joab hastening home to give an account of his conduct to David.

CHAP. III. Ver. 1. *There was long war*—For five years longer: for it is probable Ish-bosheth was made king immediately upon Saul's death; and the other tribes did not submit to David before seven years were expired. *Between the house of Saul and the house of David*—Their enmity continuing throughout the whole reign of Ish-bosheth. It is probable, there were many skirmishes between Israel and Judah; but we do not read of any pitched battle.

Ver. 2, 3. *Unto David sons were born—of Ahinoam*—He had no children, it seems, by this wife during his exile; or if he had, they were daughters. *The daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur*—A part of Syria, northward from the land of Israel. How David came by this wife it is not easy to say. Perhaps he married her out of policy, that he might have a powerful friend and ally in her father, to assist him against Ish-bosheth's party in the north, whilst himself opposed them in the south. But if so, he paid dear for making piety give place to policy, as the history of Absalom, whom he had by her, shews.

Ver. 5. *By Eglah, David's wife*—This is added, either because she was of obscure parentage, and was known by no

A. M. 2951.  
B. C. 1053.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.

7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name was <sup>e</sup> Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou <sup>f</sup> gone in unto my father's concubine?

8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of *Ish-bosheth*, and said, *Am I* <sup>g</sup> a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy fa-

ther, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to-day with a fault concerning this woman?

9 <sup>h</sup> So do God to Abner, and more also, except, <sup>i</sup> as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;

10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, <sup>k</sup> from Dan even to Beer-sheba.

11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.

A. M. 2951.  
B. C. 1053.h Ruth 1.  
17.  
i Kings  
19. 2.  
11 Sam. 15.  
25. & 16.  
1. 12. &  
28. 17.  
1 Chron.  
19. 23.k Judg. 20.  
1. Ch. 17.  
11.  
1 Kings 4.  
25.

other title but her relation to David: or, because this was his first and most proper wife, best known by her other name of Michal, who, though she had no child by David after she scoffed at him for dancing before the ark, Chap. vi. 23; yet might have one before that time. And she might be named the last, because she was given away from David, and married to another man. Six sons in seven years. Some have had as numerous an offspring, and with much more honour and comfort, by one wife. And we know not that any of the six were famous: but three were very infamous.

Ver. 6. *Abner made himself strong, &c.*—He used his utmost endeavours to support Saul's house, going up and down through all the tribes of Israel to strengthen *Ish-bosheth's* interest, and confirm the people in their allegiance to him: which is mentioned to shew the reason of Abner's deep resentment of the following aspersion.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?*—It was then looked upon as a very great crime for any man, though never so great, to marry the relict of the king; for it was esteemed an affectation of the kingdom; as appears in the case of Adonijah.

Ver. 8. *Then was Abner very wroth*—He accounted his merits so great and was become so haughty, that he thought he might do any thing without reprehension. *And said, Am I a dog's head?*—So contemptible a person that thou thinkest it a disgrace to thy family for me to have intercourse with thy father's concubine. Whether Abner was guilty of the crime laid to his charge or not, does not appear; nor what ground *Ish-bosheth* had for the suspicion. But however it was, it would have been prudent in him to have connived at it for the present, considering how much it was his interest not to disoblige Abner. And if the thing was false, and his jealousy groundless, it was very disingenuous and ungrateful to entertain unjust surmises of one who had ventured his all for him, and was certainly the best friend he had in the world. *Who against Judah do shew kindness—unto the house of Saul*—Is this my recompence for the kindness I have shewn to thee and thy father's house, and the good services I have done you? He magnifies his service with this, that it was against Judah, the tribe on which the crown was settled, and which would certainly have it at last. So that in supporting

the house of Saul he acted both against his conscience and against his interest, for which he deserved a better requital than this. And yet, probably he would not have been so zealous for the house of Saul, if he had not thereby gratified his own ambition, and hoped to find his own account in it. *That thou chargest me—with a fault—concerning this woman?*—That is, either that thou accusest me falsely concerning this matter; or that thou canst not wink at so small a fault (for so he esteemed it) as conversation with this woman, who, whatsoever she formerly was, is now so impotent and inconsiderable, that she can neither serve nor disserve thy cause.

Ver. 9. *As the Lord hath sworn to David*—These words shew clearly that Abner knew very well God had resolved to bestow the kingdom of Israel upon David; and yet he had hitherto opposed it with all his might, from a principle of ambition! That is, he had all this while fought against his own knowledge and conscience, and against God himself! Now, however, (but, alas! it is out of resentment to *Ish-bosheth*, and from a principle of revenge), he complies with the divine will, and vows, with an oath, to do that to David which the Lord had sworn to him. Undoubtedly Abner talked most foolishly in this, as if God needed his help to bring to pass what he had sworn to David, or as if his opposition could prevent it!

Ver. 10. *To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul*—A wonderful change! which the study of revenge had wrought in him, that he who so lately had gone about the country confirming the Israelites in their opposition to David, now resolved to bring them all over to him! But here we see the hand of God. Providence made use of this unjust resentment of Abner to bring about its own designs with regard to David.

Ver. 11. *He could not answer Abner a word*—Being thunder-struck with so unexpected a declaration. If he had had the spirit of a man, especially of a prince, he might have answered him, that his merits were the aggravation of his crimes; that he would not be served by so ill a man, and that he doubted not but he should do well enough without him. But he was conscious to himself of his own weakness, and therefore said not a word, lest he should make a bad matter worse.

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1015.

12 ¶ And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying *also*, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.

13 ¶ And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, † That is, † Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring <sup>m</sup> Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.

† Heb. say-  
ing.  
1 Gen. 42. 2.m 1 Sam.  
15. 30.A. M. 2957.  
B. C. 1049.

14 And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me <sup>n</sup> for an hundred <sup>n</sup> foreskins of the Philistines.

15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from <sup>o</sup> Phaltiel the son of Laish.

16 And her husband went with her † along weeping behind her to <sup>p</sup> Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

17 ¶ And Abner had communica-

n 1 Sam. 19.  
26, 27.o 1 Sam. 25.  
44, Phaltiel.† Heb.  
going and  
weeping.  
p Ch. 19. 16.

Ver. 12. *And Abner sent messengers to David*—Having thus incensed his master, he judged it not safe to delay the execution of what he had threatened. Yet he thought it neither safe nor prudent to go himself to David, till he had tried his inclinations by messengers, whom he sent privately to treat with him about a reconciliation. Thus God overrules the passions of wicked men, and turns and directs their devices and counsels to accomplish his own wise and holy purposes! And who then dare contend with that God, who makes even his enemies to do his work, and destroy themselves? *Saying, Whose is this land?*—To whom does it belong but to thee? is it not thine by divine right? A question this which required no answer. But Abner plainly meant to insinuate by it that he had power to give the land of Israel to him whose side he should take.

Ver. 13. *And he said, Well, I will make a league with thee*—David agreed to enter into a treaty with him, but upon condition that he procured the restitution of Michal his wife. Hereby David both shewed the sincerity of his conjugal affection to his first and most rightful wife, from whom neither her nor his marrying another had alienated it; and also testified his respect to the house of Saul. "David did right in making this stipulation; for, whatever may be said of his other wives, he had certainly a claim to this, as she was his first wife, and a king's daughter. And there was something of true generosity in this, both to her and to Saul, in that he received her after she had been another man's, remembering how once she loved him, and knowing, probably, that she was, without her consent, separated from him; and to shew that he did not carry his resentment of Saul's cruel and unjust persecutions of him to any of his family; whereas many princes, for much less provocation of a wife's father, would have turned off their consorts, in revenge of them, and even put them to death for having been married to another."—Chandler.

Ver. 14. *David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth*—We are not informed what answer Abner gave to David when he required the forementioned condition of him. But it is probable he let him know, as the truth was, that it was not in his power to bring Michal to him without Ish-bosheth's consent, whose sister, as well as subject, she was; at least that it was not safe to attempt it, and therefore advised him to send to her brother, who could not easily deny what he desired. Be this as it may, David sent to Ish-bosheth, and

thereby opened to him a door of hope for reconciliation, lest being desperate, he should use every possible means to hinder Abner from his present design. *Saying, Deliver me my wife*—Who, though she was taken from me by force, and constrained to marry another, yet is my rightful wife. David demands her, both for the affection he still retained for her, and upon a political consideration, that she might strengthen his title to the kingdom.

Ver. 15, 16. *Ish-bosheth sent and took her from—Phaltiel*—This was an honourable action of Ish-bosheth to restore David his lawful wife. *Her husband went with her along weeping*—"Mr. Bayle," says Delaney, "considers it as great cruelty in David to ravish her from a husband who loved her so well; that is, he thinks it a great cruelty to disturb Phaltiel in an adultery that was agreeable to him, and to redeem Michal from one, in all appearance, detestable to her, to restore her to her only husband, the husband of her affection and her choice; for whom she had so much tenderness as to save his life at the hazard of her own. Phaltiel was in distress, but it was such a distress as they all endure who are grieved to restore what they have no right to possess; and Mr. Bayle, from the same principles upon which he quarrels with David on this head, is obliged to be highly offended with every honest man who desires to have those goods restored to him of which he once was robbed, under all the circumstances of cruelty and iniquity. And therefore, in truth, Phaltiel is no proper object of pity; and yet his distress, upon this occasion, is one of the finest pictures of silent grief that any history hath left us. Conscious he had no right to complain, or molest Michal with his lamentations, he follows her at a distance, with a distress silent and self-confined: *going* (saith the text) *and weeping behind her*. However such fine paintings of nature pass unregarded in the sacred writings, I am satisfied that in Homer we should survey this with delight." Abarbinel and the Jewish rabbis in general are of opinion that Phaltiel was a strictly religious man, and had had no nuptial commerce with Michal.

Ver. 17. *And Abner*—Having seen David, and given him assurance of his fidelity as David had him of his friendship; *Had communication with the elders of Israel*—He went back to persuade all to do as he had done. And by bringing over the great men to David, he doubted not the multitude would follow, *Saying, Ye sought for David in times past*—For, after the slaughter of Goliath, he was much beloved by all

A. M. 9950.  
B. C. 1048.1 Heb. 5<sup>th</sup>  
yesterday  
and the  
third day.  
q Ver. 9.

tion with the elders of Israel, saying,  
Ye sought for David † in times past  
to be king over you :

18 Now then do it: <sup>a</sup>for the LORD  
hath spoken of David, saying, By  
the hand of my servant David I will  
save my people Israel out of the hand  
of the Philistines, and out of the hand  
of all their enemies.

p 1 Chron.  
12. 29.

19 And Abner also spake in the  
ears of <sup>r</sup> Benjamin : and Abner went  
also to speak in the ears of David in  
Hebron all that seemed good to Is-  
rael, and that seemed good to the  
whole house of Benjamin.

20 So Abner came to David to  
Hebron, and twenty men with him.  
And David made Abner and the men  
that *were* with him a feast.

s Ver. 16,  
12.

21 And Abner said unto David,  
I will arise and go, and <sup>r</sup> will ga-  
ther all Israel unto my lord the king,  
that they may make a league with  
thee, and that thou mayest <sup>r</sup> reign  
over all that thine heart desireth.

s 1 Kings  
11. 27.

the people. And when he was forced to flee, a great many of Israel came over to him while he dwelt at Ziklag. And it is highly probable that, as soon as Saul and Jonathan were dead, they all generally would have inclined to make David their king; if Abner, by his great authority, had not set up one of the family of Saul.

Ver. 18. *The Lord hath spoken—By the hand of my servant David, &c.*—We no where find these words recorded; but it is probable Samuel had often spoken them: at least the sense of them is implied in the words of God to Samuel, when he commanded him to anoint David king over Israel, 1 Sam. x. 1—12; for the intention of giving them a king was, that he might fight their battles, 1 Sam. viii. 29.

Ver. 19, 20. *Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin*—To these he particularly applies himself, because they might be thought most kind to Saul and his house, and most loath to let the kingdom go out of their own tribe; and therefore it was necessary that he should use all his art and power with them, to persuade them to a compliance with his design; and besides, they were a valiant tribe, and bordering upon Judah, and situate between them and the other tribes; and therefore the winning of them would be of mighty concernment to bring in all the rest. *Abner also went to speak in the ears of David*—To report to him privately the sense of all the people, and particularly how all Benjamin stood affected towards him: who were brought over so effectually that they did not forsake the house of David when all the rest of the tribes did. *David made Abner a feast*—Not

And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

A. M. 9956.  
B. C. 1042.

22 And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from *pursuing* a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner *was* not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

23 When Joab and all the host that *was* with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.

24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it *that* thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?

25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know <sup>u</sup> thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

u 1 Sam.  
29. 6. Isa.  
37. 26.

26 And when Joab was come out

merely as a token of kindness, but to make a league with him, as he had desired, and David had promised, Ver. 12, 13. For it was an ancient custom to enter into leagues by eating and drinking together; see Gen. xxvi. 30, and xxxi. 44.

Ver. 21, 22. *Abner said—I will gather all Israel unto my lord the king*—How empty and ill founded are the purposes of vain man! Abner, who here promises kingdoms, soon found that he could not ensure to himself one hour of life. David had sent him away, and he departed in peace; but, *Behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop*—In those times of distraction between Judah and Israel, we may well think their neighbours, who were enemies to both, viz. the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, and others, made many inroads upon the country to get spoil. Joab, however, and the valiant men about David, watched to prevent this, and at this time had overtaken a company of them, in their return home, and recovered a great booty from them.

Ver. 24, 25. *Then Joab came to the king and said, What hast thou done?*—Upon hearing what had passed, he immediately went to David, in the pride of his success, and of the great spoil he had taken, to expostulate with him upon the folly of receiving Abner in the manner he had done, and placing any confidence in a man who, he signified, had come thither only to betray him. This presumption and insolence, David was constrained to endure, because of Joab's great power with the army and military men.

Ver. 26, 27. *When Joab was come out from David*—He

A.M. 2956.  
B.C. 1049.

from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew *it* not.

27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab <sup>w</sup> took him aside in the gate to speak with him || quietly, and smote him there <sup>x</sup> under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.

1 Kings 2.  
5. Ch. 30.  
9. 10.  
1 Or. peace-  
ably.  
2 Ch. 4. 6.

4 Ch. 3. 28.

28 ¶ And afterward when David heard *it*, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for

seems to have gone out in anger; not staying for an answer. *He sent messengers after Abner*—Probably in the king's name, as if he had something further to communicate to him. For otherwise it is not credible that Abner would have returned. *Joab took him aside in the gate*—Where, it appears, he had waited for him, and, as it was a public place, where men met to do business, and where the courts of judgment sat, Abner suspected no danger, especially since Joab took him by the hand in a friendly manner, as if he wished to have some discourse with him. *And smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died*—Thus fell Abner by an unexpected and surprising treachery! and in the very article of returning to his duty, and in the eve of a great revolution, seemingly depending on his fate! And thus his thoughts, purposes, and boasts of gathering all Israel to David, and translating the kingdom to him, perished in a moment! In this, however treacherously and wickedly Joab acted, the Lord, in permitting it, was righteous. Abner had deliberately and maliciously opposed David, and in opposing him had acted against the dictates of his own conscience, and of his known duty to God, and that for a series of years: he had sported with the lives of his brethren, and spilled the first blood shed in this civil war; and, it may be, all the blood that was shed; at least we hear of none after the battle of Gibeon. He had now basely deserted Ish-bosheth, and betrayed him, under pretence of regard to God and Israel, but, in reality, from a principle of pride and revenge, and impatience of control. God, therefore, would not use so ill a man in so good a work as the uniting of Israel to Judah, and thereby preventing the progress of war and slaughter. And he hereby shewed that he did not need his help, but could, with infinite ease, accomplish his purposes without him, thus pouring contempt on the pride of man. The following reflection of Dr. Delaney here appears both just and important. "It is true Abner was now returned to his duty; but it is true, that he returned to it now, as he departed from it before, upon a pique; and from motives of ambition, interest, and revenge. He well knew the purposes and declarations of God in relation to David, and yet he deliberately opposed himself to them. And it is but, just in the appointments of Providence (and nothing is more conspicuous in his government of the world) not to permit the wicked to effect that good from wrong motives which they once obstructed upon the same principles. The occasions of duty once notoriously neglected,

ever from the † blood of Abner the son of Ner:

A.M. 2956.  
B.C. 1049.

† Heb.  
blonde.  
1 Kings 2.  
27, 28.

29 <sup>a</sup> Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not † fail from the house of Joab one <sup>b</sup> that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.

† Heb. be cut off.  
1 Kings 2.  
Lev. 15.  
2.

30 So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother <sup>c</sup> Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

1 Ch. 3. 29.

seldom return, at least, to equal advantage. Let no man decline the good that is in his power; if he once does so, he is no more worthy to be the happy instrument of effecting it in the hand of God. To conclude; a great revolution apparently depended upon Abner's fate, but it did so only in the eye of human providence, as was plainly manifested from the event."

*For the blood of Asahel his brother*—This was one reason of his committing this murder; but, doubtless, envy and jealousy of Abner's great merit with David, in gaining over the tribes to him, were the main motives that impelled him to it. In the mean time his pretence was fidelity to his sovereign, and excess of care for his safety. "What," says Josephus, reflecting on this crime, "will not men dare to do, who are covetous, ambitious, and will be inferior to none, for to obtain what they desire! They will commit a thousand crimes, and rather than lose what they have got, they will not fear to commit still greater wickedness."

*Ver. 28, 29. When David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless*—Josephus says, he lifted up his hands to God, and with a loud voice, cried out publicly, that God knew he was innocent in this matter; and therefore he trusted God would not let him and his kingdom suffer for it. *And on all his father's house*—David's indignation at the fact transported him much too far in making him wish that all Joab's family might suffer for it, which was contrary to the law of God. See Deut. xxiv. 16. "Methinks," says Henry, "a resolute punishment of the murderer himself would better have become David than this passionate imprecation of God's judgments upon his posterity." But, perhaps, the words are to be considered as a prediction rather than as an imprecation. Accordingly, Houbigant renders them, *but it shall or will rest upon the head of Joab, and on all his father's house, and there will not fail, &c.*

*Ver. 30. So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner*—For though Joab only committed the murder, yet Abishai was chargeable with the guilt of it, because it was done with his consent, counsel, and approbation. And he probably was near at hand when the bloody deed was perpetrated, ready to assist Joab, if there should be need. *Because he had slain their brother Asahel in battle*—Which he did for his own necessary defence; and therefore it was no justification of this treacherous murder.

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1048.al Job. 7. 6.  
Ch. 1. 2,  
11.  
e Gen. 37.  
34.

† Heb. bed.

31 ¶ And David said to Joab, and to all the people that *were* with him, <sup>d</sup>Rend your clothes, and <sup>e</sup>gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David *himself* followed the † bier.

32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth?

34 Thy hands *were* not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before † wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him.

† Heb. children of iniquity.

Ver. 31. *David said to Joab and all the people, &c.*—The command was especially given to Joab, to bring him to repentance for his sin, and to expose him to public shame. *Rend your clothes and gird you with sackcloth, &c.*—These were all outward expressions of very great sorrow; which Joab himself was forced, however reluctant, to make a shew of. *And king David himself followed the bier*—Was the chief mourner, attending upon the corpse, and paying Abner that respect which was due to his quality. Though this was contrary to the usage of kings, and might seem below David's dignity; yet it was now expedient to vindicate himself from all suspicion of concurrence in this action. The word *המטה* *hammittah*, here rendered *the bier*, properly means *the bed*. It was that on which persons of quality were wont to be carried forth to their graves, as ordinary people were upon what we call a *bier*.

Ver. 33, 34. *Died Abner as a fool dieth?*—That is, as a wicked man. Was he cut off by the hand of justice for his crimes? Nothing less; but by Joab's malice and treachery. It is a sad thing to *die as a fool dieth*, as they do that any way shorten their own days: and indeed all they that make no provision for another world. *Were not bound*—Thou didst not tamely yield up thyself to Joab, to be bound hand and foot at his pleasure. Joab did not overcome thee in an equal combat, nor durst he attempt thee in that way, as a general or soldier of any worth would have done. *Wicked men*—By the hands of froward, or perverse, or crooked men, by hypocrisy and perfidiousness, whereby the vilest coward may kill the most valiant person. It is justly observed by Dr. Delaney, that this short lamentation of David over Abner is truly poetical, and evidently appears so in the most literal translation. He renders it as follows:

As dies the criminal, shall Abner die?  
—Thy hands not bound,  
Nor to the fetters were thy feet applied.  
—As is their fate that fall  
Before the faces of the sons of guilt,  
So art thou fallen.

35 And when all the people came <sup>g</sup>to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, <sup>h</sup>So do God to me, and more also, <sup>i</sup>if I taste bread, or ought else, <sup>j</sup>till the sun be down.

36 And all the people took notice of it, and it † pleased them: as whatsoever the king did, pleased all the people.

37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1048.g Ch. 12. 17.  
Jer. 16. 7.

h Ruth 1.

17.

i Ch. 1. 18.

† Heb. was good in their eyes.

For he was killed as a traitor; but had he been really so, he should have died in chains and fetters after a fair trial. *And all the people wept again over him*—At the recital of these words by the king, which were so mournfully spoken, the grief became universal, and the whole people wept anew.

Ver. 35. *All the people came to cause David to eat*—This was agreeable to the usage of the Jews; for, when any one died among them, "it was customary with the friends of the family to resort to the house immediately after the funeral, and bring the best provisions they had along with them, to support and refresh their friends in affliction, to the utmost of their power. And surely a more humane and benevolent usage never obtained in any country. The presumption was, that people in affliction forgot, or, it may be, neglected, their proper refreshment, at a time when they most needed it; and therefore it was the business of friendship, and one of its kindest offices, to supply that care." *David sware, saying, God, do so to me, &c.*—He absolutely refused to touch a morsel; and confirmed the refusal by an oath, that he would taste nothing *till the sun went down*. "He was resolved to clear his innocence by all the tests of real sorrow; and to satisfy the people, that this was a just occasion of grief, he put them in mind of his dignity to whom he paid it." See Ver. 38, Delaney.

Ver. 36, 37. *All the people took notice of it, and it pleased them*—They were satisfied concerning David's integrity, and the sincerity of his sorrow at the death of Abner, and pleased with the honour he had done that great man. *Whatsoever the king did, pleased the people*—By this conduct he so ingratiated himself with them that they were disposed to put a kind construction upon all his actions, as wise and well becoming him. *For all Israel understood—that it was not of the king to slay Abner*—That he neither ordered it, nor consented to it, nor in any way approved of it; but was heartily grieved for his death.

Ver. 38. *The king said unto his servants*—Who perhaps were not sensible enough of this loss, or thought he bewailed it too much. *Know ye not that there is a prince, &c.*—



A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1045.† Heb.  
tender.

‡ Ch. 19. 7.

1 See Ch.  
19. 13.1 Kings 2.  
5. 6. 33.21. Ps. 99.  
4. A 62.12. 2 Tim.  
6. 14.

39 And I *am* this day † weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah <sup>‡</sup> be too hard for me: <sup>1</sup> the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

## CHAP. IV.

*Two of his servants murder Ish-bosheth, and bring his head to David, ver. 1—8. He puts them to death, ver. 9—12.*

AND when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were <sup>b</sup>troubled.

2 ¶ And Saul's son had two men that were captains of bands: the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the † other Rechab,

a Ezra 4. 9.  
Isa. 13. 7.b Matt. 2.  
8.† Heb.  
second.

*fallen this day in Israel?*—He bids them consider Abner's birth, and his power, his authority, and his valour, with all his other excellent qualities, and they would not think it strange, that he mourned so much for him.

Ver. 39. *And I am this day weak*—Heb. **רַך**, rack, tender; that is, his kingdom was young, was in its infancy, as we speak, and not well settled and confirmed. The metaphor is taken from a young and tender plant. *And these men*—Joab and Abishai, the sons of my sister Zeruiah, be too hard for me—That is, too powerful. They have so great an interest in, and command over all the soldiers, and are in such great favour with the people, that I cannot punish them without apparent hazard to my person and kingdom; especially now when all the tribes, except Judah, are in a state of opposition against me. But although this might give some colour to the delay of their punishment, yet it was a fault that he did not punish them in some reasonable time, both because this indulgence proceeded from a distrust of God's power and faithfulness; as if God could not make good his promise to him against Joab and all his confederates; and because it was contrary to God's law, which severely requires the punishment of wilful murderers, with which law David had no power to dispense. It was therefore carnal, wicked policy, yea cruel pity, in him to spare them. He ought to have done his duty, and trusted God with the issue. If the law had had its course against Joab, it is probable the murder of Ish-bosheth, Ammon, and others, had been prevented. But in this instance, David, though anointed king, is kept in awe by his own subjects, and bears the sword in vain, contenting himself, as a private person, to leave the murderers to the judgment of God, saying, *The Lord shall reward the evil doer according to his wickedness*—In the mean time, however, it must be acknowledged, he detested their actions, and was not so over-awed by them but he had courage to shew it.

CHAP. IV. Ver. 1. *His hands were feeble*—He was

the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin: <sup>c</sup> Josh. 18. 26.

3 And the Beerothites fled to <sup>d</sup> Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day. <sup>d</sup> Neh. 11. 25.

4 And <sup>e</sup> Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan <sup>f</sup> out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. And his name was <sup>g</sup> Mephibosheth. <sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. 99. 1, 11.

5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of <sup>h</sup> Or, Meribbaal, 1 Chron. 8. 34. & 9. 40.

greatly dismayed, as well he might; for he was in effect disarmed; he had lost both his sword and his shield in Abner. *And all the Israelites were troubled*—That is, all those who were united to the interest of Ish-bosheth, and probably many others also; for they had lost their great and powerful agent with David; the man in whom both he and they confided; the man who, from his authority and credit, both with the army and the people, was best able to conduct and confirm the league, then agreed to on both sides. They feared that, through his death, this treaty would be broke off, or that it would not be managed with so much prudence as Abner would have used; that the fall of this great man would produce some important change, and they were apprehensive it might be of a disastrous kind.

Ver. 2. *Captains of bands*—Whether of regular forces, or some sly parties, whose business was spoil and prey, is not certain. Perhaps they were captains of two companies of guards about the king.

Ver. 3. *The Beerothites fled to Gittaim*—When Saul was slain, several Israelites left their cities and fled, and the Philistines took possession of them. Among these, it seems, this city was forsaken of its inhabitants. *And were sojourners there until this day*—When this book was written they were not returned to their own country, being commodiously settled at Gittaim.

Ver. 4. *Jonathan—had a son*—This history is inserted as that which encouraged these men to this wicked murder, because Saul's family was now reduced to a low ebb; and if Ish-bosheth were despatched, there would be none left, but a lame child, who was altogether unfit to manage the kingdom, and therefore the crown must necessarily come to David by their act and deed; for which they promised themselves no small recompense. *When the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan*—That is, the tidings of their death, mentioned 1 Sam. xxxi. *Out of Jezreel*—The place of that last and fatal fight.

Ver. 5, 6. *Who lay on a bed at noon*—As the manner

A. M. 2926.  
B. C. 1048. the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who lay on a bed at noon.

6 Ch. 2. 23. 6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, *as though* they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him <sup>5</sup> under the fifth *rib*: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bed-chamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.

b 1 Sam. 19. 3, 10, 11, & 23. 1b. & 25. 29. 8 And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, <sup>b</sup> which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

was, and still continues to be, in hot countries. *As though they would have fetched wheat*—Which was laid up in public granaries in the king's house, and was fetched thence by the captains and commanders of the army for the pay of their soldiers, who, in those ancient times, were not paid in money, but in corn. Upon this pretence they were admitted into the house, and so went from room to room, to the place where the king lay.

Ver. 7, 8. *They smote him and slew him, &c.*—The privacy of the place gave them opportunity to do all this, without discovery. *And gat them away through the plain*—From Mahanaim to Hebron—It being for the most part a flat country, till they came to ascend the mountain, on the side of which Hebron stood. *Hath avenged the king of Saul and of his seed*—For they were all now extinguished except his grandson Mephibosheth, who was of no account because of his lameness.

Ver. 9. *David answered Rechab and Baanah, &c.*—Together with his thankful acknowledgment of God's care of him in all his straits and adversities, he suggests to them that he needed not the help of such men as they were, nor of the commission of wicked acts for his future preservation and advancement. "It was from God only that he sought for deliverance from his troubles and enemies; and he that doth so, needeth not the aid of treachery. Even they that need it, are often observed to punish it; they that need it not, always will. And surely vindictive justice is then seen in its greatest glory, when it is exerted in the chastisement of guilt committed against an enemy; for then no mist either of partiality or prejudice can misguide or obscure it."—Delaney.

Ver. 11. *How much more, &c.*—If he put the Amalekite to death for barely saying that he slew Saul, even at Saul's

A. M. 2926-  
B. C. 1048. 9 ¶ And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, *As the LORD liveth*, <sup>i</sup> who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,

1 Gen. 48. 16.  
1 Kings 1. 29. P. 31. 7. 10 When <sup>k</sup> one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, <sup>†</sup> thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, <sup>‡</sup> who *thought* that I would have given him a reward for his tidings:

1 Gen. 9. 4. 6. 11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now <sup>1</sup> require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?

Ch. 1. 16. 12 And David <sup>m</sup> commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged *them* up over the pool in

own command, and when his life was despaired of, how much more would he take signal vengeance on their united and aggravated treachery and murder? *When wicked men have slain a righteous person*—For such Ish-bosheth was in respect of them. Saul might have some guilt in the Amalekite's eye from his former destruction of the Amalekites; but Ish-bosheth could have none with regard to these his murderers, to whom he had done no wrong, but had preferred them to places of trust and honour. In respect of David, however, Ish-bosheth was not righteous, because he opposed him whom he knew God had appointed to the throne. *In his own house, upon his bed*—This aggravated their crime, and made it very different from that of the Amalekite who slew Saul. *Shall I not, therefore, require his blood at your hands?*—As persons unworthy to live. There is no one villainy which the human mind so naturally, so instinctively abhors as treachery; because it is, perhaps, the only villainy, from which no man living is secure; and for this reason every man must take pleasure in the punishing it. This conduct of David towards these murderers of Ish-bosheth is well worth our attention; it is a proof of his integrity and piety, and of his detestation of treachery and cruelty. And we may learn from hence, that we ought not only to do no hurt to our enemies, but that we ought not even to rejoice at the hurt which may happen to them without our contributing any thing to it, nor to countenance injustice and vice in any degree, how great advantage soever we may reap from them.

Ver. 12. *David commanded—and they slew them*—But what a disappointment to Baanah and Rechab, was the sentence which David passed upon them! And such they will meet with, who think to serve the Son of David, by cruelty

**Hebron.** But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

CHAP. V.

*David is anointed king by all the tribes, ver. 1-5. Takes the strong hold of Zion, ver. 6-10. David builds him an house; his kingdom is established, ver. 11, 12. Has more children, ver. 13-16. Conquers the Philistines, ver. 17-25.*

1018.  
a 1 Chron. 11. 1. & 12. 23.  
b Gen. 29. 14.

**THEN** came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

2 Also in time past, when Saul was

king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

A.M. 2956.  
B.C. 1048.  
c 1 Sam. 15. 13.  
d 1 Sam. 16. 1, 12. Ps. 78. 71.  
Ch. 7. 7.

3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel.

e 1 Chron. 11. 2.  
f Kings 11. 17.  
g Judg. 11. 11.  
1 Sam. 23. 15.

4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

h 1 Chron. 26. 31. & 29. 27.

5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months:

i Ch. 2. 11.  
1 Chron. 3. 4.

or injustice: who, under colour of religion, outrage, or murder of their brethren, think they do God service. However men may now canonize such methods of serving the church and the catholic cause, Christ will let them know another day, that Christianity was not designed to destroy humanity. And they who thus think to merit heaven, shall not escape the damnation of hell.

CHAP. V. Ver. 1. Then came all the tribes—to David—That is, elders, deputed as ambassadors from every tribe, sent by a common agreement among them. Saying, Behold, we are bone of thy bone, &c.—Abner and Ish-bosheth being dead, whose authority had swayed the Israelites against their duty, they now acknowledged David's divine right to the crown; they remembered that he had every qualification requisite for a rightful king of Israel, according to God's own limitations, Deut. Chap. xvii.; that he was one of their brethren, and that he was chosen of God. They called to mind his valour, and various merits towards Israel, the many deliverances which he had wrought out for them, and God's express declaration in his favour, that he would make him the shepherd and captain of his favourite people. And when they had thus considered his undoubted title and merits, and their own duty, they immediately came together to crown him.

Ver. 2. The Lord said, Thou shalt feed my people Israel—The learned Bishop Patrick very justly observes here, that this is the first time we meet with any ruler, or governor of a people characterized under the idea of a shepherd; and it cannot but be thought remarkable that the first man so characterized was at first in fact a shepherd; and when we find him, after his advancement to the throne, still characterized by God himself under the same idea, what can be a clearer inference than that God's raising him to be a king was but exalting him to a nobler office of the same nature with his first? How fine a document is this to princes, that they are not, in the intention of Providence, the tyrants, but the guardians of their people! that their business is the preservation and well-being of the flock, from the duty they owe to the great Lord and owner thereof! And how fully is this document confirmed to us, when we find bad princes set forth,

in the prophetic style, under the characters of roaring lions, hungry bears, and devouring wolves. It was a truly noble and princely maxim of Cyrus, that "every man that aspired to the government of others, should take care to be a better man than those he ruled."—Delaney.

Ver. 3. King David made a league with them—It is not said what the contents of this league or covenant were. The Jews think it was an act of oblivion and indemnity for all injuries done on either side, whether of Judah against the other tribes, or of all the other tribes against Judah. But in that case the league would rather have been between the tribes than with the king. It is therefore probable that it included a great deal more, and that David obliged himself to rule them according to God's laws, and that the people promised obedience to him agreeably to the same; and that both the king and the people ratified their engagements by solemn sacrifices, and appeals to God for the sincere performance of them. All this being done as in the presence of him who fills heaven and earth, and to whose all-seeing eye the hearts and ways of mankind are without a covering, is properly said to have been before the Lord, although it was not before the ark, that symbol of the divine presence, for that certainly was not now at Hebron. They anointed David king over Israel—That is, they desired the high priest to anoint him, whose office it was; and thereby expressed their consent that he should reign over them. David was anointed, in all, three times; first by Samuel in his father's house, 1 Sam. xvi. 13; then when the tribe of Judah owned him for their king, Chap. ii. 4; and now when all Israel did the same.

Ver. 4, 5. David was thirty years old when he began to reign—At this age the Levites were at first appointed to begin their ministrations, Numb. iv. 3. About this age the Son of David entered upon his public ministry, Luke iii. 23. And it is the age when men come to their full maturity of strength and judgment. In Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years—By this it appears it was immediately after his third unction that he made the attempt upon Jerusalem, mentioned in the next verse, otherwise he could not have reigned there so long.

A. M. 2956  
B. C. 1044

and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

2 Judg. 1.  
21.

1 Josh. 15.  
63. Judg.  
1. 9. & 19.  
11, 12.

6 ¶ And the king and his men went <sup>k</sup>to Jerusalem unto <sup>l</sup>the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: ¶ thinking, David cannot come in hither.

Or, saying David shall not, &c.



Ver. 6. *The king and his men went to Jerusalem*—His first warlike enterprise, after he was made king of all Israel, was against that part of Jerusalem which was still in the hands of the Jebusites, viz. the strong fort of Zion, which they held, although the Israelites dwelt in the other parts of the city. *Which spake unto David*—When he came with his army to attack the fortress. *Saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come hither.* In this translation the order in which the words stand in the Hebrew is not observed, nor are they exactly rendered. They are literally, *The king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusite, inhabiting the land, and he (the Jebusite) spake to David, saying, Thou shalt not come hither, except thou remove the blind and the lame*—Or rather, as, *כי לא תסיר, chi im esihreka*, may be properly rendered, *For the blind and lame shall keep thee off*, which is the sense given to the words in the English Bible of Coverdale, printed in 1535, where they are translated, *Thou shalt not come hither, but the blind and the lame shall drive thee away.* The Seventy render the passage, *Ουκ εισελιυσθαι ωδε, δι αυτισμων οι τυφλοι, &c. Thou shalt not come hither, for the blind and the lame resist, or have resisted, thee, saying, that David shall not come hither.* They confided in the strength of their fortifications, which they thought so impregnable that the blind and the lame were sufficient to defend them against the most powerful assailant. And probably they appointed a number of blind and lame people, invalids, or maimed soldiers, to make their appearance on the wall, in contempt of David and his men. There is another interpretation of these words which Dr. Delaney and many others prefer, viz. that they imagined their fortress to be impregnable and secure under the protection of their gods, whom the Israelites were wont to despise, and to call them gods *who had eyes, but saw not; feet, but walked not.* As if they had said, *Our gods, whom you call blind and lame, shall defend us, and you must overcome them before you overcome us.* “These blind and lame,” says a learned writer, “were the idols of the Jebusites, which, to irritate David, they set upon their walls, as their patrons and defenders. And they as good as said, Thou dost not fight with us, but with our gods, who will easily repel thee.”

Ver. 8. *David said on that day*—When the assault was made. *Whosoever getteth up into the gutter*—That is, whosoever scaleth the fort, or getteth up to the top of it, where the gutter was: Or, as some understand it, *cuts off their pipes of water, or their cisterns into which the water fell.* Dr. Kennicott observes that “the Hebrew *זנור, zenur*,

A. M. 2956  
B. C. 1049

7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion; <sup>m</sup>the same is the city of David.

m Ver. 9.  
1 Kings  
2. 10. &  
8. 1.

8 And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are hated of David's soul*, <sup>n</sup>*he shall be chief and captain.* ¶ Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

n 1 Chron.  
11. 6-9.  
Or, Because they had said, even the blind and the lame. He shall not come into the house.



*gutter*, occurs but once more in the Bible, and does not seem commonly understood in this place. The English version calls it, *the gutter*; the Vulgate, *fistulas, pipes*; Vatablus, *canales*; Junius and Tremellius, *emissarium, a common sewer*; Poole, *tubus aquæ, a pipe for water*; and Bochart, *alceus, a bed, or channel of a river.* Most interpreters agree in making the word signify something hollow, and in applying it to water.” It may mean, he thinks, “a subterraneous passage, or great hollow, through which men could pass and repass for water. That this *Zenur*, in the text, was such an under ground passage, might be strongly presumed from the text itself; but it is proved to have been so by Josephus. For, speaking of this very transaction, he says, ‘The citadel being as yet in the possession of the enemy, the king promised that he would make any one general of all his forces, who should ascend into the citadel, *διὰ υποκειμένων φαραγγων, through the subterraneous cavities.*’ Here then we have *subterraneous cavities* most remarkably answering to *Zenur*, and putting this interpretation upon a very solid footing.”—Kenn. Dissert. vol. i. p. 42. *And the lame and the blind that are hated of David's soul*—This, some think, plainly shews, that by *the lame and the blind*, must be meant the idols of the Jebusites; because David certainly abhorred idolatry, but could never detest men for mere unblamable infirmities. But two things may be said in answer to this: 1, That *the lame and the blind* Jebusites, had probably themselves insulted David, and blasphemed God, and David might *hate* them in the same sense in which he often speaks of hating the wicked in his Psalms; that is, he might hate their ways, their dispositions, and actions. But, 2, The original words may, and certainly should be rendered, as they are by the Seventy, *who hate David's soul.* *He shall be chief and captain*—These words are not in the Hebrew here, but are fitly supplied from 1 Chron. xi. 6, where they are expressed. *Wherefore they said*—That is, it became a proverb, or common saying, used by David and others, *The blind and the lame shall not come into the house, or into this house*—That is, into the fort of Zion. The blind and lame Jebusites were set to keep that fort, and to keep others from coming into it; but now they themselves are shut out of it, and none of them was to be admitted to come into it again; which David might resolve to ordain, to keep up the memory of this great exploit, and of the insolent carriage of the Jebusites, and their unhappy success. Or, *the blind and the lame shall not come into my house*, viz. into the king's palace; which, though a general rule and decree of David, yet might be dispensed with in some special cases;

A. M. 2916.  
B. C. 1015.

Ver. 7.

9 So David dwelt in the fort, and called it ° the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

† Heb. went going and growing. cir. 1013.

10 And David † went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him.

‡ 1 Kings 5. 2. 1 Chron. 14. 1.

11 ¶ And <sup>p</sup> Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and † masons; and they built David an house.

† Heb. heavers of the stone of the wall.

12 And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

¶ Deut. 17. 17. 1 Chron. 3. 9. & 14. 3.

13 ¶ And <sup>q</sup> David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron:

as in that of Mephibosheth. But it is not necessary to understand this as a proverb; for the words may be rendered, as they are in the margin of our Bibles, *Because they had said, even the blind and the lame, he (i. e. David) shall not come into the house; or, because they (the Jebusites) had said, The blind and the lame shall hinder him.* They who understand, by *the blind and the lame*, the idols of the Jebusites, consider this clause as meaning, that from this time it became a proverb, *Let not the blind and lame come into the house; that is, Do not trust in idols, who have eyes and see not, &c.; and who are not able to do more for you than the lame and the blind.*

Ver. 9, 10. *From Millo*—Which seems to have been the town-hall, or state-house, near the wall of the city of Zion; or, as some think, a tower or armoury. *The Lord God of hosts was with him*—This was the cause of his great prosperity, that God, who commands all the armies of heaven and earth, directed and blessed him in all his enterprises.

Ver. 11. *Hiram sent messengers to David, &c.*—Hearing that he intended to settle in the fort he had taken; Hiram sent him both materials and artificers to build him a palace. For the Jews, being given to feeding cattle and husbandry, were not very skilful in mechanic arts. The accounts left us of this king of Tyre are short; but it appears from them that he was a magnificent and a generous prince, and a believer in the true God. See the form of his congratulation to Solomon upon his accession to the throne, 1 Kings v. 7. And this character well fitted him to enter into, and to cultivate an alliance with David, as he did with uncommon friendship and affection as long as David lived, and continued it to his son for his sake.—Delaney.

Ver. 12. *For his people Israel's sake*—Well would it be for mankind if all kings had the same view of the design of their exaltation to the sovereignty; if they considered themselves as being raised to their high station for the good of their people; that this is the great end of their appointment; the

and there were yet sons and daughters born to David.

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1045.

14 And <sup>r</sup> these *be* the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; || Sammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,

1 Chron. 3. 5. & 14. 4.

15 Ibhar also, and || Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

Or, Shamma, 1 Chron. 3. 5.

16 And Elishama, and || Eliada, and Eliphalet.

Or, Elishama, 1 Chron. 3. 6.

17 ¶ <sup>s</sup> But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, <sup>t</sup> and went down to the hold.

Or, Beethada, 1 Chron. 14. 7. 1047. 1 Chron. 11. 16. & 14. 8.

18 The Philistines also came and spread themselves in <sup>u</sup> the valley of Rephaim.

† Ch. 23. 14.

Josh. 15. 6. Isai. 17. 8.

pursuit of this end their great duty; and the attainment of it their true glory. Certainly great and good kings of all ages have been of this way of thinking: they have believed, not that the people were created and ordained by God for the king, but the king for the people.

Ver. 13. *David took him more concubines and wives*—This may well be reckoned among David's miscarriages, the multiplication of wives being expressly forbidden to the kings of Israel, Deut. xvii. 17. It may, however, be observed, perhaps, in extenuation of this fault of David, that it has always been looked upon as a piece of political wisdom in princes to endeavour to have many children; that by matching them into potent families, they might strengthen their interest, and have the more supporters of their authority. And this seems to have been the reason why David took so many wives. Some of his first wives had no children, and he was induced to take others that he might obtain an issue, enlarge his family, and thereby strengthen his interest. But the many wives and concubines he took, did not preserve him from coveting his neighbour's wife. On the contrary, they inclined him to it; for men who have once broken the fence, will wander carelessly.

Ver. 17. *All the Philistines came up to seek David*—They raised all the forces they were able, to come up to David, and fight him before he was settled in his new kingdom. Whilst the civil war subsisted between the partizans of David and Ish-bosheth, the Philistines contented themselves with being calm spectators of their mutual ravages and conflicts, which naturally tended to their mutual destruction; but when all these were ended in their unanimous election of David to the throne, and that election was succeeded by those beginnings and omens of a prosperous reign which have been mentioned, they began to be alarmed, and thought this the fit season to crush the growing power of this prince before it rose to a greater height. *And David heard it, and went down to the hold*—To some fortified place, to which his people might

A. M. 2062.  
B. C. 1042.x Ch. 2. 1.  
1 Sam.  
22. 2, 4.  
& 30. 8.

19 And David <sup>x</sup>enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

y 1 Sam. 26.  
21.

20 And David came to <sup>y</sup>Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place || Baal-perazim.

† That is,  
the Lord  
of breaches.

21 And there they left their images, and David and his men <sup>z</sup>burned them.

z Deut. 7.  
5, 25.  
1 Chron.  
14. 12.  
† Or, took  
them  
away.  
1 Chron.  
14. 13.

22 ¶ <sup>a</sup>And the Philistines came

conveniently resort from all parts, and where he might entrench his army.

Ver. 19. *David enquired of the Lord*—Though David went into a strong hold, he did not trust to that, nor intended merely to stand upon his defence. But yet he would not give them battle till he had asked counsel of God, and was encouraged by him to do it.

Ver. 20. *David came to Baal-perazim*—For thither the Philistines marched from Rephaim, where they first pitched; as appears from 1 Chron. xiv. 11. *Hath broken forth upon mine enemies, as the breach of waters*—Hath overpowered and scattered them, as waters, when they make a breach in a bank, overflow and carry all before them. *Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim*—That is, *The master of the breaches*. Thus ascribing all to God, and giving the place this name, that it might put him and his posterity in mind of God's great power and goodness shewn in that place.

Ver. 21. *And there they left their images*—Their gods, which they had brought into the field with them to be carried before their host. Such was the consternation into which they were thrown. Thus we read, 2 Chron. xxv. 14, that the Edonites had their gods along with them when they fought with Amasaiah. And perhaps they learned this from the Israelites, who carried the ark (the symbol of God's presence) in their army when they went to fight with the Philistines; who saw it, and took it, as the Israelites now did their images, 1 Sam. iv. 4, 5, &c. But behold here the difference between the ark and these images! When the ark fell into the hands of the Philistines it consumed them; but when these images fell into the hands of the Israelites, they could neither hurt them, nor save themselves from being consumed.

Ver. 22, 23. *And spread themselves*—The expression intimates, that they were very numerous, and made a very

up yet again, and spread themselves <sup>A. M. 2062.  
B. C. 1042.</sup> in the valley of Rephaim.

23 And when <sup>b</sup>David enquired of <sup>b</sup>the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; *but* fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

24 And let it be, when thou <sup>c</sup>hearest <sup>c</sup>the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then <sup>d</sup>shall <sup>d</sup>the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

25 And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from <sup>e</sup>Geba until thou <sup>e</sup>come to <sup>f</sup>Gazer.

c 1 Chron.  
14. 16.  
Gibon.  
f Josh. 16.  
10.

formidable appearance. So we read, Rev. xx. 9, of the churches' enemies *going up on the breadth of the earth*. But the wider they spread themselves, the fairer mark they are for God's arrows. *And when David enquired of the Lord*—Though he had been successful before, yet he would attempt nothing further without God's direction; to whom he knew he owed his former victory. *He said, Thou shalt not go up*—That is, not directly, to fight in a pitched battle as before. So the following words explain it. *But fetch a compass behind them*—Where they least expect thee. God's purposes and promises do not exclude or render unnecessary men's endeavours.

Ver. 24. *When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops, &c.*—The Hebrew, בראש, *beroshee*, here translated *tops*, may properly be rendered, *in the beginnings*, or, *amongst the first of the mulberry trees*; that is, in the very entrance of the place where these trees were, or amongst those which were first in order, and by which the grove was entered. So that God gives David for a sign, the sound of many men's feet walking, not on the tops of the trees (for men do not walk there) but on the ground amidst the trees, though nobody should be seen amongst them by any in David's army. Probably the sound was to be heard by the Philistines, to whom it might appear as if a vast number of men were marching to fall upon them. The Hebrew, however, may be rendered, *When thou hearest the sound of a moving in the tops, &c.* And it may imply nothing more than a rushing and extraordinary sound among the trees, which was to be a signal for David's attack. *Then bestir thyself*—Fall upon the Philistines. *For then the Lord shall go before thee*—By making such a noise either of a mighty host coming to assault them, or of something very extraordinary, that they shall be amazed, and confounded, and put to flight.



A. M. 2949.  
B. C. 1049.

## CHAP. VI.

The ark is brought from the house of Abinadab, ver. 1—5. Its progress stopped by the death of Uzzah, ver. 6—11. It is brought into the city of David with solemn rejoicings, ver. 12—19. David answers the reproof of Michal, ver. 20—23.

**A** GAIN, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand,

2 And <sup>a</sup> David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from || Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, || whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts <sup>b</sup> that dwelleth between the cherubims.

1049.  
1 Chron.  
13. 5. 6.  
Or, Baalah, that is, Kirjath-jearim, Josh. 15. 9, 60.  
Or, at which the name, even the name of the LORD of hosts was called upon.  
1 Sam. 4. 4. Ps. 90. 1.

3 And they † set the ark of God <sup>c</sup> upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in || Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, <sup>d</sup> the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of <sup>d</sup> the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, † accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psal-

A. M. 2968.  
B. C. 1042.  
Heb. made to ride.  
See Num. 7. 9.  
1 Sam. 6. 7.  
Or, the Hill.

1 Sam. 7. 1  
Heb. with A.

CHAP. VI. Ver. 1. *Again David gathered—the chosen men of Israel*—Having defeated the Philistines, and enjoyed some peace, he thought it a seasonable time to fetch up the ark, and settle it in an honourable place; and for that purpose summoned the principal persons in Israel to attend. For he was sensible that purity and sincerity in the worship of God was the best, and, indeed, only sure stay of his own power and of his people's prosperity. And to settle the worship of God, in all its solemnity, was now his object.

Ver. 2. *From Baale of Judah*—The same with Kirjath-jearim, 1 Chron. xiii. 6, called Baalah Josh. xv. 9, and Kirjath-baal, Josh. xv. 60, and xviii. 14. Some have apprehended a difficulty here, because it is said they went from Baale, whereas, 1 Chron. xiii. 6, it is said they went to Baale. But there is no disagreement between these two places. They first went from Jerusalem and other places to Baale, where they assembled, and then from it to Gibeah. *To bring up from thence the ark of God*—Where it had been a long time in the house of Abinadab, whose son had been sanctified to attend it, 1 Sam. vii. 1. *Whose name is called by the name, &c.*—This rendering is both obscure and inaccurate. The clause should either be translated, *On which (ark) is called the name, even the name of the Lord of hosts; that is, which is named the ark of the Lord of hosts: or, At, by, or before which the name, even the name of the Lord of hosts is called upon*—That is, by or before which they were to present their prayers to God for counsel, and succour on all occasions. And this is mentioned here as the reason why David put himself and his people to so great trouble and charge, it was to convey to its appointed place the ark of the Lord of hosts; the symbol and token of his presence with them, and the medium and principal instrument of their whole worship and service.

Ver. 3. *And they set the ark of God upon a new cart*—Which ought to have been carried upon the shoulders of the Kohathites, Numb. vii. 9; for which reason, no waggons were allowed to them, as there were to the rest of the Levites, to carry several parts of the tabernacle. “It is matter of astonishment to me,” says Delaney, “how David and all the priests and people could fall into so great an error, and

deviate so strangely from the plain precepts of the law of God in this point, which expressly prohibited any but the priests to touch the ark, upon pain of death, Numb. iv. 5, 15; and any but the Levites to carry it. The best apology that can be made for them is, that David now succeeded to the throne after a long irreligious reign, in which the ark, and every thing relating to it, were utterly neglected; especially after the massacre of all those priests, whose peculiar business it was to attend the tabernacle (all but one young man); and who were, in all probability, the only priests of that realm that had ever seen it, or knew any thing of its rituals; and there was not then, probably, any one priest or Levite alive who had ever seen it removed. In short, the public worship of God had long been discouraged and neglected in Israel; and with that the study of the Scriptures, except so much as was absolutely necessary for the administration of the civil affairs of the state. Would to God Israel were the only nation upon which this sad truth could at any time be pronounced! Add to all this, that David and his people had now been for many years immersed in wars; and the voice of religion, as well as reason, is often drowned in the din of arms. It is true; the Philistines had, about ninety years before, removed the ark with impunity, 1 Sam. vi. 17, in the same manner as the Israelites did now; but they forgot, that what was pardonable in the Philistines, might be highly criminal in the Israelites;” because the Philistines were ignorant of God's laws; but the Israelites knew, or might have known, that the Lord commanded that the Levites should bear the ark upon their shoulders. But their present transports of joy, on account of the happy change of their affairs, and their greedy desire of having the ark of God removed, made them inconsiderate. *In Gibeah*—Or on the hill, as 1 Sam. vii. 1.

Ver. 4, 5. *Accompanying the ark of God*—That is, when it was brought out of the house of Abinadab, the people flocked together to attend it. It seems as if Eleazar, who had been sanctified to take care of the ark, was dead, or stayed at home to attend to his father, who was now grown old. *David and all Israel played before the Lord*—Who was present with the ark. Public joy should always be as before the Lord, with an eye to him, and terminating in him.



A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.

teries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

e 1 Chron. 13. 9, he is called, Chidon.  
f Num. 4. 15.

6 ¶ And when they came to <sup>e</sup>Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah <sup>f</sup>put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the || oxen shook it.

g Or. stum- bled.

h 1 Sam. 6. 19.

i Or. rash- ness.

7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and <sup>h</sup>God smote him there for his || error; and there he died by the ark of God.

† Heb. broken.

8 And David was displeased, because the LORD had † made a breach

Otherwise it is no better than public madness, and the source of all manner of wickedness.

Ver. 6. *For the oxen shook it*—There is perhaps no word, about the signification of which commentators are more divided, than the word שָׁמַטוּ, *shametu*, here rendered, *shook it*. Bochart and Waterland interpret it, *The oxen stuck in the mire, or stumbled*.

Ver. 7. *The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah*—For his rashness in touching the ark. Some have thought it was because he was not a Levite, and therefore should not have touched it. But it is pretty plain he was, being the brother of Eleazar, who, as a Levite, was consecrated to take care of the ark, 1 Sam. vii. 1. But, although a Levite, he was guilty of a double error; first, in not carrying the ark upon his shoulders, together with his brethren; which their neglecting to do, on this solemn occasion, and consulting their ease more than their duty, was an offence of no small aggravation. Secondly, in touching it, which even the Levites were prohibited from doing under the express penalty of death, Numb. iv. 15—20. And this penalty being incurred by a violation of that prohibition, was justly inflicted by him that threatened it, as an example to others, and to preserve a due reverence to the institution; especially as this, it appears, was the first instance of such violation. Add to this, the infliction of the penalty in this extraordinary way, manifested the prohibition to be divine; and as David himself, and the whole house of Israel, by their heads and representatives, were present at this solemnity, the nature of the punishment, and the reason why it was executed, would be made very public. Some have observed, *thirdly*, that Uzzah discovered by this action his want of faith, in the presence of God with the ark, and in his power, as if he were not able to preserve that sacred symbol of his presence from falling without Uzzah's helping hand. Uzzah, therefore, they say, was thus punished to teach and impress on the minds of the people, that God was peculiarly present with the ark, in order that they might be deterred from breaking any of his laws, or profaning sacred things. It may not be improper to add to the above the following observations from Poole. God's smiting Uzzah, so that he instantly died by the ark, may seem very severe, considering his intention was pious, and his transgression not great. But, besides that, men are improper judges of the actions of God; and that God's judgments are always just, though sometimes obscure: it is rea-

upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place || Perez-uzzah to this day.

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.

That is, the breach of Uzzah.

h Ps. 119. 130. Luke 9. 9.

9 And <sup>h</sup>David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

10 So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the <sup>i</sup>Gittite.

i 1 Chron. 13. 13.

k 1 Chron. 16. 16.

11 ¶ <sup>k</sup>And the ark of the LORD

sonable God should make some present examples of his high displeasure against sins seemingly small; partly for the demonstration of his own exact and impartial holiness; and partly for the establishment of discipline, and for the greater terror and caution of mankind, who are very prone to have slight thoughts of sin, and to give way to small sins, and thereby to be led on to greater; all which is, or may be prevented by such instances of severity; and consequently there is more of God's mercy than of his justice in such actions, because the justice is confined to one particular person, but the benefit of it is common to mankind in that, and all future ages.

Ver. 8. *David was displeased*—Or rather, *grieved*, both for the sin, and for God's heavy judgment; whereby their hopes were dashed, and their joys interrupted. *Because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah*. He was sorry that there was any cause for such a breach or destruction, and perhaps was afraid also that he himself might suffer for not taking better care about carrying the ark. *Perez-Uzzah*—That is, the breach of Uzzah. Thus he called the place in memory of this dreadful stroke, that thereby the Levites, and all others, might be admonished of their duty.

Ver. 9. *David was afraid of the Lord that day*—Apprehensive, it seems, that he himself was in danger. Hence he durst not bring the ark into his city; either thinking, in great humility, that he was unworthy to have it so near him; or that he did not sufficiently understand how to treat it. This, however, he understood better afterwards, as we learn from 1 Chron. xv. 2—15.

Ver. 10. *David carried it to the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite*—He is not called a Gittite from his being born in, or dwelling at that Gath which was a city of the Philistines, but from Gath-rimmon, a Levitical city, Josh. xxi. 24. For it is certain he was a Levite, 1 Chron. xv. 18—24, and xvi. 5. Obed-edom knew what slaughter the ark had made among the Philistines and the Bethshemites; he saw Uzzah struck dead; yet invites it to his house, and opens his doors without fear, knowing it was a savour of death only to them that treated it ill. "O the courage," says Bishop Hall, "of an honest and faithful heart! Nothing can make God otherwise than amiable to him; even his justice is lovely."

Ver. 11. *The Lord blessed, &c.*—The same hand that punished Uzzah's presumption, rewarded Obed-edom's humble boldness. None ever had, or ever shall have reason to

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042. continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD <sup>1</sup> blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

1 Gen. 30. 37.  
& 39. 3. <sup>12</sup> ¶ And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. <sup>m</sup> So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

m 1 Chron. 15. 26. <sup>13</sup> And it was *so*, that when <sup>n</sup> they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed <sup>o</sup> oxen and fatlings.

n Num. 4.  
15. Josh.  
3. 3.  
1 Chron.  
15. 2. 15.  
o 1 Kings 8.  
5.  
1 Chron.  
15. 26.  
p Exod. 15.  
30. Ps.  
90. 11.  
q 1 Sam. 9.  
15.  
1 Chron.  
15. 27.  
r 1 Chron.  
15. 28. <sup>14</sup> And David <sup>p</sup> danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* girded <sup>q</sup> with a linen ephod.

<sup>15</sup> <sup>r</sup> So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042. LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

<sup>16</sup> And <sup>s</sup> as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

<sup>17</sup> ¶ And <sup>t</sup> they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in <sup>u</sup> his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had <sup>†</sup> pitched for it: and David <sup>x</sup> offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, <sup>y</sup> he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.

<sup>19</sup> <sup>z</sup> And he dealt among all the

say, that *it is in vain to serve God*. Piety is the best friend to prosperity. His household too shared in the blessing. It is good living in a family that entertains the ark; for all about it will fare the better for it.

Ver. 12. *That God had blessed the house of Obed-edom because of the ark*—They could not tell to what to impute the extraordinary prosperity and happiness that attended him, but to his willing reception and care of the ark. And it is certain it was, under God, owing to this. *David went and brought up the ark to the city of David*—Hoping God would bless him and his city, as he had done Obed-edom and his house.

Ver. 13, 14. *He sacrificed oxen and fatlings*—As a thanksgiving to God for his goodness, upon an altar erected on purpose, on this extraordinary occasion. *And David danced before the Lord*—His joy increased as the procession went happily on. And God having filled his heart with gladness, he was not ashamed to shew it, and to express his thankfulness to him, by his outward carriage, according to the manner of those times; singing and shouting, and leaping and dancing before the Lord, according as the various measures of the music inspired and directed, till he arrived at the tabernacle, and fixed the ark in its place. *Girt with a linen ephod*—The usual habit of the priests and Levites, in their sacred ministrations, yet sometimes worn by others, as it was by the young child Samuel; and so here by David, who laid aside his royal robes, and put on this robe, to declare, that although he was king of Israel, yet he willingly owned himself to be the Lord's minister and servant.

Ver. 15. *So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark*—Undoubtedly this was as solemn and magnificent a procession as can be imagined. The order of it is set forth,

Ps. *xlviii. 25, The singers went before, the players upon instruments after, in the midst* (that is, between both) the damsels playing with timbrels; then followed, in all likelihood, the several tribes with their princes, elders, &c.; for this seems to be the meaning of that expression, Ver. 27, *The princes of Judah and their council*. This whole company, with David at the head of them, sung alternately the twenty-fourth Psalm, which was composed for this occasion; which is so noble a composition, that scarce any reader can fail to be struck with the beauty and sublimity of it, and its propriety for the occasion.

Ver. 16. *She despised him in her heart*—Imagining that he debased himself, by stripping himself of the ornaments of majesty, and dancing among the common people. She had no knowledge nor conception, it appears, of those emotions of divine love which David felt, and which he declared to her afterwards.

Ver. 17. *The tabernacle that David had pitched for it*—For the ancient tabernacle made by Moses remained still at Gibeon, 1 Chron. *xvi. 39*, and *xxi. 29*; 2 Chron. *i. 3*. From whence David did not think fit to fetch it, because he intended soon to build a temple to place it in. For the present, therefore, he only hung some curtains round about the ark, after the fashion of the tabernacle. See Chap. *vii. 2*. *David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings*—To implore the continuance of God's mercies to them, and to thank him for those they had received.

Ver. 18, 19. *He blessed the people*—That is, he heartily and solemnly prayed to God for his blessing upon them; which he did, both as a prophet, and as their king, to whom, by office, it belonged, by all means, to seek his people's welfare. He also pronounced them blessed in God's name. *So all the people departed every one to his house*—Or

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people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of *flesh*, and a flaggon of *wine*. So all the people departed every one to his house.

a Pr. 30, ti-  
uc.

20 ¶ Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who

b Ver. 16.  
16.  
1 Sam.  
19. 28.

uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the <sup>c</sup>vain fellows || shamelessly uncovereth himself!

c Jude. 9. 4.  
Or, openly.

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21 And David said unto Michal, *It was* before the LORD, <sup>d</sup>which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD.

d 1 Sam. 13.  
14. & 15.  
27.

22 And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and || of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.

Or, of the  
hand-  
maids of  
my ser-  
vants.

23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child <sup>e</sup>until the day of her death.

e 1 Sam. 13.  
25. Isai.  
22. 14.  
Matt. 1.  
25.

rather to his tent pitched in or near Jerusalem on this occasion.

Ver. 20. *David returned to bless his household*—As he had done his people. Ministers must not think that their public performances will excuse them from family worship; but when they have blessed the public assembly, they are to return and bless their own households. And none is too great to do this. It is the work of angels to worship God; and therefore certainly can be no disparagement to the greatest of men. *How glorious was the king of Israel!*—This she spoke ironically, by way of derision and contempt. *Who uncovered himself to-day*—Stripped himself of his royal robes, and put on a linen ephod. “The original word, נגלה, *niglah*, which we render *uncovering himself*, doth not mean exposing any part of the body to view, and is never used in that sense, without some other word to determine it to that meaning. And as, in the parallel place, 1 Chron. xv. 29, this circumstance is not at all taken notice of, but only, that when she saw David dancing and leaping (or, as the word should be rendered, playing on some musical instrument, as it is used, Ver. 5,) *she despised him*; the meaning can be nothing more than that, by dancing before the ark without his royal habit, (exchanged for the linen ephod,) and playing on his harp, or some musical instrument like the rest of the people, he appeared (i. e. exposed himself in her eyes) *as one of the vain fellows*.”—Dodd. *In the eyes of the hand-maids of his servants*—The women probably bore a part in this procession and solemnity, as they did Exod. xv. or at least were spectators of it; from which, indeed, none were excluded, though ever so mean. *As one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself*—Throws off his clothes, and cares not who sees him. The word *shamelessly* is not in the original, but injudiciously inserted, by our translators, who have themselves put a better word, viz. *openly*, in the margin. The Hebrew words, כנגלות נגלות, *cheniggaloth nigloth*, literally translated, are, *as in uncovering he uncovereth*. Michal doubtless spoke this, by way of reproach, of his putting off his proper royal apparel,

and mixing with the multitude. If she meant to intimate that he had exposed himself immodestly, she aggravated his action in a fit of passion; for it is not at all credible that he should do any thing of the kind. There can be no doubt but he kept himself within the bounds of modesty and decency, especially as he was employed in sacred work. He was acting according to the command of God, who required the Israelites to rejoice in their feasts, Deut. xii. 7, and xvi. 14; but certainly not with a trifling, lascivious and petulant mirth, but with a pious, holy, and moderate joy, becoming the presence of God. But as Michal judged of David, so do carnal and worldly-minded men judge of true piety, and of those who make a profession of it. It is all weakness, and meanness of spirit, or it is enthusiasm and extravagance in their eyes. But David's reply to Michal may teach us not to be ashamed of religion, or of any part of it, whatever reproach may be cast upon us for it. The erroneous judgment and sneers of ungodly men should be despised and disregarded when the honour of God is in question.

Ver. 21, 22. *It was before the Lord*—In his presence and service, which, though contemptible to thee, is, and ever shall be honourable in mine eyes. *Who chose me before thy father*—Who took away the honour from him and his, and transferred it unto me, whereby he hath obliged me to love and serve him with all my might. *I will yet be more vile than thus*—The more we are vilified for well-doing, the more resolute therein we should be, binding our religion the closer to us, for the endeavours of Satan's agents to shame us out of it. *And will be base*—I will always be ready to abase myself before God, and think nothing too mean to stoop to for his honour. *Of them I shall be had in honour*—So far will they be from despising me on this account, that they will honour me the more.

Ver. 23. *Therefore*—Because of her proud and petulant speech and carriage to David, which God justly punished with barrenness. *Michal had no child*—After this time.

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## CHAP. VII.

Nathan approves David's design of building an house for God, ver. 1—3. God forbids it, but promises to bless him and his seed, ver. 4—17. His prayer and thanksgiving, ver. 18—29.

1 Chron.  
17. 1, &c.

AND it came to pass, <sup>a</sup> when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies;

<sup>b</sup> 2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in <sup>b</sup> an house of cedar, <sup>c</sup> but the ark of God dwelleth within <sup>d</sup> curtains.

2 Exod. 26.  
1, & 40, 31.

<sup>e</sup> 3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is <sup>e</sup> in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.

1 Kings 8.  
17, 18.  
1 Chron.  
29. 7. &  
28. 2.  
1042.

CHAP. VII. Ver. 1, 2. *When the king sat in his house*—That is, was settled in the house which Hiram's men had built for him: then he reflected upon the unsettled state of the ark. For being a pious prince he spent much of his time in holy meditations and the exercises of devotion. And among other subjects of consideration, thought upon the meanness of God's habitation in comparison of the splendor of his own. *See now, I dwell in an house of cedar*—Such as the rich Jews had in the days of Haggai, termed by the Lord *cieled houses*: See Hag. i. 4; *but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains*—That is, in a tent or tabernacle, Ver. 6, composed of several curtains. This, David thought, ought not to be, and therefore resolved to build a stately house for God's ark.

Ver. 3. *Nathan said—Go and do all that is in thine heart*—Pursue thy intentions, and build an house for the ark. The design being pious, and the thing not forbidden by God, Nathan hastily approves it, before he had consulted God about it, as both he and David ought to have done in a matter of so great moment. And therefore Nathan meets with this rebuke, that he is forced to acknowledge his error, and recant it. For the holy prophets did not speak all things by prophetic inspiration, but some things, as religious men, by a human spirit.

Ver. 4—6. *That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan*—Because David's mistake was pious, and from an honest mind, God would not suffer him to remain long in it. *Shalt thou build an house for me?* That is, How is it that thou hast formed this design? *Whereas I have not dwelt in any house, &c.*—I have not mentioned, nor has any one else thought of the building me one, from the time you have been a people. *But I have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle*—I have been content with a moveable house, in which I was always present to conduct and lead my people from place to place. By the *tent* may be meant the curtains and hangings within, which were of curious work, and by the *tabernacle* the frame of boards to which they were fastened, with the coverings upon it.

Ver. 7. *The tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed*

4 ¶ And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,

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5 Go and tell † my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, 'Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?

Heb. to my servant, to David.  
1 Kings 8.  
2. & 9. 19.  
1 Chron.  
29. 8. &  
28. 2.

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house <sup>e</sup> since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in <sup>a</sup> a tent and in a tabernacle.

1 Kings 8.  
16.Exod. 40.  
15, 16, 34.

7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with || any of the tribes of Israel, whom I com-

1 Lev. 26.  
11, 12.  
Deut. 28.  
14.  
1 Chron.  
16. 6. any of the judges.

*my people Israel*—The word *tribes* seems here to be put for *Judges*, appointed to govern the tribes. Indeed, the Hebrew word *שִׁבְטֵי* *shibtee*, here rendered *tribes*, signifies also *scptres*, and, consequently, supreme governors or rulers; such as the judges were, who had the supreme authority in Israel. Saying, *Why build ye not me an house of cedar?* God was the properest judge what house was agreeable to him, and he never signified that he disliked his present, and desired a more stately habitation. Though God was pleased to give Moses directions for erecting the tabernacle, and afterwards appointed Solomon to build him a more magnificent temple; yet this was done only with respect to, and as suitable to men, and not in regard of, or as any way suitable to himself. And the Scripture has taken great care to inculcate on us, *that the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, Acts vii. 4. *Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*, Acts xvii. 24. And this is perhaps peculiar to the pure religion of the Scriptures: For, if we attentively examine them, we shall find in all other religions, something in the principle of them, as if the worship of God was founded on his needing something. And, amongst most of them, we find a meanness of thought, as if temples were something to the Deity himself; and not as the Scriptures rightly describe them to be, as witnesses only to men, that God concerns himself with the inhabitants of the earth, and will hearken to their prayers. Thus we find St. Stephen, in the Acts of the Apostles, Ch. vii. 4, calling the tabernacle, which Moses was ordered to make, *The tabernacle of witness*—And the Spirit of God put such a prayer into the heart and mouth of Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, as may sufficiently instruct us in what light the holy Scriptures consider temples of any kind, viz. as concerning and having respect to men only, and as being nothing to God himself. *But will God indeed (says Solomon) dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have builded?* And the Scripture every where represents God as the maker of the world and all things therein, as the

manded <sup>k</sup>to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar ?

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, †from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel :

9 And <sup>m</sup>I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, <sup>n</sup>and have cut off all thine enemies †out of thy sight, and have made thee <sup>o</sup>a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will <sup>p</sup>plant them, that they may dwell in a place

supreme Lord of heaven and earth, as having the whole heavens for his throne, and the earth for his footstool ; and, therefore needing or requiring no worship from men, but as it is conducive to their welfare and happiness.

Ver. 8. So shalt thou say unto my servant David.—Lest David should be discouraged, or judge himself neglected of God, as one thought unworthy of so great a honour, God here gives him the honourable title of his servant, thereby signifying that he accepted of his service, and good intentions.

Ver. 9, 10. I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest.—In the time of his banishment he was remarkably preserved by God. Moreover, I will appoint a place, &c.—I will make room for them, whereas hitherto they have been much straitened and distressed by their enemies. Or, I have appointed a place for them, viz. the land of Canaan. And I will plant them—Make them take root: I will establish them in their place and land. That they may—move no more—May no longer wander, as they did in the wilderness. Neither shall the children of wickedness—The idolatrous people round about them. Afflict them any more as before time—When they were in the land of Egypt. Thus, among the favours which God had vouchsafed, and would vouchsafe to David, he reckons his blessings to Israel, because they were great blessings to David ; partly, because the strength and happiness of a king consists in the multitude and happiness of his people ; and partly, because David was a man of a public spirit, and therefore no less affected with Israel's felicity than with his own.

Ver. 11. And as since the time that I commanded judges—In whose days they were sorely afflicted by the Moabites, Canaanites, Midianites, and others. But, all this, as the event shewed, was intended to be understood with a condition, except they should notoriously forsake God, which they did, and therefore this promise was not fulfilled in that extensive and absolute sense which the words here seem to convey. And have caused thee to rest, &c.—Have given thee

of their own, and move no more ; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.

11 And as <sup>r</sup>since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have <sup>s</sup>caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee <sup>t</sup>that he will make thee an house.

12 ¶ And <sup>u</sup>when thy days be fulfilled, and thou <sup>x</sup>shalt sleep with thy fathers, <sup>y</sup>I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 <sup>z</sup>He shall build an house for my name, and I will <sup>a</sup>stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

a quiet possession of the whole kingdom of Israel, which was never in so happy a condition as now. But these words, though according to our translation they are inclosed in the same parenthesis with the foregoing clauses, may be better put without it, and taken by themselves. For the foregoing words in this verse, and in Ver. 10, all concern the people of Israel ; but these words concern David alone, to whom the speech returns, after a short digression, concerning the people of Israel. And they may be rendered thus : And I will cause thee to rest, &c. more fully and perfectly than yet thou dost. He will make thee an house, &c.—For thy good intentions to make him an house, he will make thee an house, a sure house ; that is, he will increase and uphold thy posterity, and continue the kingdom in thy family.

Ver. 12. And when thy days are fulfilled, &c.—When the time of thy life shall expire. This phrase implies, that his days should be prolonged to the usual course of nature, and not cut off in the midst, by any violent or untimely death. Thy seed, which shall proceed out of thy bowels—This manner of speaking, shews that it was intended to be understood of one who was not yet born, viz. Solomon ; and that Absalom, Adonijah, and the rest who pretended to the kingdom, were not designed for it, having already proceeded from him. I will establish his kingdom—Solomon reigned a long time himself, and his posterity after him, and the Messiah, his seed, will reign for ever. So the following words may be understood, part of Solomon, part of his posterity in general, and part of Christ only, according to the different nature of the several passages.

Ver. 13. He shall build an house for my name—This is meant literally of Solomon, who alone did build the material house or temple ; but ultimately of Christ, who is the builder of God's spiritual house or temple. For my name—That is, for my service and glory. For ever—This is not meant of Solomon, for his kingdom was not for ever. But it is to be understood of David's posterity in general, and

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.  
k Ch. 5. 2.  
Ps. 78. 71.  
72. Matt.  
2. 6. Acts  
20. 36.  
11 Sam. 16.  
11. 12.  
Ps. 78. 70.  
11 Job. from  
after.  
m 1 Sam.  
18. 17.  
Ch. 5. 10.  
& 5. 6. 14.  
n 1 Sam. 31.  
6. Ps. 49.  
23.  
† Heb.  
from thy  
face.  
o Gen. 18. 2.  
p Ps. 44. 9.  
& 50. 8.  
Jer. 24. 6.  
Amos 9.  
15.

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.  
q Ps. 89. 23.  
r Judg. 2.  
14. 16.  
1 Sam. 12.  
9. 11.  
Ps. 106.  
42.  
s Ver. 1.  
t Exod. 1.  
21.  
Ver. 27.  
1 Kings  
11. 32.  
u 1 Kings 2.  
1.  
x Dent. 31.  
16.  
1 Kings 1.  
21. Acts  
13. 36.  
y 1 Kings 8.  
20. Ps.  
132. 11.  
z 1 Kings 8.  
5 & 6. 12.  
& 9. 19.  
1 Chron.  
22. 10. &  
25. 6.  
a Ver. 16.  
Ps. 90. 6.  
29. 26.

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.  
b Ps. 89. 26.  
Hebr. 1. 5.  
c Ps. 89. 30.  
26.

14 <sup>b</sup> I will be his father, and he shall be my son. <sup>c</sup> If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men :

d 1 Sam. 15. 27, 28. & 16. 14.  
1 Kings 11. 13. 34.  
Ver. 13.  
e Ps. 59. 36.  
John 12. 34.

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, <sup>d</sup> as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And <sup>e</sup> thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee : thy throne shall be established for ever.

17 According to all these words,

with special respect to Christ, in whose person the kingdom was to be lodged for ever.

Ver. 14. *I will be his father*—I will carry myself towards him as a father, with all affection, and I will own him as my son. This is intended both of Solomon, as a type of Christ, and of Christ himself, as is evident from Heb. i. 5. *If he commit iniquity*—This agrees only to Solomon and some others of David's posterity; but not to Christ, who never committed iniquity, as Solomon did, who therein was no type of Christ, and therefore this branch of the text is terminated in Solomon; whereas in those things wherein Solomon was a type of Christ, the sense passes through Solomon to Christ. *With the rod of men*—With such rods as are gentle and moderate, and suited to man's weakness. This implies that God would punish that seed of David, in whom his kingdom was to be established, with such correction as parents give their children, in case he should fall away and commit iniquity; and not punish him with that exact severity as his sins might deserve, nor entirely cut him and his posterity off from the kingdom, as he had done Saul. And God accordingly performed this for some ages, till the time arrived when it was proper and beneficial to make a change, not only in regard to the family of David, but to the whole Hebrew nation, which was to produce a greater good, not only to them, but to the whole human race, viz. the establishment of Christ's kingdom. Thus does God work to produce a greater and still greater good to mankind, and gives far better things than he has promised.

Ver. 15, 16. *My mercy shall not depart from him*—Or, *my kindness*, as the Hebrew word *חסד*, *chasi*, rather means. That is, the kingdom which I have mercifully and kindly promised to thee and thine. *As I took it from Saul*—In regard of his posterity, for the kingdom was continued to Saul himself during his life. *Thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee*—Thine eyes, in some sort, beholding it; for he lived to see his wise son Solomon actually placed on the throne with reputation and general applause, which was in itself a good presage of the continuance of the kingdom in his family, and when considered in connexion with God's infallible promises made to him and his descendants, must have given him assurance thereof. David, however, had his eyes and thoughts on the Messiah, Psal. cx. 1; whose day he saw by faith, as Abraham had done; whom he knew God would raise up of the fruit of his loins to sit on his throne.

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and according to all this vision, <sup>A. M. 2962. B. C. 1042.</sup> so did Nathan speak unto David.

18 ¶ Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, *Who am I, O LORD God?* <sup>Gen. 22. 10.</sup> and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O LORD God; <sup>Ver. 16.</sup> but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come.

<sup>b</sup> And is this the † manner of man, <sup>b Isai. 65. 7. c Heb. 1. 6.</sup> O LORD God?

Acts ii. 30, and the eternity of whose kingdom might well be said to be *before him*. *Thy throne shall be established for ever*—The kingdom shall be continued for a long time, even for many ages in thy family, and in the Messiah, who is to be thy seed, to all eternity. Thus the angel applying this promise to Jesus, says to Mary, *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of HIS FATHER DAVID. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob FOR EVER, and of HIS KINGDOM there shall be NO END.*

Ver. 17. *According to all this vision did Nathan speak unto David*—And thereby manifested his integrity, not being ashamed to retract his own words when he was better taught of God. And, as Dionysius observes in the epistle to Novatus, the correction of his fault was more remarkable than the fault itself.

Ver. 18. *Then went king David in*—Into the tabernacle. *And sat before the Lord*—That is, before the ark, the symbol of the divine presence, and where God was then peculiarly present, and was believed by David to be so. David probably sat for a season, while he meditated on these things, and then altered his posture, and betook himself to prayer. It must be observed, however, that the Hebrew word, *ישב*, *jashab*, here rendered *sat*, may with equal propriety be translated *remained* before the Lord. The Hebrews never addressed prayers, or praises to God but either standing up, or prostrate on the earth, and even their kings are always described as standing when they prayed or gave thanks in the temple. See *Rask. xvi. 1, 2*; compared with *2 Kings xi. 14*, and *2 Chron. xxxiii. 13*. Nor is there any other posture of worship mentioned in Scripture, but standing, or kneeling, or falling on the face. *Who am I, O Lord God?*—How infinitely unworthy am I and my family of this great honour and happiness! Thus David begins his address to God in a becoming spirit of humility and self-abasement, acknowledging his utter unworthiness of the blessings which God had already bestowed on him.

Ver. 19. *This*—Which thou hast already done for me, *that thou hast brought me hitherto*, to this pitch of honour, and peace, and prosperity, in which, through thy favour, I now stand. *Was small*—Though it was more than I deserved, or could expect, yet thou didst not think it enough for thee to give to me. *A great while*—For many future ages, and indeed to all eternity. *Is this, &c.*—Do men use

5 Q



A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.1 Gen. 18.  
19. Ps.  
139. 1.

20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, LORD God, knowest thy servant.

21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know *them*.

22 Wherefore<sup>k</sup> thou art great, O LORD God: for<sup>l</sup> *there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.*

23 And<sup>m</sup> what one nation in the earth is like thy people, *even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before<sup>n</sup> thy people, which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?*

to deal so kindly with their inferiors, as thou hast done with me? No; this is the prerogative of divine grace.

Ver. 20, 21. *What can David say*—Either in a way of gratitude and praise: Words cannot express my obligations to thee, nor my sense of these obligations: Or in a way of prayer; What can I ask of thee more than thou hast freely done? *Thou knowest thy servant*—Thou knowest my deep sense of thy favours and my obligations to thee; and my condition and necessities, what I do or may need hereafter; and as thou knowest this, so I doubt not thou wilt supply me. *Thy word's sake*—That thou mightest fulfil thy promises made to me, and thereby demonstrate thy faithfulness. *According to thine own heart*—Of thy own mere liberality and good pleasure, without any desert of mine. So far was David, though a very gracious man, from thinking his actions meritorious. *To make thy servant know them*—Thus David expresses the deep sense he had of the extraordinary kindness of God, not only in designing these great things for him and his posterity, but in condescending to make them known to him.

Ver. 22. *Wherefore thou art great*—Both in power and in goodness, as appears by the great and good things which thou hast done for me. *Neither is there any God besides thee*—Thus Hannah had expressed herself in her song, in which she prophesied of him, 1 Sam. ii. 2, 10. *According to all that we have heard*—That is, what their forefathers had reported concerning the wonders which God had done by Moses and Joshua, and in the time of the judges.

Ver. 23. *What one nation in the earth, &c.*—He seems to have in view the words of Moses in Deut. iv. 7, 34. *To make him a name*—That all the world might know and acknowledge his power and glory. *To do for you great things and terrible, &c.*—Instead of, *for you*, the Seventy,

24 For<sup>o</sup> thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel *to be a people unto thee for ever*:<sup>p</sup> and thou, LORD, art become their God.

25 And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish *it* for ever, and do as thou hast said.

26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.

27 For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast<sup>†</sup> revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

28 And now, O LORD God, thou

A. M. 2962.  
B. C. 1042.  
o Deut. 98.  
18.  
p Ps. 68. 14.† Heb.  
opened  
the ear,  
Ruth 4. 4.  
1 Sam. 9.  
12.

Vulgate, and Arabick, read, *for them*. Or the words may be understood, according to Le Clerc's interpretation, who supplies some words evidently intended to be supplied to perfect the sense, thus: *To do for you great things*, O Israel, and terrible for thy land, O God, by casting out the nations before thy people, &c.—But the parallel place, 1 Chron. xvii. 2, to which the reader is referred, will best explain the sense of this whole verse. *From the nations and their gods*—Some by gods understand their rulers; but their gods were no more able, nay, being mere imaginary beings, were less able to save the nations whom Jehovah drove out, than their kings and rulers.

Ver. 24—26. *For thou hast confirmed*—Partly by thy promises, and that solemn and sure covenant into which thou hast entered with them; and partly by thy glorious works wrought on their behalf, as it appears this day. *Thou art become their God*—In a peculiar manner, and by special relation and covenant; for otherwise he is the God and Father of all. *The word—concerning thy servant and his house, establish thou it*—And yet he did not desire this great kindness merely for his own sake and the sake of his family, but that God might be glorified in what he did for him and them. Thus, it follows, *And let thy name be magnified for ever*—Never cease to manifest thyself to be the God and governor of Israel, and let all men acknowledge that the God of Israel is the Lord of hosts, the Lord of heaven and earth, of angels and men, and faithful in his promises to the house of David.

Ver. 27—29. *Thy servant found it in his heart to pray this prayer*—That prayer, which is found in the tongue only, will not please God; it must be found in the heart, which must be lifted up to God, and poured out before him. *Thou art that God*—Who hast declared thyself to be Israel's God,



A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.John 17.  
17.

art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant :

Heb. be  
thou  
pleased  
and bless.

29 Therefore now † let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee : for thou, O LORD God, hast spoken it : and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed † for ever.

Ch. 22. 51.

and in particular my God. *And thy words be true*—Thus he relies with unshaken faith on the truth of all that God had said, and confidently expects the accomplishment of God's promises to him. And hence, it seems, these and some other clauses of this prayer are not so much to be considered as petitions, as the overflowings of a grateful heart, touched with a sense of the greatness of these mercies, and therefore dwelling on them, and thereby shewing how much it desired them. For after God had promised David these things by a prophet sent to him on purpose, it is hardly to be supposed that he would immediately begin to offer to God petitions for them in any other sense than as expressions of the very high estimation in which he held them. Indeed it is easy to see, as Delaney observes, that "his heart was wholly possessed with a subject which he did not know how to quit, because he did not know how to do justice to his own sense of the inestimable blessings poured down upon himself, and promised to his posterity ; and much less to the infinite bounty of his benefactor."—*That it may continue for ever before thee*—When Christ for ever sat down on the right hand of God, and received all possible assurance, that his seed and throne should be as the days of heaven, then this prayer was abundantly answered.

CHAP. VIII. Ver. 1. *David smote the Philistines and subdued them*—In the beginning of his reign they had invaded Israel twice, and were successfully repulsed. But now David invaded their country, made a conquest of it, and brought it under subjection to the Israelites. *David took Methegammah*—That is, *Gath and her towns*, as it is expressed in the parallel place, 1 Chron. xviii. 1, which are called *Methegammah*, or the *bridle of Ammah*, because Gath was situate in the mountain of Ammah ; and because this being the chief city of the Philistines, and having a king, which none of the rest had, was the bridle which had hitherto kept the Israelites in subjection.

Ver. 2. *He smote Moab*—For although the king of Moab, out of hatred to Saul, gave protection to David's parents, 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4 ; yet the Moabites were perpetual and sworn enemies to the Israelites, who therefore were forbidden to admit them *into the congregation of the Lord*. God indeed commanded the Israelites, in their march to Canaan, to spare the Moabites for the sake of their progenitor Lot, but afterwards they became such fierce enemies to him and his people, that he was provoked to treat them in a different

## CHAP. VIII.

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.

David subdues the Philistines and Moabites, ver. 1, 2. *Smite Hadadexer, and the Syrians*, ver. 3—8. *Dedicates the presents he had received and the spoils to God*, ver. 9—12. *Conquers the Syrians again, and the Edomites*, ver. 13, 14. *His administration of justice, and chief officers*, ver. 15---18.

cir. 1040.  
1 Chron.  
18. 1, &c.

AND <sup>a</sup>after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them : and David took || Methegammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

Or, the  
bridle of  
Ammah.

2 And <sup>b</sup>he smote Moab, and mea-

Num. 24.  
17.

manner. Now was fulfilled the prophecy of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17, 18, "A sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners," or *princes*, "of Moab." See the note on that passage. *And measured them with a line*—That is, having conquered the country, he took an exact survey, and made an estimate of it, distributing the towns and people into three parts. *Casting them down to the ground*—Destroying the fortified cities and strong-holds of the whole land, and levelling them with the ground, as far as he thought necessary to humble them and secure himself. *With two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive*—This passage, it must be acknowledged, is extremely obscure. But the most probable sense of it seems to be, that upon the taking and demolishing of those forts and strong-holds, which made an obstinate resistance, he discriminated between those who were hardy and determined in refusing all offers of mercy, made upon their submission, and those who were unwillingly with-held by their rulers and commanders from accepting the mercy offered them ; preserving the latter alive, and putting the others to death. "Agreeable to this sense," says Dr. Delaney, "the Hebrew text may, and I think ought, to be understood thus : *With two lines measured he, viz. one to put to death, those obstinate few who rejected all offers of mercy ; and with one full line (in the original, one line of plenitude) to keep alive ;* that is, to save all those who would have submitted and accepted proffered mercy, had they been suffered. David was a prophet, and thoroughly versed in the Scriptures ; and when he had there learned that a king was to arise out of Jacob who should one day smite and subdue Moab, it was not hard for him to discern, in the spirit of prophecy, that he himself was that king, especially after the message delivered to him by Nathan, from the word of the Lord. And there is no doubt but he executed the sentence denounced against Moab, in the prophecy of Balaam, in that sense in which the Spirit of God denounced it, which I apprehend to be that now explained. But, supposing David destroyed two-thirds of the Moabites on this occasion, and saved only one-third (for so some understand the text), the severity of this chastisement was no greater than that which God himself denounces against his own people for their sins, Zech. xiii. 8. And why might not the sins of the Moabites deserve this chastisement now, as those of the Jews did at the time referred to in this prophecy ? The greatest sins the Jews ever committed against God were those corruptions which they copied

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1036.

sured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive.

<sup>c</sup> Ver. 6. & <sup>d</sup> And so the Moabites<sup>e</sup> became David's servants, and <sup>d</sup> brought gifts.

<sup>3</sup> ¶ David smote also ¶ Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of <sup>e</sup> Zobah, as he went to recover <sup>f</sup> his border at the river Euphrates.

<sup>4</sup> And David took ¶ from him a thousand ¶ chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David <sup>g</sup> houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for an hundred chariots.

<sup>5</sup> <sup>h</sup> And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

<sup>6</sup> Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians

from their neighbour nations, the most abominable of all which were practised by the very nation we are now speaking of; and therefore there is good reason to believe that they now deserved the same severity of vengeance from the justice of God, which he afterwards inflicted upon his own people." *And so the Moabites became David's servants—Were made subject to him. And brought gifts—Or paid a constant tribute, which they continued to do all his days, and in the reign of Solomon. And after the kingdom was divided, it was paid to the kings of Israel, till after the death of Ahab, when they refused to pay it, 2 Kings iii. 4, 5.*

*Ver. 3. King of Zobah—Zobah was a part of Syria, whose eastern border was Euphrates, as the western was the land of Canaan, and the kingdom of Damascus. As he went to recover his border—That is, as David went to extend the limits of his kingdom towards the river Euphrates, he smote this king, who probably came out to oppose him. David remembered the grant which God had made to his people of all the land, as far as that river; and, having subdued his neighbouring enemies, went to recover his rights according to the divine promise and gift.*

*Ver. 4. David took from him a thousand chariots—The word chariot is not in the Hebrew, but is well supplied by our translators from 1 Chron. xviii. 4, in which book many things are explained which are briefly related here. Seven hundred horsemen—Or rather, seven hundred companies of horsemen, that is, in all, seven thousand, as it is, 1 Chron. xviii. 4, there being ten in each company, and each ten having a ruler or captain. David houghed all the chariot horses—That is cut the sinews of their legs, or their hamstrings,*

became servants to David, and brought gifts. <sup>k</sup> And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

<sup>7</sup> And David took <sup>l</sup> the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

<sup>8</sup> And from ¶ Bethah, and from ¶ Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.

<sup>9</sup> ¶ When ¶ Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,

<sup>10</sup> Then Toi sent <sup>m</sup> Joram his son unto king David, to <sup>n</sup> salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer <sup>n</sup> had wars with Toi. And *Joram* <sup>n</sup> brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass:

<sup>11</sup> ¶ Which also king David <sup>n</sup> did

that they might be of no use in war. *But reserved of them for an hundred chariots—Probably, as a monument of his victory, not for war; God having forbid them to multiply horses, Deut. xvii. 16.*

*Ver. 5, 6. The Syrians of Damascus—That is, that were subject to Damascus, the chief city of Syria. Put garrisons in Syria of Damascus—Hebrew, in Aran Damasek. This was that part of Syria which lay between Libanus and Antilibanus. The Syrians brought gifts—By way of tribute, in token of their subjection. The Lord preserved David whithersoever he went—Kept him from all the dangers to which he was exposed in these wars.*

*Ver. 7. The shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer—It hath been the practice of many princes to make the arms of their soldiers ornamental and precious, partly from the love of splendor and magnificence, and partly to influence the courage of those that carried them: since nothing else could secure them from becoming a property and a prey to the enemy. Some think, however, the meaning here is, Which were with the servants, that is, committed to their custody, as being kept in the king's armoury; for it is not probable, they think, that they carried shields of gold into the field.*

*Ver. 8. From Bethah, &c.—In 1 Chron. xviii. 8, it is, from Tibhath, and from Chun. Either therefore the same cities were called by several names, as is usual, the one by the Hebrews, the other by the Syrians; or those were two other cities, and so the brass was taken out of these four cities.*

*Ver. 9—11. King of Hamath—This city was also in Syria, and lay north of Judea. To salute him and bless him—To*

c Ver. 6. &  
14.d Ps. 78. 10.  
1 Sam. 10.  
27.Or, Hada-  
rezer.1 Chron.  
18. 3.e Ch. 10. 6.  
Ps. 60.  
title.f Gen. 15. 19.  
Or, of his.1 Chron.  
18. 4.g Josh. 11.  
6, 9.h 1 Kings  
11. 23, 25.i 1 Chron.  
18. 10.m 1 Chron.  
18. 10.n Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.o Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.p Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.q 1 Kings  
7. 51.r 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.s 1 Chron.  
18. 10.t Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.u Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.v Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.w 1 Kings  
7. 51.x 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.y 1 Chron.  
18. 10.z Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aa Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ab Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ac 1 Kings  
7. 51.ad 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ae 1 Chron.  
18. 10.af Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ag Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ah Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ai 1 Kings  
7. 51.aj 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ak 1 Chron.  
18. 10.al Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.am Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.an Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ao 1 Kings  
7. 51.ap 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aq 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ar Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.as Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.at Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.au 1 Kings  
7. 51.av 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aw 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ax Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ay Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.az Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aa 1 Kings  
7. 51.ab 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ac 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ad Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ae Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.af Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ag 1 Kings  
7. 51.ah 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ai 1 Chron.  
18. 10.aj Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ak Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.al Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.am 1 Kings  
7. 51.an 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ao 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ap Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aq Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ar Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.as 1 Kings  
7. 51.at 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.au 1 Chron.  
18. 10.av Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aw Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ax Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ay 1 Kings  
7. 51.az 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aa 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ab Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ac Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ad Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ae 1 Kings  
7. 51.af 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ag 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ah Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ai Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.aj Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ak 1 Kings  
7. 51.al 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.am 1 Chron.  
18. 10.an Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ao Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ap Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aq 1 Kings  
7. 51.ar 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.as 1 Chron.  
18. 10.at Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.au Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.av Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aw 1 Kings  
7. 51.ax 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ay 1 Chron.  
18. 10.az Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aa Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ab Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ac 1 Kings  
7. 51.ad 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ae 1 Chron.  
18. 10.af Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ag Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ah Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ai 1 Kings  
7. 51.aj 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ak 1 Chron.  
18. 10.al Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.am Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.an Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ao 1 Kings  
7. 51.ap 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aq 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ar Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.as Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.at Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.au 1 Kings  
7. 51.av 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aw 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ax Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ay Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.az Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aa 1 Kings  
7. 51.ab 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ac 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ad Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ae Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.af Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ag 1 Kings  
7. 51.ah 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ai 1 Chron.  
18. 10.aj Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ak Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.al Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.am 1 Kings  
7. 51.an 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ao 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ap Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aq Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ar Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.as 1 Kings  
7. 51.at 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.au 1 Chron.  
18. 10.av Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aw Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ax Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ay 1 Kings  
7. 51.az 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aa 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ab Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ac Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ad Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ae 1 Kings  
7. 51.af 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ag 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ah Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ai Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.aj Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ak 1 Kings  
7. 51.al 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.am 1 Chron.  
18. 10.an Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ao Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ap Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aq 1 Kings  
7. 51.ar 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.as 1 Chron.  
18. 10.at Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.au Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.av Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aw 1 Kings  
7. 51.ax 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ay 1 Chron.  
18. 10.az Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aa Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ab Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ac 1 Kings  
7. 51.ad 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ae 1 Chron.  
18. 10.af Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ag Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ah Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ai 1 Kings  
7. 51.aj 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ak 1 Chron.  
18. 10.al Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.am Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.an Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ao 1 Kings  
7. 51.ap 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aq 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ar Heb. ask  
him of  
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a man of  
wars with.at Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.au 1 Kings  
7. 51.av 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.aw 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ax Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ay Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.az Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.aa 1 Kings  
7. 51.ab 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ac 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ad Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ae Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.af Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.ag 1 Kings  
7. 51.ah 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ai 1 Chron.  
18. 10.aj Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.ak Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.al Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.am 1 Kings  
7. 51.an 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.ao 1 Chron.  
18. 10.ap Heb. ask  
him of  
peace.aq Heb. was  
a man of  
wars with.ar Heb. in  
his hand,  
were.as 1 Kings  
7. 51.at 1 Chron.  
14. 11. &  
26. 26.

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.

dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;

12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

13 And David gat *him* a name when he returned from † smiting of the Syrians in ° the valley of salt, P || *being* eighteen thousand men.

14 ¶ And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and <sup>q</sup> all they of Edom be-

† Heb. his smiting.  
° 2 Kings 14. 7.  
P 1 Chron. 18. 12. Ps. 60. title.  
¶ Or. staying.  
q Gen. 27. 29. 37. 40. Num. 24. 15.

congratulate him in his good success in the war with Hadadezer, and to wish him continued prosperity. *Joram brought with him vessels, &c.*—As a present to king David; whose friendship he sought by this embassy. *Which David did dedicate to the Lord*—These words seem to import, that he was so far from multiplying silver and gold for himself, (which Moses forbid, Deut. xvii. 16), that he put all his spoil, or the greatest part of it, into God's treasury; for the building of the temple, which he designed, and his son was to accomplish, Ch. vii. 13. A rare instance of his piety and gratitude to God, by whose aid he conquered; too seldom imitated by kings!

Ver. 14. *Throughout all Edom put he garrisons*—Having conquered the whole country, he garrisoned the strongest places in it with his own men, to keep them in subjection to him. Some of the Jews interpret these words, *He put captains, or commanders in Edom*, that is, great men to govern them, and, as his deputies, to raise a tribute from them. Now began to be fulfilled the extraordinary prediction to Rebekah, recorded by Moses, Gen. xxv. 22, but not begun to be accomplished till many centuries after his death, viz. *The elder shall serve the younger*—Then also was fulfilled that prophecy of Balaam, mentioned Num. xxiv. *Edom shall be a possession, &c. The Lord preserved David, &c.* God, in his providence, still watched over, and protected him, as before, Ver. 6, in all these expeditions. All David's victories were typical of the success of the gospel over the kingdom of Satan, in which the Son of David rode forth, *conquering and to conquer*, and will reign till he has brought down all opposing rule, principality, and power.

Ver. 15. *David reigned over all Israel*—He had no disturbance at home, while he was engaged in wars abroad: but all Israel obeyed him. *And David executed judgment and justice*—That is, either, 1, Having now finished his foreign wars, he applied himself to the civil government of his people, according to the law of God, which he executed duly by himself, or his judges: or, rather, 2, Even while he was engaged in so many wars abroad, he did not neglect his people at home; but took care that justice should be administered to them, according to that divine admonition recorded

came David's servants. † And the LORD preserved David whitherso-  
ever he went.

15 ¶ And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people:

16 † And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and † Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was || recorder;

17 And † Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the || scribe;

18 † And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the † Cherethites and the Pelethites.

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.  
r Ver. 6.

Ch. 19. 13.  
A 20. 23.  
1 Chron. 11. 6. & 13. 15.  
1 Kings 4. 3.

¶ Or, remembrancer, or, writer of chronicles.  
u 1 Chron. 24. 3.

¶ Or, secretary.  
x 1 Chron. 18. 17.  
y 1 Sam. 30. 16.

in his last words; Ch. xxiii. 3, *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

Ver. 16. *Jehoshaphat was recorder*—That is, the remembrancer, or writer of chronicles, as is generally thought; “an employment,” says Dr. Delaney, “of no mean estimation in the eastern world, where it was customary with kings to keep daily registers of all the transactions of their reigns; and a trust which, whosoever discharged to purpose, must be let into the true springs and secrets of action; and, consequently, must be received into the utmost confidence.” Some, however, rather suppose, that by the recorder, the treasurer is intended, who examined all the accounts, and kept records of them.

Ver. 17. *Zadok and Ahimelech were the priests*—That is, as some think, Zadok was the high-priest, and Ahimelech his sagan or vicar; or, according to others, neither of these was the high-priest, but they were both only the vicars of Abiathar, and heads of the sacerdotal families, the second priests, to use the language of Scripture, 2 Kings xxv. 18. The former was of the family of Eleazar, 1 Chron. vi. 8, the other of Ithamar. The family of Eli was now declining fast; and in the next reign the other family was advanced to the high-priesthood, Abiathar and his posterity being quite thrown out. *Seraiah was the scribe*—Or Secretary of State, as we now speak. But Bishop Patrick observes, that as the word *סופר*, which we translate *scribe*, imports something of learning, as the word *scribe*, so often occurring in the New Testament, also does, he takes Seraiah to have been the king's prime counsellor in the law. And others think there were two of this character, one an ecclesiastical and the other a civil scribe. Thus “the sacred writer no sooner gives us an account of David's executing justice and judgment, but he immediately adds a list of the great officers then employed by him. For a principal part of a king's wisdom, as well as of his felicity, consists in the choice of able ministers to discharge the great offices of the state.”—Delaney.

Ver. 18. *Benaiah, &c.*—Benaiah was one of David's three worthies of the second order; eminent for many great exploits, of which three only are recounted by the sacred historian. *Was over both the Cherethites, and the Pelethites*

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.  
Or, *princes*.  
Ch. 20, 26.

thites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were || chief rulers.

## CHAP. IX.

David sends for Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, ver. 1—6. Restores to him all the land that was Saul's, and appoints him to eat at his own table, ver. 7—13.

**A**ND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may <sup>a</sup> shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. 18. 3, & 20. 14, 15, 16, 17, 42. Prov. 27. 10.

These were undoubtedly soldiers of some kind, and even such as were eminent for their valour and fidelity to the king, as is evident from 2 Sam. xv. 18, and xx. 7; and 1 Kings i. 38, 44; yet they were not common soldiers, but probably the constant guards of David's person; like the Prætorian bands among the Romans. Josephus calls them *Keepers of the body*, or *Body-guards*, who never departed from the place where the king was. That *Cherethites* is sometimes another word for *Philistines*, appears plainly from Zeph. ii. 5, and Ezek. xxv. 16. But, "that David's guards were native Philistines, of his mortal enemies, is not to be imagined, even although we should suppose them proselytes. For how could their being proselyted more effectually recommend the fidelity of any men to him, than being natives of his own country, and known and tried subjects? The only question, then, is, why any of his own subjects should be called Cherethites; and the answer is obvious. They were called so from their having gone with him into Philistia, and continued there with him all the time that he was under the protection of Achish. These were they who resorted to him from the beginning, in his utmost distress; and clave to him in all his calamities; and it is no wonder if men of such approved fidelity were in a more intimate degree of favour and confidence with the king, and enjoyed, among other privileges, an exemption from the authority of the Captain-general, and were placed under peculiar commanders. And, it will be no uncommon thing in the history of any country, to find legions and bands of soldiers, denominated, not from the place of their nativity, but that of their residence; as General Monk's troops, who sojourned with him in Scotland, were called *Coldstreamers*." Delaney. The same author apprehends the Pelethites to have been another body of troops, made up of those valiant men who resorted to David when he resided at Ziklag, among whom we find one Pelet, the son of Azmaveth, 1 Chron. xii. 3, who, it is supposed, became their captain, and from whom they were called Pelethites, as the soldiers disciplined by Fabius and Iphicrates, were called Fabians and Iphicrations. "Now, as the Cherethites adhered to David and followed his fortune from the beginning, they justly held the first degree of favour with him, and therefore they are always placed before the Pelethites who only resorted to him when he was in Ziklag; and for that reason were only intitled to the second degree of favour." See 1 Sam. xxx. 14. It must be observed, however, that the Chaldee interpretation of these terms is, *archers* and *slingers*, an interpretation which

2 And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant whose name *was* <sup>b</sup> Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art thou Ziba?* And he said, *Thy servant is he.*

3 And the king said, *Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew <sup>c</sup> the kindness of God unto him?* And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is <sup>d</sup> lame on his feet.*

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.

Ch. 16. 1.  
& 19. 17, 29.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. 20. 14.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. 4. 4.

is defended by a learned professor abroad, deriving the name *Cherethite* from *Caratha*, which, in the Arabic language, signifies to *hit the mark*, and *Pelethite*, from *pelet*, which in the same language, among other things, signifies to be *alert*, to *leap*, to *run swiftly*. The latter, therefore, he thinks were soldiers chosen for their speed, and were light armed, like the Roman *velites*, who, with their other weapons, carried very light arrows, which were called *pelles*, and the use of which came from the East.

*And David's sons were chief rulers*—For so the Hebrew word, כֹּהֲנִים, *cohanim*, generally translated *priests*, must often be interpreted. Indeed it signifies any ministers, either of God or of man. David's sons, being of the tribe of Judah, and not of the posterity of Aaron, could not be priests, according to the law. But they were among the principal officers of his court, the prime ministers of his household. Upon the whole, we find by this chapter that so long as David was zealous for the honour of God, and faithful in the discharge of his duty, God defended and protected him against his enemies, and blessed him with glory and happiness; but the scene changed when he provoked God by his sins, as we see in the sequel of his history.

CHAP. IX. Ver. 1. *And David said, Is there any left of the house of Saul*—Having ended the wars in which he had been engaged, and settled his kingdom and court, and enjoyed a short interval of peace and tranquillity, like a gleam of sun-shine in the intermittings of a storm, he now begins to consider what private obligations he was under, especially to the house of Saul, and above all to Jonathan. His prosperity had, hitherto, in no degree overset him; on the contrary, the blessings God had bestowed upon him appear to have been followed by an increase of gratitude and love to his divine benefactor, and zeal for his glory. These pious dispositions had lately given birth to a resolution of building a most magnificent temple to God's honour. And he had already made a noble provision for the work. Religion was his first care, and friendship now became his second. He recollected the strong and solemn ties thereof between him and Jonathan, confirmed by the most sacred oaths and engagements; and his present retirement from the hurry and din of war, left him at leisure to reflect upon, and take proper measures to fulfil them. *That I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake*—He does not say, *Is there any left of the house of Jonathan*; for he seems to have had no idea

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1040.

4 And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.

e Ch. 17. 27.

5 ¶ Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

f Called,  
Mephibosheth,  
1 Chron.  
2. 26.

6 Now when ¶ Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

g Ver. 1. 2.

7 ¶ And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

h 1 Sam. 24.  
14. Ch.  
19. 2.

8 And he bowed himself and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such *a* dead dog as I *am*?

9 ¶ Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him,

A. M. 2964.  
B. C. 1010.  
h Ch. 16. 4.  
& 19. 27.

<sup>b</sup> I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son <sup>1</sup> shall eat bread <sup>1</sup> alway at my table. Now Ziba had <sup>2</sup> fifteen sons and twenty servants.

i Ver. 7, 11.  
14. Ch.  
19. 26.

k Ch. 19. 17.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, <sup>1</sup> whose name *was* Micha. <sup>1</sup> And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants unto Mephibosheth.

l 1 Chron.  
2. 26.

13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: <sup>m</sup> for he did eat continually <sup>m</sup> at the king's table; and <sup>n</sup> was lame <sup>n</sup> on both his feet.

m Ver. 7, 10.  
n Ver. 3.

that he had left any son or descendant; but thought his kindness and obligation were to pass to the next of his kindred. As for Mephibosheth, he was very young and obscure, and probably concealed by his friends, lest David should cut him off, according to what had been the usual practice of princes in like cases.

Ver. 4. *He is in the house of Machir*—This Machir appears to have been a generous man, who entertained Mephibosheth out of mere compassion, not of disaffection to David; for afterwards we find him kind to David himself, when he fled from Absalom. David now little thought that the time would come when he himself should need his assistance. Let us be forward to give, because we know not what we ourselves may some time want.

Ver. 6—8. *He fell on his face and did reverence*—As the manner was when men came into the presence of the king or king's son; for thus David himself prostrated himself before Jonathan, 1 Sam. xx. 41. *I will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father*—That is, according to our mode of speaking, *thy grand-father*. This land was, perhaps, the family estate of Saul, to which he had annexed other lands for his private use. But because they had been taken by virtue of Saul's royal prerogative; therefore they were now con-

sidered, and perhaps had been seized, as appertaining to his successor on the throne, David. *And he bowed himself*—It is good to have the heart humbled under humbling providences. If, when divine providence brings our condition down, divine grace bring our spirits down, we shall be easy. *That thou shouldest look on such a dead dog*—This is an high expression of humility; for a dog was accounted a vile and unclean creature, and a dead dog as of no use at all. And it is likely, that Mephibosheth spoke this, both in regard of his bodily infirmity of lameness, and because he was not instructed in, or had no natural genius for affairs of state.

Ver. 10—13. *Mephibosheth—shall eat bread alway at my table*—Now David declares publicly what he had said privately to Mephibosheth. His family was to be maintained by the fruit of the estate that David gave him, though he himself was to eat always with David. *And he was lame on both his feet*—Or, *though he was lame, &c.* This defect and blemish did not hinder him from being entertained by the king with the greatest kindness; which procured him, though despicable in his person, honour from the people as one in great favour with the king.

A. M. 2967.  
B. C. 1057.

## CHAP. X.

*David's ambassadors are abused by Hanun, ver. 1—4. The Ammonites prepare for war and are routed, ver. 5—14. Their allies, the Syrians, rally and are defeated again, ver. 15—19.*

cir. 1037.  
a 1 Chron.  
19. 1, &c.

AND it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.

2 Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.

3 And the princes of the children

CHAP. X. Ver. 1. *The king of the children of Ammon died*—Who, it appears by the next verse, was Nahash, to whom Saul gave a very great defeat at Jabesh-Gilead, 1 Sam. xi.

Ver. 2. *As his father shewed kindness unto me*—All generous minds are full of gratitude and compassion. David here remembers the ancient benefits which he had received from Nahash, and pitied his son, who had lost such a father. What those benefits were is uncertain. It is probable, however, that, being an enemy to Saul, who had given him a great overthrow, he proved a friend to David when he was persecuted by him, sent him relief and assistance, and perhaps offered him his protection. *David sent to comfort him*—According to the present custom among princes, who send some of their courtiers to condole with those, under any loss or suffering, with whom they live in friendship. And as, it appears, there had hitherto been friendship between David and him, we must conclude that what is said of the spoils of the children of Ammon, Chap. viii. 12, is mentioned by way of anticipation, and is to be understood of the spoils taken after the victory spoken of in this chapter.

Ver. 3, 4. *Hath not David sent to search the city?*—Nothing is so well meant, but may be ill interpreted; and is wont to be so by men who love none but themselves. *And shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle*—He must not only have been very credulous, but of a bad and hasty temper; otherwise he would have dismissed them civilly, how much soever his courtiers suspected them; or have kept them in an honourable custody till the truth had been discovered. But this was the highest disgrace he could put upon them. For the wearing of long beards and long garments was then, as it is still, the fashion of the East, where they were deemed badges of honour; and consequently the cutting off and curtailing of either, was regarded as the greatest indignity; nay, in some places,

of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, † Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?

4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, <sup>b</sup> even to their buttocks; and sent them away.

5 When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.

6 ¶ And when the children of Ammon saw that they <sup>c</sup> stank be-

A. M. 2967.  
B. C. 1057.  
† Heb in  
thine eyes  
doth Da-  
vid?b Jeri. 40.  
6. & 47. 2.c Gen. 34.  
20. Exod.  
6. 21.  
1 Sam.  
15. 6.

the cutting off the beard, was not only looked upon as matter of the highest reproach, but also of the severest punishment. So it was anciently among the Indians, as we learn from Nicolaus Damascenus, mentioned by Stobæus, who says, that the king commanded the greatest offenders to be shaven, as the greatest punishment he could inflict upon them. And so it is at this day among the Persians. And it was one of the most infamous punishments of cowardice in Sparta, that they who turned their backs in the day of battle, were obliged to appear abroad with one half of their beards shaved, and the other unshaved. There were two reasons which caused the eastern people of old, as they cause them at present, to look upon the beard as venerable: 1, They considered it as a natural ornament, designed to distinguish men from women. 2, It was the mark of a free man, in opposition to slaves. So that, in every view, the indignity offered by Hanun to the ambassadors of David was capital, and, it seems, the greatest he could have done them. It was a violation of the law of nature, of hospitality, and the right of nations. Insult and contumely were added to the disgrace; half the beard was cut off to make them look ridiculous, and half the robe to make their figures at once more contemptible and indecent.—Delaney, Bishop Patrick, and Plut. in Agesilao.

Ver. 5. *Tarry at Jericho*—Which was the first place to which they came in the land of Canaan, and then a private village, where they might remain obscure till they were fit to appear in publick. *Until your beards be grown*—For though it was well known how they came to be deprived of them, yet it was not fit that persons of their quality should appear unlike all other men.

Ver. 6. *When the children of Ammon saw that they stank, &c.*—They wanted not intelligence how heinously David resented the barbarous usage of his ambassadors; which is expressed by a phrase, signifying that they were become very odious to him.

A. M. 2567.  
B. C. 1077.  
Ch. 5. 3, 5. fore David, the children of Ammon sent and hired <sup>d</sup> the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of <sup>e</sup> Ish-tob twelve thousand men.

10. the men of Tob. Judg. 11. 4, 5. 7 And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of <sup>e</sup> the mighty men.

8 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and <sup>f</sup> the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah, were by themselves in the field.

9 When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians :

10 And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon.

11 And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt

help me : but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.

12 <sup>g</sup> Be of good courage, and let us <sup>h</sup> play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God : and <sup>i</sup> the LORD do that which seemeth him good.

13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians : and they fled before him.

14 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai; and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

15 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together.

16 And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond <sup>j</sup> the river : and they came to Helam ; and <sup>k</sup> Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them.

A. M. 2568.  
B. C. 1036.  
Deut. 31. 6.  
Sam. 4. 9.  
1 Cor. 16. 13.  
1 Sam. 3. 18.

cir. 1036.

That is, Zuphrates. Or, Shobach, 1 Chron. 19. 16.

Ver. 7, 8. *He sent Joab and all the host*—He did not think it prudent to stay till they assaulted him in his own country, but went and invaded theirs. *And the children of Ammon came out, &c.*—They drew up their army, either before Rabbah, the metropolis of their country; or before Medeba, in the borders of it, where their confederates were pitched, 1 Chron. xix. 7.

Ver. 9. *The front of the battle*—Hebrew, *the face of the battle, was against him before and behind*—That is, they had divided their forces, the Syrians appearing before him, and the Ammonites behind him. *He—put them in array against the Syrians*—He, also, like an expert commander, presently divided his army into two bodies, and picked out the best soldiers to engage the Syrians, who, it seems, were the strongest, or the most valiant.

Ver. 12. *Be of good courage, &c.*—These words, it is likely, were not spoken to Abishai alone, but to all the army by their officers, that they might not be disheartened at the sight of such numerous forces as in a manner encompassed them; but be so much the more resolute for the preservation of their country. *And the Lord do that which seemeth him good*—If they did their duty he trusted Divine Providence, would favour them. But if not, he would be resigned to

God's will: He would piously leave the issue with him. And when we have done our part, according to the duty of our place, we may, with the greatest satisfaction, leave the event with God; not thinking that our efforts bind him to prosper us, but, that he may still do as he pleaseth, and yet hoping for his salvation in his own way and time.

Ver. 13, 14. *Joab drew nigh unto battle against the Syrians*—He acted very wisely in assaulting the mercenary army first; for they that are hired to fight, generally take great care to save themselves, having little regard to the cause for which they fight. *Then fled they also*—They seem not to have struck a stroke, but provided for their safety, by retiring into the city, near to which their army was drawn up. *So Joab returned*—Here is no account of the number of the slain, who, probably, were few, because they did not fight but flee. The year also seems to have been so far spent, that it was not a fit season for laying siege to the city. See Chap. xi. 1.

Ver. 15, 16. *They gathered themselves together*—Fearing David would fall upon them for assisting his enemies, they resolved to be beforehand with him; and therefore levied a new army to invade his territories. *And Hadarezer*—Who was king of Aram Zoba in Mesopotamia, sent and brought



A. M. 2969.  
B. C. 1036.

17 And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.

1 Chron. 19. 15.  
footmen.

18 And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand <sup>k</sup>horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there.

1 Ch. 8. 6.

19 And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and <sup>l</sup>served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

out the Syrians that were beyond the river—That is, beyond Euphrates; which was the bound of his territories eastward, Chap. viii. 3.

Ver. 17, 18. *David passed over Jordan*—In this expedition, David seems to have commanded his army in his own person. But, notwithstanding, the Syrians appear to have begun the fight. *David slew the men of seven hundred chariots, &c.*—The parallel place, 1 Chron. xix. 18, reads, *seven thousand men that fought in chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and not horsemen* as here. It is probable, either that horse and foot were mixed together, and that, in all, there were slain forty thousand of them, part horsemen and part footmen; or, as many learned men suppose, that some error has crept into the text in one of the places. Houbigant is of opinion, that the text here, corrected from the parrallel passage, should be read, *David destroyed seven thousand horsemen, seven hundred chariots, and forty thousand footmen.*

Ver. 19. *The kings that were servants to Hadarezer*—He being the most powerful prince in those parts, it appears there were several petty kings that were subject to him. *They made peace with Israel, and served them*—As it is likely Hadarezer himself also did: whereby God fulfilled his promise to Abraham, (which was renewed to Joshua) of enlarging the dominion of his posterity as far as Euphrates. See Gen. xv. 18; Josh. i. 2, 3, 4. Wonderful to reflect on! kingdoms and vast tracts of country, which were promised by God, ages before, to the posterity of a man who had not one foot of property in them, we see here all falling, with a very particular exactness, under the dominion of one of the posterity of him to whom they had been promised! So faithful is God, and all his purposes will be fulfilled! Thus, in the space of nineteen or twenty years, David had the happiness of finishing gloriously eight wars, all righteously under-

CHAP. XI.

A. M. 2969.  
B. C. 1036.

David commits adultery with Bathsheba, ver. 1—5. Endeavours to father the child upon Uriah, ver. 6—13. Contrives the death of Uriah, ver. 14—25. Marries Bathsheba, ver. 26, 27.

cir. 1035.

AND it came to pass, †after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that <sup>a</sup>David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

† Heb. at the return of the year, 1 Kings 20. 27, 28. 2 Chron. 36. 10. 1 Chron. 20. 1.

2 And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed, <sup>b</sup>and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he <sup>c</sup>saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

b Deut. 22. 8.

c Gen. 34. 9. Job 31. 2. Matt. 5. 28.

taken, and all honourably terminated; namely, 1, The civil war with Ishbosheth; 2, The war against the Jebusites; 3, Against the Philistines and their allies; 4, Against the Philistines alone; 5, Against the Moabites; 6, Against Hadarezer; 7, Against the Idumeans; 8, Against the Ammonites and Syrians. We shall soon see this last entirely completed, by the conquest of the kingdom of the Ammonites, abandoned by their allies. What glory for the monarch of Israel, had not the splendour of this illustrious epocha been obscured by a complication of crimes, of which one could never have even suspected him! See Delaney.

CHAP. XI. Ver. 1. *After the year was expired*—Hebrew, *at the return of the year*: when that year ended, and the next begun, which was in the spring time. *When kings go forth to battle*—Which is, when the ground is fit for the march of soldiers, and brings forth provision for man and beast. *David sent Joab—and all Israel*—All his soldiers. *And they destroyed the children of Ammon*—Laid waste their country, and killed all the people they could meet with. *But David tarried still at Jerusalem*—He committed the care of this war to Joab, and did not himself go out to fight; as he had done against Hadarezer: had he been now in his post at the head of his forces, he had been out of the way of temptation.

Ver. 2. *David arose from off his bed*—Where he had lain down to sleep in the heat of the day, as the manner was in those countries; and where he had probably slept for some time. The bed of sloth often proves the bed of lust. *And walking upon the roof of his house*—To take the fresh air, for the roofs of their houses in that country were flat for this purpose. *He saw a woman washing herself*—In a bath, which was in her garden; probably from some ceremonial pollution.

A. M. 2969.  
B. C. 1035.

3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, Is not this || Bathsheba, the daughter of || Eliam, the wife <sup>d</sup> of Uriah the Hittite?

Or, Bathsheba,  
1 Chron. 3. 5.  
Or, Ammiel.  
Ch. 22. 59.

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and <sup>e</sup> he lay with her; || for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.

e Ps. 91.  
title.  
Jam. 1. 14.  
Or, and when she had purified herself, &c.  
she returned.  
Lev. 15. 19. & 15. 19.

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child.

6 ¶ And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

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7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him † how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered?

† Heb. of the peace of, &amp;c.

8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there † followed him a mess of meat from the king.

† Gen. 18. 4. &amp; 19. 2.

† Heb. went out after him.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of

Ver. 3. *David sent and enquired after the woman*—Thus, instead of suppressing that desire, which the sight of his eyes had kindled, he seeks rather to feed it; and first enquires who she was; that if she were unmarried he might make her either his wife or his concubine. *And one said, Is not this Bathsheba?*—This seems to have been an answer given by some one to David's enquiry. Uriah is called a Hittite, because he was such by nation, but a proselyte to the Jewish religion; and for his valour made one of the king's guards among the Cherethites and the Pelethites; which was the reason, perhaps, that he had an house so near the king's.

Ver. 4. *David sent messengers and took her*—From her own house into his palace, not by force, but by persuasion. *And he lay with her*—See how all the way to sin is down hill! When men begin they cannot soon stop themselves. *And she returned unto her house*—With a guilty conscience, and oppressed with terror, no doubt; for she had committed a sin for which the law condemned her to be stoned. She returned, it is probable, early in the morning, to prevent discovery. But how little did it avail to conceal from man a crime, of the commission of which the holy and sin-avenging God, who is no respecter of persons, had been a witness! Alas! for poor Bathsheba! Her confusion and distress were doubtless unutterable. But, in the mean time, who can describe the wretched state of David's mind, when the tumult of passion was subsided, Bathsheba departed, and reason and reflection returned! "The calm reflections of a spirit truly religious," says Dr. Delaney, "will best imagine the horrors of so complicated a guilt on the recoil of conscience; when all those passions, whose blandishments, but a few moments before, deluded, seduced, and overset his reason, now resumed their full deformity; or rushed into their contrary extremes; desire, into distraction; the sweets of pleasure, into bitterness of soul; love, into self-detestation; and hope almost into the horrors of despair. The wife of one of his own worthies, apparently an innocent and a valuable woman, abused, and tainted, and brought to the very brink of ruin and infamy! A brave man basely dishonoured! and a faithful subject, irreparably injured! The laws of God trampled under foot, of that God who had so eminently distinguished, exalted, and honoured him! Well might he cry out, in the anguish of this distracted condition, *Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me!* In one word, his condition was now so dread-

ful, that it was not easy to bring himself to the presumption of even petitioning for mercy! And this I take to be the true reason why we find no Psalm of David penned upon this occasion." Here we may observe, that any other historian, but the *sacred*, would have endeavoured to draw a veil over the conduct of the admired hero of his story, that his reader might not see him falling into such crimes, as would shock us even in the most abandoned of men. But the Scriptures are divine. They were written by persons whom divine inspiration had raised above the low thoughts of the mere human mind, and they therefore proceed in another manner. They give us a faithful account of things, without any false colouring, without partiality to any one, without concealing the blemishes or vices of the most favoured characters. For they were intended as well to instruct us by the sins of these persons as by their virtues, and therefore set forth their example in all its parts, that we may as well learn to shun the former as to imitate the latter. We have in this crime of David with Bathsheba as strong a picture represented to us, as ever was set before the eyes of men, of the true nature and progress of vice, how it insinuates itself into the corrupt minds of men, how easily it overcomes them, if not resisted, and how it proceeds from bad to worse, till, it may be, it plunges them into the greatest depth of iniquity and misery, even, as we see here, into adultery and murder!

Ver. 5, 6. *The woman conceived, and sent and told David*—She was afraid of infamy, and perhaps of the severity of her husband, who might cause her to be stoned. And therefore she prays David to consult her honour and safety. *Send me Uriah the Hittite*—It is likely David ordered an account of the state of the war to be sent by him, as a colour for having sent for him home.

Ver. 8, 9. *David said, Go down to thy house*—Not doubting but he would there converse with his wife, and so hide their sin and shame. *There followed him a mess of meat from the king*—In token of David's peculiar favour and kindness to him; and that eating freely of good cheer, he might be the more desirous of enjoying the company of his wife. *But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house*—Like a true soldier, he lay all night in the guard-chamber, and did not go home to his wife. This he did by the secret influence of God upon his mind, and the order of his wise providence, that David's sin might be brought to light notwithstanding all his contrivances to conceal it.

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the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from *thy* journey? why *then* didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, <sup>a Ch. 7. 2, 6.</sup> The ark, and Israel, and Judah, <sup>b</sup> abide in tents; and <sup>c</sup> my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? <sup>d Ch. 30. 6.</sup> as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah,

Ver. 10. *David said, Camest thou not from thy journey?*—Wearied with hard service and travel; nor did I expect or desire that thou shouldst now attend upon my person, or keep watch among my guards. He still artfully pretends kindness to him, and great care of him.

Ver. 11. *The ark, and Israel, and Judah abide in tents*—It appears by this that the custom, which we read of, 1 Sam. iv. 4, of carrying the ark with them into the field, was still continued. It was done, no doubt, both for the encouragement of the army, who were taught to consider it as a token of the divine presence with them, and favour to them, and also for their direction, that they might consult God in any difficult case. *My lord Joab and the servants of my lord are in the open field*—In tents which are in the fields. His meaning is,—Now, when God's people are in a doubtful and dangerous condition, it becomes me to sympathize with them, and to abstain even from lawful delights. What a generosity of temper does Uriah shew in these words! David's heart, one might have expected, would have been deeply touched to think how he had abused so brave a man, and how vilely he had indulged himself in sinful pleasures, while this man, and the rest of the brave army were gloriously enduring all manner of hardships, and refusing the most innocent gratifications, for his service and the service of their country. But, alas! he was at present in so corrupt a state of mind, that he was rather grieved than rejoiced to find Uriah so true a soldier.

Ver. 12, 13. *Tarry here to-day*—He pretended still more kindness to him in giving him time to rest himself after his journey; and perhaps pretended also that he could not sooner finish the despatches which he intended to send by him to Joab. *When David had called him in*—Invited him to supper the night before he went away. *And he made him drunk*—He made him merry, as the Hebrew word often signifies. He caused him to drink more than was proper. What mean

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Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him <sup>k</sup> drunk: and <sup>k Gen. 19. 24, 25.</sup> at even he went out to lie on his bed <sup>l</sup> with the servants of his lord, <sup>l Ver. 9.</sup> but went not down to his house.

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David <sup>m</sup> wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. <sup>m 1 Kings 21. 6.</sup>

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the <sup>†</sup> hottest battle, and retire ye <sup>† Heb. strong.</sup> <sup>† Heb. from after him.</sup> from him, that he may <sup>n</sup> be smitten, and die. <sup>n Ch. 12. 9.</sup>

and shameful contrivances did David employ against this brave man! How base is sin, how low it will make men stoop, and what vile and unworthy things it will induce them to do! This was a great addition to David's sin, that by one evil he endeavoured to effect another, by intoxicating Uriah he strove to make him forget his oath before-mentioned.

Ver. 15. *Retire ye from him, that he may be smitten and die*—Thus swift is the progress of vice! thus does it lead from bad to worse! thus does it corrupt man's whole nature, and bring him to such degeneracy as he could not before have thought himself capable of! So far is David from repenting, that he seeks to cover one scandalous and wicked action by another still more scandalous and wicked; to conceal the great crime of adultery by the still greater crime of murder! How are the beginnings of sin to be dreaded! for who knows where they will end? David hath sinned, therefore Uriah must die! That innocent, valiant, gallant man, who was ready to die for his prince's honour, must die by his prince's hand! See how *fleshy lusts war against the soul*, and what devastations they make in that war! How they blind the eyes, sear the conscience, harden the heart, and destroy all sense of honour and justice! See the shameful and deplorable change which they have made in David! Is this the man whose heart smote him because he had cut off Saul's skirt? who more than once generously saved the life of his most bitter enemy when he had it in his power; but who is now using the basest contrivances to take away the life of a most worthy and faithful servant? Is this he that executed judgment and justice to all his people; and that exercised himself in God's laws day and night, conscious what extraordinary favours he had received from him, and the infinite obligations he was under to him; the just, the generous, the pious David? Yes, this is the very man. Alas! how can he do such unjust and base actions? How can he be so ungrateful to his heavenly benefactor, as thus to transgress and trample under foot his

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16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew the valiant men *were*.

17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

18 ¶ Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war:

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,

20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

• Judg. 9.  
55.¶ Judg. 6.  
32. Jerub-  
baal.

21 Who smote ° Abimelech the son of P Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a milstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall?

law in the most capital of all its articles? How can he give such scandal and cause of stumbling to his subjects, whose piety and virtue he was appointed to promote? And how can he thus expose to contempt and reproach the true religion amongst the idolatrous nations all around? Alas! sin, through its deceitfulness, has gained entrance, and re-established its empire in his soul! Sin has produced this horrid transformation in the mind and heart of one of the bravest and worthiest of men! Reader! take warning, and withstand the first assaults of evil, lest, if they once prevail, they deprive thee of all religious and moral sense and feeling, and plunge thee into the greatest depth of guilt and baseness, to the present dishonour of God and religion, and thy own everlasting ruin and misery!

Ver. 16, 17. *Where he knew that valiant men were*—He ordered him, with others, to attack a part of the city which he knew would be valiantly defended; or out of which he knew the best men they had in the city would issue forth against them. Joab also was herein very guilty in complying with David's wicked command; unless he supposed that Uriah had committed some great crime, for which David, consulting his honour, chose to punish him in this manner, rather than openly. *The men of the city went out*—They seem to have made a sally out of the city upon the Israelites, when they saw the latter were preparing for an assault. *There fell some*

Then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

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22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and *some* of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing † displease thee, for the sword devoureth † one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.

† Heb. be  
erill in  
thine  
eyes.  
† Heb. so  
and such.

26 ¶ And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was

of the servants of David—This was a further aggravation of David's sin, that he not only exposed an innocent and a valiant faithful servant to be killed, but other persons also with him, who might otherwise have lived to have done good service to their country. For it is not to be imagined that David meant Uriah to be set alone in the fore-front of the battle, where the service was hottest, but that there was to be a party with him, whom he was to lead on. This was accordingly ordered by Joab, and those men fell with Uriah.

Ver. 25. *Let not this thing displease thee*—Be not disheartened by this loss. David shewed no sign of grief or displeasure at these tidings, as he heard the news which he desired of Uriah's death. *The sword devoureth one as well as another*—Makes no distinction between good and bad. *Make thy battle more strong, &c.*—Assault the city with greater force, till thou art made master of it. *And encourage thou him*—Joab and his soldiery.

Ver. 27. *When the mourning was past*—Which commonly continued only the space of seven days, 1 Sam. xxxi. 13; nor could the nature of the thing admit of longer delay, lest the too early birth of the child should discover David's sin. *Bare a son*—By which, it appears, that David continued in the state of impenitency for divers months together; and this notwithstanding his frequent attendance upon God's ordinances. Which is an eminent instance of the corruption

A. M. 2970.  
B. C. 1034.  
q Ch. 12. 9.

past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she <sup>a</sup> became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done <sup>†</sup> displeased the LORD.

† H. b. was evil in the eyes of.

CHAP. XII.

*Nathan delivers and applies his parable, ver. 1—12. David repents, and is forgiven, but punished, ver. 13, 14. The sickness and death of the child, with David's behaviour on the occasion, ver. 15—23. The birth of Solomon, ver. 24, 25. The taking of Rabbah, ver. 26—31.*

cir. 1034.  
a Ps. 51, title.  
b Ch. 14, 5, &c.  
1 Kings 20, 25, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

**A**ND the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And <sup>a</sup> he came unto him, and <sup>b</sup> said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and

of man's nature, of the deceitfulness of sin, and of the tremendous judgment of God in punishing one sin by delivering a man up to another.

CHAP. XII. Ver. 1. *The Lord sent Nathan unto David*—When the ordinary means did not awaken David to repentance, God takes an extraordinary course. Thus the merciful Lord pities and prevents him who had so horribly forsaken God. *He said*—He prudently ushers in his reproof with a parable, after the manner of the eastern nations, that so he might surprise David, and cause him unawares to give sentence against himself.

Ver. 2, 3. *Many flocks and herds*—Denoting David's many wives and concubines, with whom he might have been satisfied. *One little ewe-lamb*—It appears by this that Uriah had but one wife, with whom he was well contented. *Which he had bought*—Or, had procured. Men frequently purchased their wives in those days, giving to their parents a sum of money for them. *It did eat of his meat, &c.*—These words express the exceeding care which the poor man took of his one sheep, and the value he put upon it, as being, in some manner, his chief substance, furnishing him with milk food, and wool for clothing; and they are intended to signify how dear his wife was to Uriah, and the high estimation in which he held her.

Ver. 4. *There came a traveller unto the rich man*—This aptly signifies David's roving affection, which he suffered to wander from his own home, and to covet another man's wife. The Jewish doctors say it represents the evil disposition or

with his children; it did eat of his own <sup>†</sup> meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

A. M. 2970.  
B. C. 1034.  
† Heb. morsel.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, *As* the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing **||** shall surely die:

Or, is worthy to die, or, is a son of death. 1 Sam. 30. 16. Exod. 22. 1. Luke 19. 8.

6 And he shall restore the lamb <sup>c</sup> fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 ¶ And Nathan said to David, *Thou art* the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I <sup>d</sup> anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

d 1 Sam. 16. 12.

desire that is in us, which must be carefully watched and resisted when we feel its motions. *But took the poor man's lamb*—Nathan, in this parable, omits touching the murder committed to cover the adultery, perhaps in order that David might not readily apprehend his meaning, and so be induced, unawares, to pronounce sentence of condemnation upon himself.

Ver. 5, 6. *David's anger was greatly kindled, &c.*—So many base and aggravated circumstances appeared to him to attend it, that he thought it deserving of capital punishment. *The man shall surely die*—This seems more than the fact deserved, or than he had commission to inflict for it. But it is observable, that David now when he was most indulgent to himself, and to his own sin, was most severe, and even unjust, to others; as appears by this passage, and the following relation, Ver. 31, which was done in the time of David's impenitent continuance in his sin. *He shall restore the lamb four-fold*—This was agreeable to the law, Exod. xxii. 1.

Ver. 7. *Nathan said to David, Thou art the man*—Though he took such a mild, gentle, and prudent manner to bring David to a proper view and just sense of his sin; yet he deals faithfully with him at the last, and sets his iniquity before him in all its aggravations. Thus, in a similar way, by most appropriate and striking parables, our Lord set the sin, which the Jews were about to commit in crucifying him, before them, in so clear a light, and shewed it to be so inexcusable, that they were led, before they were aware, to pass an equally severe sentence against themselves. See Matt. xxi. 28—46 The Jews, however, when they perceived

A. M. 2970.  
B. C. 1034.

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

e 1 Sam. 15.  
17.  
f Num. 15.  
31.g Ch. 11. 15.  
16, 17, 27.

9 <sup>e</sup> Wherefore hast thou <sup>f</sup> despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? <sup>g</sup> thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore <sup>h</sup> the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

A. M. 2970.  
B. C. 1034.  
h Amos 7. 9.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will <sup>i</sup> take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

i Dent. 24.  
30, Ch. 16.  
22.

12 For thou didst *it* secretly: <sup>k</sup> but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

k Ch. 16.  
22.

that Christ referred to them in his parables, were only exasperated the more, and sought the sooner to lay hands on him. But David, being, although greatly fallen, of a different spirit, was brought by Nathan's words, to deep and lasting repentance. Oh, how did Nathan's application of his parable, *Thou art the man*, pronounced in all the dignity and authority of the prophetic character, sink into David's soul especially when he proceeded to a further explication of the greatness of his iniquity, which he does in the following words. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel—Nathan now speaks, not as a petitioner from a poor man, but as an ambassador from the great Jehovah. *I anointed thee king over Israel, &c.*—Thus he aggravates David's sin, from the obligations he was under to God, who had raised him to the highest dignity, from a very low condition, and had extricated him from the greatest dangers and distresses.

Ver. 8. *I gave thee thy master's house*—All that pertained to him as a king, which came, of course, to David, as his successor. *Thy master's wives into thy bosom*—For the wives of a king went along with his lands and goods unto his successor, it being unlawful for the widow of a king to be wife to any but a king, as appears by the story of Adonijah. The expression in the text, however, does not necessarily signify that David married any of them; nor have we any proof that he did. Indeed, it is doubtful whether he could, consistently with the law of God. See Lev. xviii. 8, 15. The meaning seems only to be, that God put them into David's power, together with Saul's house and other property. *And gave thee the house of Israel*—Dominion over the twelve tribes. *And if that had been too little, &c.*—He needed but have asked, and God would have given him all he could have reasonably desired.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast killed Uriah*—David's contriving his death, was as bad as if he had killed him with his own hand. *With the sword of the children of Ammon*—This was an aggravation of his crime, that he caused him to be slain by the professed enemies of God, who doubtless triumphed in the slaughter of so great a man. *Hast taken his wife, &c.*—To marry her whom he had defiled, and whose husband he had slain, was an affront upon the ordinance of marriage, making that not only to palliate, but in a manner to consecrate such

villanies. In all this he *despised the word of the Lord*; (so it is in the Hebrew.) Not only his commandment in general, but the particular word of promise, which God had before sent him by Nathan, that he would *build him an house*: which sacred promise if he had had a due value for, he would not have polluted his house with lust and blood.

Ver. 10. *The sword shall never depart from thine house*—During the residue of thy life. As long as he lived, at times there should be destruction made in his family by the sword, which was awfully fulfilled in the violent deaths of his children, Ammon and Absalom, and about the time of his death, Adonijah.

Ver. 11, 12. *I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house*—Which was notoriously fulfilled in Absalom's conspiracy against him. *I will take thy wives before thine eyes*—Openly, so that thou shalt know it as certainly as if thou didst see it, and yet shalt not be able to prevent it. For Absalom had a tent spread upon the house top, and there went in unto them. *And give them unto thy neighbour*—I shall, by my providence, give power over them to one, who is very near unto thee. But God expresseth this darkly, that the accomplishment of it might not be hindered. *I will do this thing before all Israel*—It was made notorious to all, that David fled in haste from his son, and left his wives and concubines behind him. "Whoever," says Dr. Delaney, "considers the predictions of divine vengeance now denounced against David, must surely find them to be very extraordinary. His family to continue beyond any other regal race in the known world and yet the sword to continue as long—never to depart from it! A king, the greatest of his time! his dominion thoroughly established, and his enemies under his feet; highly honoured and beloved at home, and as highly awful to all the neighbouring nations!—Such a king threatened to have his wives publicly prostituted before the face of all his people! And, what is yet stranger, more shocking, and more incredible, by one of his own race! and, as a sure proof of this, the darling offspring of his guilt to perish quickly, before his eyes! He alone, who fills futurity, could foresee this; he alone, who sways the world; and knows what evil appetites and dispositions, unrestrained, will attempt and perpetrate, could pronounce it."

A.M. 2670  
B.C. 1034.

13 <sup>1</sup> And David said unto Nathan, <sup>m</sup> I have sinned against the LORD.

And Nathan said unto David, <sup>n</sup> The LORD also hath <sup>o</sup> put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD <sup>p</sup> to blaspheme, the child also *that is born unto thee* shall surely die.

<sup>n</sup> Eccles. 47. 11.  
<sup>o</sup> Ch. 21. 10.  
<sup>p</sup> Ps. 32. 1.  
Job 7. 21.  
Mic. 7. 18.  
Zech. 3. 4.  
<sup>q</sup> Isai. 52.  
5. Ezek. 36. 20. 33.  
Rom. 2. 24.

15 ¶ And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David <sup>†</sup> fasted, and went in, and <sup>q</sup> lay all night upon the earth.

17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him

<sup>†</sup> Heb. fasted a fast.  
<sup>q</sup> Ch. 13. 21.

Ver. 13. *David said—I have sinned against the Lord*—Overwhelmed with shame, stung with remorse, and oppressed with a dreadful sense of the divine vengeance, impending, and ready to fall upon himself and his family, he could only give utterance to this short confession. How sincere and serious it was, what a deep sense he now had of his guilt, and from what a softened, penetrated, broken, and contrite heart, his acknowledgment proceeded, we may see in the Psalms he penned on this occasion, especially the 51st. *The Lord also hath put away thy sin*—That is, so far as concerns thy own life. *Thou shalt not die*—As, according to thy own sentence, Ver. 5, thou dost deserve, and mightest justly expect to do from God's immediate stroke; though possibly thou mightest elude the law before a human judicature, or there should be no superior to execute the law upon thee. There is something unspeakably gracious in this sudden sentence of pardon, pronounced by the prophet in the instant of David's confession of guilt and humiliation before God, even if we consider it as only implying exemption from the stroke of temporal death, and the granting him space for repentance, and for making his peace with God, with respect to his spiritual and immortal interests. And this seems to be the true light in which we ought to view it. If the Psalm we have just mentioned was written after the event of Nathan's coming to him, as the title of it signifies, and as is generally allowed, it is evident David did not yet consider himself as pardoned by God, or in a state of reconciliation with him. For, in that Psalm, we find, not any thanksgivings for pardon actually obtained, but several most fervent supplications and entreaties for it as a blessing not yet granted. It may, therefore, be true enough, as Dr. Delaney supposes, that David's pardon was not obtained by the instantaneous submission which he expressed, when he said, *I have sinned*; but that a long and bitter repentance preceded it; and yet, that able divine may be mistaken, as it seems evident from the whole narrative, he is, in supposing that repentance took place before Nathan was sent to him. The sacred historian gives no intimation of David's being awakened to a proper sense of guilt, or of his being made truly penitent for it, till the application of Nathan's parable. Then, and not before, it appears, he began to feel the compunction and distress expressed in that and the 32d Psalm, during the continuance of which, *day and night God's hand was heavy upon him: his moi-ture was turned into the drought of summer, and his bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long*. Some time after, but how long we are not told, he was made a partaker of the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered; and that on his own

certain knowledge and experience: for he says, *I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*.

Ver. 14. *Great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme*—To reproach God and his people, and the true religion. For, although these were not concerned in David's sin, but the blame and shame of it belonged entirely to himself; yet, heathens and wicked men, would, according to their own evil hearts, endeavour to throw the reproach of it upon God, and religion; as if God were unholy, because the man, whom he had termed a *man after his own heart*, was so; and partial in conniving at so great a crime in him, when Saul was cast off for an apparently less sin; and negligent in the government of the world, and of his church, in suffering such wickedness, as even heathens have abhorred, to go unpunished: and, as if all religion were but hypocrisy, and imposture, and a pretence for villainies! The neighbouring nations, in particular, might well take occasion to object to the Israelites, that they had no room to boast much about the purity of their religion; since he whom they acknowledged to be their best king, and the great favourite of their God, was guilty of such atrocious crimes. And the Ammonites, upon their success against Uriah and his party, would, doubtless, magnify and praise their idols, and blaspheme the God of Israel. *The child that is born unto thee shall surely die*—David seems to have been much taken with Bathsheba, and very desirous of having a child by her, otherwise it is hardly to be supposed, that he would have been so distressed at the denunciation of its death; especially, as its life must needs have been a standing monument of his adultery, and of the murder of Uriah. It must be observed, that the immediate infliction of this punishment was a certain token that Nathan was sent by God, and that the other threatenings which he had denounced would be executed.

Ver. 15, 16. *The Lord struck the child*—With some sudden and dangerous distemper. *David besought God for the child*—Supposing the threatening might be conditional, and so the execution of it prevented by prayer. *And went in*—Viz. into his closet to pray, solitarily and earnestly. Or, perhaps, into the sanctuary, where the ark of God was; where he lay all night on the earth, humbling himself, mourning, repenting, weeping, praying, with all the agonies of the most bitter grief.

Ver. 17. *The elders of his house*—The chief officers of his kingdom and household. *He would not*—This excessive mourning did not proceed simply from the fear of the loss of the child; but from a deep sense of his sin, and the divine displeasure manifested herein.



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up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

† Heb. do  
hurt.

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel,

† Ruth 2. 3.

Ver. 18. *On the seventh day the child died*—The seventh from the beginning of the distemper. “Thus was the first instance of the divine vengeance for David’s guilt, speedily and rigidly executed: other instances of it were fulfilled in their order, before his own eyes, as will abundantly appear in the sequel of this history; and the dreadfulest of all the rest, *The sword shall never depart from thine house*, sadly and successively fulfilled in his posterity; from the death of Amnon, by the order of his own brother, to the slaughter of the sons of Zedekiah before his own eyes, by the king of Babylon.” We may learn from hence therefore, that God is no respecter of persons, for David’s guilt was as signally and dreadfully punished, in his own person, and in his posterity, as, perhaps, any guilt in any other person, since Adam. “The Jews are of opinion that his own decree of repaying the robbery four-fold, was strictly executed upon him. The deflowering of Tamar by her own brother; the death of four sons, three of them before his own eyes, and one by the hand of his brother; the unnatural rebellion of one son, which brought him almost to the brink of ruin; the prostitution of ten wives in the sight of all his subjects; and the successive and signal massacre of his posterity; besides the distress of his own public shame and infamy, added to at least one cruel disease.”—These are surely awful proofs that God did not connive at sin in David any more than in any other. Why then are the scoffers so fond of urging and dwelling on the heinous crimes of David? Do the holy Scriptures deny them? No, they set them forth, with all their aggravating circumstances, but, at the same time, they assure us, they were followed by such a train of calamities, as is enough to make every sinner tremble; since it affords an indubitable proof, that the ALMIGHTY GOVERNOR of the world, is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity without

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and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

Job 1. 20.

21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.

22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

Isa. 55. 1.  
5. Jonah  
3. 9.

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

Job 7. 9.  
10.

24 ¶ And David comforted Bath-

detestation, and, that every species of vice and wickedness, in whomsoever it is found, will certainly be punished under his government. Let the reader consider these things, and then say, Whether David’s example be an encouragement to sin? Who would incur his guilt, to go through such a scene of sorrow and suffering? See Delaney.

Ver. 20. *David arose from the earth and changed his apparel*—Put off the habit of a mourner, and prepared himself to appear before God. *And came into the house of the Lord*—That is, to the tabernacle, to confess his sin before the Lord, to own his justice in this stroke, to deprecate his just displeasure, to acknowledge God’s rich mercy in sparing his own life; and to offer such sacrifices as were required in such cases.

Ver. 23. *Wherefore should I fast*—Seeing fasting and prayer cannot now prevail with God for his life. *I shall go to him*—Into the state of the dead in which he is, and into heaven, where, I doubt not, I shall find him. Or, as Mr. Saurin paraphrases the words, “If I cannot have the consolation to partake with this infant, the temporal happiness wherewith the divine goodness hath blessed me, I hope to rejoin his soul one day in heaven, and to partake with him eternal felicity.” As David undoubtedly believed in the immortality of the soul, and even in the resurrection of the body, it would be quite unreasonable to leave out this latter idea, and suppose, with some commentators, that he only meant he should die and go to the grave like his son, which would be a very poor consolation. But, considered in the light here stated, his words convey the most satisfactory comfort, and “are the noblest lesson,” says Delaney, “upon all that is reasonable and religious in grief that ever was penned.”

Ver. 24, 25. *And David comforted Bathsheba his wife*—

5 s

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10.33.  
x Matt. 1. 6.  
y 1 Chron. 22. 9.

sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.

i That is, Beloved of the Lord.

x 1 Chron. 20. 1.  
y Deut. 3. 11.

25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name ||Jedidiah because of the LORD.

26 ¶ And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.

27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters.

28 Now therefore gather the rest

Who, no doubt, was deeply afflicted for the loss of her child, and dejected for her sin. It is observable, however, that there is not one word said to her in all this relation, either concerning her guilt or her punishment. She was punished in the calamities that befel David; who enticed her, and not she him, to commit the foul sin of adultery, and was innocent in the murder of Uriah. *She bare a son, and he called his name Solomon*—Probably his mother, with the consent of David, gave him this name as soon as he was born. *And the Lord loved him*—That is, the Lord declared to David, probably by Nathan the prophet, that he loved this his son, notwithstanding the just cause which David had given to God, to withdraw his love from him and his. Perhaps, after his great humiliation, Nathan was sent to comfort him with this good hope, that God would have a peculiar regard for this son, and make him very famous. Such is the wonderful goodness of God to truly penitent sinners, who manifest the sincerity of their repentance by an humble submission to whatsoever punishments God sees fit to inflict upon them (as David did to the death of the former child) and thereby induce that goodness to shew them still further mercy. *He sent*—viz. God did, by Nathan, and he called his name Jedidiah—That is, beloved of Jehovah. *Because of the Lord*—Either because of the Lord's love to him, or because the Lord commanded him to do so. This name, however, was merely significative, being only intended to express to the child's parents what they might expect; for we find him always called Solomon in the Scriptures.

Ver. 26, 27. *Took the royal city*—That is, that part of the city where the king's palace was; though now, it seems, he was retired to a strong fort. It is not to be supposed that Joab continued the siege so long as till David had two children by Bathsheba; this was done soon after the death of Uriah, when David commanded them to assault the city with greater force. *The city of waters*—That part of the city which lay open, or was encompassed with the water; the other part, which was the upper city, and probably much stronger, was not yet taken.

Ver. 28. *Encamp against the city, and take it*—For having taken one part of the city, he concluded the remaining

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† Heb. my name be called upon it.

b 1 Chron. 20. 3.

† Heb. very great.

of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it: lest I take the city, and it be called after my name.

29 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.

30 And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.

31 And he brought forth the peo-

part of it could not long stand out. *Lest I take the city—Lest I have the honour of taking it. And it be called by my name*—As from the conquest of Africa, the Roman general, Scipio, many ages after, was called Africanus. By this it appears that though Joab had many faults, yet he loved his prince, and endeavoured to raise his glory. "There is a magnificence in this proposal, capable of creating admiration in the meanest minds. The man that could transfer the glory of his own conquests upon his prince, needs no higher eulogy. And it is but justice to the character of Joab to declare that he is supreme, if not unrivalled, in this singular instance of heroism. Rabbah, it must be observed, was a royal, a large, and a populous city, the metropolis of Arabia Felix, watered, and in some measure, encompassed by the river Jabbok. It had its name from its grandeur, being derived from a Hebrew word which signifies to increase and grow great, and was now in the height of its glory."—Delaney.

Ver. 29. *David gathered all the people and went*—The reader will naturally observe that this was an expedition which came very seasonably to relieve David in his distress, and to revive his glory in arms. And if Joab considered it in this light, as in all probability he did, the praise of his generosity is still more ennobled in this view.

Ver. 30. *He took the king's crown from off his head*—This was the king's part of the spoil. *The weight thereof was a talent of gold*—Or rather, the price or value of it, as the Hebrew frequently signifies, and not only weight; and so it is to be taken here; for who could be able to carry on his head such a weight as a talent; which is computed to be 125 pounds. *With precious stones*—Which made the value of it so great. Josephus says that there was a stone of great price in the middle of the crown, which he calls a sardonyx. *And it was set on David's head*—To shew the inhabitants that they were to submit to him as their king.

Ver. 31. *He brought forth the people*—The words are indefinite, and therefore not necessarily to be understood of all the people, but of the men of war, and especially of those who had been the chief actors of that villainous action against David's ambassadors, and of the dreadful war ensuing upon

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ple that *were* therein, and put *them* under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.

it; for which they deserved severe punishments. Indeed, since David left Shobi in the government of Rabbah, Ch. xvii. 27, it must be presumed that he left some besides female subjects under his dominion; and it is most likely that the bulk of the people were received to mercy, and only the king and the accomplices and instruments of his tyranny suffered the chastisements due to their guilt. *And put them under saws, &c.*—The Hebrew, *וַיִּשֶׁב בְּמִנֵּהוּם*, *vajuscem bammegeerah*, &c. may be literally and properly rendered, *And he put them to the saw, and to iron harrows, or mines, and to axes of iron, and made them pass by, or to, the brick-kilns*; that is, he made them slaves, and put them to the most servile employments, viz. sawing, harrowing, or making iron harrows, or mining, hewing of wood, and making brick. The version of the Seventy, though not very clear, may be interpreted to the same purpose. The Syriac and Arabic versions render the passage, *He brought them out, and threw them into chains, and iron shackles, and made them pass before him in a proper measure, or by companies at a time.* If the parallel place, 1 Chron. xx. 3, which our version renders, *He cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes*, be objected, it must be observed, the Hebrew, *וַיִּשֶׁב*, *vajasser*, may be rendered, *He separated to the saw, &c.*; Or, *He ruled, or governed by the saw, harrows, mines, and axes*, made them slaves, and condemned them to these servile employments. Thus the words are rendered by Schmidius. And “this interpretation,” says Dr. Dodd, “is far from being forced, is agreeable to the proper sense and construction of the words, and will vindicate David from any inhumanity that can be charged upon the man after God’s own heart. The Syriac version is, *He bound them with iron chains, &c.; and thus he bound them all.* And the Arabic, *He bound them all with chains, killing none of the Ammonites.* This interpretation may be farther confirmed by the next clause: *Thus did he unto all the children of Ammon*—For had he destroyed all the inhabitants by these or any methods of severity, it would have been an almost total extirpation of them; and yet we read of them as united with the Moabites, and the inhabitants of Seir, and forming a very large army to invade the dominions of Jehoshaphat. It may be added, that if the punishments inflicted on this people were as severe as our version represents them, they were undoubtedly inflicted by way of reprisals. Nahash, the father of Hanun, in the wantonness of cruelty, would admit the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead to surrender themselves to him upon no other condition than their every one consenting to *have their right eye thrust out*, that he might lay it as a reproach upon all Israel. If these severities of David were now exercised by way of retaliation for former cruelties of this nature, it will greatly lessen the horror that may be

CHAP. XIII.

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Amnon ravishes Tamar, ver. 1—20. Absalom kills him, ver. 21—29. David mourns: Absalom flees to Geshur, ver. 30—39.

AND it came to pass after this, <sup>cir. 1032.</sup> <sup>a Ch. 3. 2.</sup> that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was <sup>b 1 Chron. 3. 9.</sup> Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her.

2 And Amnon was so vexed, that

conceived upon account of them, and, in some measure, justify David’s using them; and as the sacred writers, who have transmitted this history to us, do not pass any censure upon David for having exceeded the bounds of humanity in this punishment of the Ammonites, we may reasonably conclude, either that the punishment was not so severe as our version represents it, or that there was some peculiar reason that demanded this exemplary vengeance, and which, if we were acquainted with it, would induce us to pass a more favourable judgment concerning it; or that the law of nations, then subsisting, admitted such kind of executions upon very extraordinary provocations, though there are scarce any that can justify them.” See Delaney and Chandler, p. 178. But, in whatever light we view these severities exercised upon the Ammonites, they ought, in no manner, to be proposed as an example to Christians, nor be pleaded as a precedent for any people to do the like. For the divine laws are the rules of our conduct, and not the actions of any men whomsoever.

CHAP. XIII. Ver. 1. *Absalom, the son of David, had a fair sister*—His sister by both father and mother. For they were both born of Maacah, the daughter of Talmal, king of Geshur. Now began another part of Nathan’s prophecy, *I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house*, to be awfully fulfilled on David; and the sad scene of domestic troubles to be opened which were to befall his family. And it is probable he had not been long returned to Jerusalem, from the taking of Rabbah, before they began to take place and to multiply upon him.

Ver. 2. *Amnon fell sick for his sister Tamar*—He fell deeply in love with her, and being conscious that his passion was very criminal, he concealed it for some time, but at the expense of his health, being racked by the violence of a strong desire, and the terror of indulging it. Thus fleshly lusts are their own punishment, and not only *war against the soul*, but the body too, and are the *rottenness* of the bones. See what a hard master sinners serve, and how heavy a yoke sin is! *For she was a virgin*—And therefore under a strict guard, so that it was difficult for him to get private converse with her, or to enjoy her company. *Amnon thought it hard to do any thing unto her*—Thought it criminal, as indeed it was in a high degree, to betray that virtue and honour, of which, as a brother, he ought to be the protector. His conscience at first startled, and shrunk back from the commission of so great a sin, and he could not think of it without horror. But what wickedness is so vile as not to gain entrance into an unsanctified, unguarded heart, especially when evil counsel comes to aid its assaults!

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he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she *was* a virgin; and † Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her.

† Heb. it was marvellous, or hidden in the eyes of Amnon.

e 1 Sam. 16, 9.

3 But Amnon had a friend, whose name *was* Jonadab, 'the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab *was* a very subtil man.

† Heb. thin.

† Heb. morning by morning.

4 And he said unto him, Why art thou, *being* the king's son, † lean † from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.

5 And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see *it*, and eat *it* at her hand.

d Gen. 16.6.

6 So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and <sup>d</sup>make me a couple

Ver. 3. *Amnon had a friend*—Say rather an *enemy*; for surely he proved himself to be such in an high degree, by the evil counsel he gave, issuing in Amnon's utter ruin of soul, as is too probable, as well as body. "He plainly perceived that Amnon's disease was some strong desire ungratified; and insinuated to him that he who was the king's son might give a loose to his desires, and despise the restraints of ordinary men! How vile was this advice! and how lamentable it is that the heirs of royalty, whose virtue is of much more consequence than that of meaner men, should yet be under more temptation to taint it from the poison of infectious flatterers."—Delaney.

Ver. 5. *Jonadab said—Make thyself sick*—He advises Amnon to pretend that his stomach was so weak that he could eat nothing that his servants dressed, and therefore desired his sister, who understood how to make delicate dishes, might come and prepare something that he could relish. Ah! false, treacherous, and base flatterer! that could thus tempt thy prince to so vile a crime! More than the poison of asps is under the lips of such friends and counsellors.

Ver. 10. *Amnon said—Bring the meat into the chamber*—It is probable that when Tamar first came, Amnon had received her in an outward room, but that, pretending now to be fatigued, he retired into his chamber, desiring her to go along with him, that he might put his design upon her in ex-

of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.

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7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.

8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took || flour, and kneaded *it*, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes.

Or, paste.

9 And she took a pan, and poured *them* out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, °Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him.

e Gen. 46.1.

10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* into the chamber to Amnon her brother.

11 And when she had brought *them* unto him to eat, he <sup>f</sup>took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister.

f Gen. 39.12.

12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not †force me; for

† Heb. Humble me, Gen. 24.2.

ecution without being interrupted; it being an inner chamber probably, remote from any other room.

Ver. 12. *Nay, my brother*—Whom nature both teaches to abhor such thoughts, and obliges to defend me from such an injury, with thy utmost hazard, if another should attempt it. *Do not force me*—Thou oughtest to abhor it, if I were willing; but to add violence is abominable. *No such thing ought to be done in Israel*—Among God's people, who are taught better things; who also will be infinitely reproached for so base an action. Thus she represents to him that, whatever other nations did, among whom idols were worshipped with filthy lusts, they who worshipped so pure and holy a God, and had such divine laws, ought not to be guilty of any such abomination. *Do not this folly*—That is, this wickedness, the foolishness of which she prays him to consider, as, for a moment's gratification of a brutal desire, it would highly provoke the divine Majesty, and bring lasting disgrace and wretchedness upon them both. Would he expose a sister to infamy? Would he expose himself to indelible reproach?

Ver. 13, 14. *And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go?*—How shall I drive it from me, and where shall I hide it? This plea for herself is inexpressibly beautiful and forcible. *Thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel*—Shalt utterly lose thy reputation, and be contemptible to all the people, as a man void of all religion, honour, virtue, and

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in Israel: do not thou this <sup>h</sup> folly.

Lev. 19. 9,  
11. & 20.  
17.  
† Heb. †  
ought not  
so to be  
done.  
‡ Gen. 34.  
7. Judg.  
19. 23. &  
20. 6.  
§ Lev. 18. 9,  
11. 13 And I, whither shall I cause my  
shame to go? and as for thee, thou  
shalt be as one of the fools in Israel.  
Now therefore, I pray thee, speak  
unto the king; <sup>i</sup> for he will not with-  
hold me from thee.

¶ Deut. 22.  
25. Ch. 19.  
11. 14 Howbeit he would not hearken  
unto her voice: but, being stronger  
than she, <sup>k</sup> forced her, and lay with  
her.

† Heb. with  
great  
hatred  
greatly. 15 ¶ Then Amnon hated her † ex-  
ceedingly; so that the hatred where-  
with he hated her *was* greater than  
the love wherewith he had loved her.  
And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be  
gone.

16 And she said unto him, *There  
is no cause: this evil in sending me  
away is greater than the other that*

even humanity; wilt be treated as a brute and a fool, and, instead of the honour of being heir apparent to the throne, wilt sink into the lowest degree of derision and reproach. *Now, therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king*—Having urged in vain the heinousness of the action; the dishonour it would be to her, and, the no less reproach it would bring on himself; and he still blindly persisting in his wicked resolution, she adds these words to give him hope, and flatter him into forbearance. *He would not hearken unto her*—Tamar said all this to a deaf man, who was wholly under the power of his furious lusts; which would not suffer him to regard God, or men, his sister or himself.

Ver. 15, 16. *Then Amnon hated her exceedingly*—His mind, which at first had been impelled by lust, was now agitated by remorse, which drove it to a different extreme, like the vibration of a pendulum. The horror of his guilt struck him with a sudden detestation of her whom he deemed the cause of it, and he hated his sister when he should have hated himself. Thus, through God's abandoning him, in just judgment, to the tumult of his own intemperate mind, this other punishment of David's adultery became more flagrant: and the prophet's prediction, of evil being raised up to him out of his own house, more conspicuous. For Amnon's barbarous behaviour now precluded all possibility of concealing his guilt. The moment his brutality was indulged, he commanded his sister out of his sight. *And she said—There is no cause*—For me to go, or for this hard usage. She had given him no cause for aggravating his first offence, by loading it with an immediate and public scandal, and indelible reproach upon her, himself, and his house: upon religion, and the people of God. *This evil is greater than the former*—Not a greater sin, but an act of greater cruelty, and a greater calamity to her; because it exposed

thou didst unto me. But he would A. M. 2972.  
B. C. 1032. not hearken unto her.

17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her.

18 And *she had* <sup>l</sup> a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters *that were* virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

19 ¶ And Tamar put <sup>m</sup> ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that *was* on her, and <sup>n</sup> laid her hand on her head, and <sup>a</sup> went on crying.

20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath † Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he *is* thy brother;

her to general infamy and contempt. And, besides it turned a private offence into a matter of public scandal, to the great dishonour of God, and of his people, and especially of all the royal family. *But he would not hearken to her*—He was now as deaf to decency and humanity, as he had been before, to all sense of shame and conscience, and, therefore, called to his servant that attended him, and bid him *turn out that woman from him, and bolt the door after her*.

Ver. 18. *She had a garment of divers colours*—Of embroidered work. *His servant brought her out, &c.*—A high contempt of a king's daughter. But the servant's dependence on his master over-ruled all respect due to her. "Tamar thus treated" says Delaney, "not parted with as an innocent woman, cruelly injured; but thrust out as a prostitute that had seduced to sin; is the strongest image of innocence, barbarously abused, and insufferably insulted, that history affords us: the greatest injury loaded with the greatest indignities! contumely added to cruelty!"

Ver. 19. *Tamar put ashes upon her head*—To signify her grief for some calamity which had befallen her, and what that was, concurring circumstances easily discovered. *And laid her hand on her head*—In token of shame and sorrow, as if she were unable to shew her face. *And went on crying*—To manifest her abhorrence of the fact, and that it was not done by her consent.

Ver. 20. *And Absalom her brother said to her*—To whose house she had passed on, in the condition just mentioned, with ashes on her head, &c. oppressed with sorrow, and overwhelmed with shame. *Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee?*—A modest expression for the foul rape he had committed. Thus Absalom covers the gross injury, which he suspected she had received, under the veil of the most decent and distant phrase that could hint his suspicion to her.

A. M. 2971.  
B. C. 1030.† Heb. set  
not thine  
heart.  
† Heb. and  
desolate.

† regard not this thing. So Tamar remained † desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

21 But when king David heard of all these things he was very wroth.

• Gen. 24.  
30. & 31.  
21.  
† Lev. 19.  
17.

22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon °neither good nor bad: for Absalom †hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

1030.  
• Gen. 29.  
12. 18 Sam.  
25. 4, 36.

23 ¶ And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom †had sheepshearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.

24 And Absalom came to the king,

And to save her blushes, and let her see that he understood her distress, he stopped her short, from attempting any answer, by begging her to say nothing of the matter, but endeavour to forget the injury, since it was a brother that had done it. *Hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother*—Therefore thou must forgive and forget the injury; for thy disgracing of him will be a blot to us all; and thou wilt not get right from thy father against him, because he is as near and dear to him as thou: therefore, also, thy dishonour is the less, because thou wast not abused by any mean person, but by a king's son; and, as this evil cannot be revenged, it must be borne. Thus he covers his design of taking vengeance upon Amnon at the first opportunity. *Regard not—So as to torment thyself. So Tamar remained desolate*—Through shame and dejection of mind, giving herself up to solitude and retirement. “And, in all probability, she continued so her whole life long; unmarried and undone. And Amnon had the horror of reflecting, that for one moment's base and brutal indulgence, he had made his nearest kinswoman, an amiable and an innocent sister, miserable to the last moment of her life.” Such are generally the sad products of sin!

Ver. 21. *When David heard, he was very wroth*—With Amnon: whom yet he did not punish, at least so severely as he ought to have done; perhaps, because he was his eldest son, and the next heir to his crown, and therefore he was unwilling either to cut him off, or to expose him to contempt among the people he might hereafter be called to govern; or, because he could not punish him in any legal or equitable manner, without laying open the infamy of his house; or, which seems to have been the most weighty reason, because he was conscious of his own guilt, in an instance not very dissimilar, which certainly had set Amnon a bad example; and because he had otherwise been partly accessory to his guilt by a very unguarded compliance with his son's irrational request in sending Tamar to him. There can be no question but that David's guilt with Bathsheba rendered him more backward to punish that of Amnon. “However, the guilt which human justice, or human infirmity did not, or

A. M. 2971.  
B. C. 1030.

and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant.

25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him.

26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?

27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.

could not chastise as it deserved, the divine vengeance did.” Delaney.

Ver. 22. *Absalom spake, &c.*—Though he hated Amnon in his heart, yet he never expressed the least resentment, nor said any thing to him at all about that business. He neither debated it with him, nor threatened him for it, but seemed willing to pass it by with brotherly kindness. Not that he forbore all discourse with him on any subject, which would have raised jealousy in his mind, and also in David's. But by the method Absalom pursued, Amnon was lulled asleep, in a belief that he would give him no trouble for what he had done.

Ver. 23—25. *After two full years*—This circumstance of time is noted, as an aggravation of Absalom's malice, which was so implacable: and as an act of policy, that both Amnon and David might more securely comply with his desires. *Let the king and his servants go*—He certainly did not wish the king to go; but invited him, to avoid all suspicion. *He would not go, but blessed him*—Gave him thanks for his invitation, and prayed God to bless him.

Ver. 26. *Let my brother Amnon go with us*—That is, with him and the rest of his brethren, as appears from the following verse. David designed, it seems, to keep him at home with him, as being his eldest son, and heir of his kingdom; otherwise Absalom would never have made particular mention of him, which, in consequence of what the king said, he was now forced to do. Nor did Absalom's desire of Amnon's company want specious pretences, as that, seeing the king would not, he who was next to the king in dignity, might honour him with his presence; and that this might be a public token of friendship between him and his brother, notwithstanding the former occasion of difference.

Ver. 27. *He let Amnon and all the king's sons go*—It is strange that Absalom's urgent desire of Amnon's company raised no suspicion in the mind of so wise a king: but God suffered him to be blinded that he might execute his judgments upon David, and bring upon Amnon the just punishment of his lewdness.

A. M. 2974.  
B. C. 1050.

28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: || have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be † valiant.

29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man † gat him up upon his mule, and fled.

30 ¶ And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left.

31 Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.

32 And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that

A. M. 2974.  
B. C. 1050.

they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the † appointment of Absalom this hath been || determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.

33 Now therefore \* let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.

34 † But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him.

35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: † as thy servant said, so it is.

36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept † very sore.

Ver. 28, 29. *When Amnon's heart is merry*—When he least suspects, and will be most unable to prevent the evil. *Have not I commanded you?*—I who am the king's son, and, when Amnon is dead, next heir to the crown, and who therefore can easily stand between you and the danger of your being called to an account for what you do, or can obtain pardon for you, and not only so, but have it in my power to reward you. *The servants did as Absalom had commanded*—And Amnon fell. Thus did Absalom at one blow revenge himself upon his sister's ravisher, and rid himself of his rival in his father's favour, and only obstacle, as he apprehended, to his crown. Now is the threatened sword drawn in David's house, which will not depart from it. His eldest son falls by it, through his own wickedness, and his father, by conniving at that wickedness, is accessory to his death. *Then all the king's sons arose—and fled*—Terrified at what they saw, they started up from the table, seized every man his mule, and fled home as fast as they could. But fast as they fled, fame reached the palace before them, and told David that Absalom had destroyed all his sons.

Ver. 31, 32. *Then the king arose*—He was thrown by this news, as we may well imagine, into the utmost consternation, and almost driven even to despair. He tore his clothes, and laid himself down upon the earth, like a person frantic with grief, and abandoned to distress; and his servants stood disconsolate around him with their garments torn also. *And Jonadab—answered, &c.*—Recollecting himself in his subtilty, and running over the train of his own thoughts; he easily concluded that Amnon only, was killed; and immediately

took upon him to assure the king it must be so. *Amnon only is dead—for by the appointment of Absalom, &c.*—It is probable Absalom had talked among his familiar friends, that he would take an opportunity to revenge the injury done his sister, although, for the present, he took no notice of it, which Jonadab had some way or other discovered. But, "what unparalleled impudence and effrontery," says Delaney, "was this, to speak with such calmness and unconcern, of an horrid villany, which he himself had contrived, and of which, he now saw the dreadful consequences! What a miscreant minister was this, and how much fitter to be admitted into the councils of hell, than into those of David!" *This hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister*—And, did Jonadab know all this? Or, had he any cause to suspect it? Then, what a wicked wretch was he, that he did not make David acquainted with it sooner, in order that means might have been used to make up the quarrel, or, at least, that David might not have thrown Amnon into the mouth of danger, by letting him go to Absalom's house! For, if we do not do our utmost to prevent mischief, we make ourselves accessory to it. It is well if Jonadab was not as guilty of Amnon's death, as he was of his sin. Such friends do they prove who are hearkened to, when they counsel us to do wickedly!

Ver. 34. *Absalom fled*—He was now as much afraid of the king's sons as they were of him; they fled from his malice, he from their justice. No part of the land of Israel could shelter him; the cities of refuge afforded no protection to a wilful murderer. Though David had let Amnon's incest go unpunished, Absalom could not promise himself his pardon



A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1027.

37 ¶ But Absalom fled, and went to <sup>2</sup>Talmi, the son of ¶ Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day.

38 So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.

39 And the soul of king David ¶ longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was <sup>b</sup> comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

## CHAP. XIV.

The story told David by the widow of Tekoah, ver. 1—20. Absalom is brought back to Jerusalem, but not to court, ver. 21—24. An account of Absalom's person and children, ver. 25—27. He is at length introduced to David, ver. 28—33.

1027.

NOW Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was <sup>a</sup> toward Absalom.

2 And Joab sent to <sup>b</sup> Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and

for this murder. He therefore made the best of his way to his mother's relations, and was entertained and protected by his grand-father Talmi three years; David not demanding him, and Talmi not thinking himself obliged to send him back unless he were demanded.

Ver. 37. David mourned for his son every day—Either for the murder of Amnon, or for Absalom, who was lost as to any comfort he could have from him. "Thus did God, by withdrawing his restraining grace from Amnon, and leaving him a prey to his own passions, raise up evil to David out of his own house; a daughter ravished by her own brother; that brother murdered by another brother; and that other in exile on that account; and soon to perish by a fate yet more deplorable, had it not been more deserved! And now began another and more dreadful prophecy of Nathan to be fulfilled upon David, before his eyes: the sword was now first brought in upon his house, attended with this dreadful assurance of never departing from it."—De-laney.

Ver. 39. The soul of king David longed to go forth to Absalom—To visit him, or to send for him. What amazing weakness was this! At first he could not find in his heart to do justice to the ravisher of his sister! and now he can almost find in his heart to receive into favour the murderer of his brother! How can we excuse David from the sin of Eli, who honoured his sons more than God?

CHAP. XIV. Ver. 1. That the king's heart was towards Absalom—That he longed to see him, and have him restored to his country; but was ashamed to shew kindness to one whom God's law and his own conscience obliged him to punish.

said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, <sup>c</sup> and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead:

3 And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab <sup>d</sup> put the words in her mouth.

4 And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she <sup>e</sup> fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, † Help, O king.

5 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, <sup>g</sup> I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead.

6 And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was † none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.

A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1027.

c Ruth 2. 9.

d Ver. 19.  
Exod. 4.  
16.e 1 Sam. 30.  
41. Ch. 1.  
2.† Heb.  
Sare.  
f 9 Kings 6.  
26, 28.

g Ch. 12. 1.

† Heb. no  
deliverer  
between  
them.

He wanted, therefore, a fair pretence for it, with which Joab now furnished him.

Ver. 2. Joab sent to Tekoah—A city in the tribe of Judah, about twelve miles south of Jerusalem. And fetched thence a wise woman—One whom he knew to be fit for such an undertaking, having good sense and a ready utterance. And said—I pray thee feign thyself to be a mourner—Who put on no ornaments, nor used any ointment, but appeared in a sordid, neglected condition. She was to assume this habit to heighten the idea of her distress, that her circumstances as a widow, her mournful tale, her dress, and her person, might make one united impression on the king, and secure his attention. She tells the king that she had buried her husband; that she had two sons that were the support and comfort of her widowed state; that they quarrelled, and fought, and one of them unhappily killed the other; that, for her part, she was desirous to protect the man-slayer, for, as Rebekah argued concerning her two sons, Why should she be deprived of them both in one day? But though she, who was nearest of kin to the slain, was willing to let fall the demands of an avenger of blood; yet the other relations insisted upon it, that the surviving brother should be put to death, according to the law; not out of affection either to justice or to the memory of the slain brother; but that, by destroying the heir, (which they did not conceal to be the thing they aimed at) the inheritance might be their's. The whole design of her speech was to frame a case similar to that of David, in order to convince him how much more reasonable it was to preserve Absalom. But there was great art in not making the similitude too plain and visible, lest the king should perceive the intention of the woman's peti-

A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1627.Num. 35.  
19. Deut.  
19. 12.† Heb. up-  
on the  
face of  
the earth.† Gen. 27.  
13. 15am.  
25. 24.  
Matt. 27.  
25.  
† Ch. 3. 28.  
† Kings 2.  
32.

7 And, behold, <sup>h</sup> the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband *neither* name nor remainder † upon the earth.

8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity *be* on me, and on my father's house: <sup>k</sup> and the king and his throne *be* guiltless.

10 And the king said, Whosoever

saith *ought* unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember the LORD thy God, † that thou wouldest not suffer <sup>†</sup> the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, <sup>m</sup> As the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

12 Then the woman said, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak *one* word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on.

13 And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against <sup>n</sup> the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing

A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1627.† Heb. that  
the re-  
venger of  
blood do  
not mul-  
tiply to  
destroy.  
Num. 35.  
19.  
m 1 Sam.  
14. 45.  
Acts 27.  
34.n Judg. 20.  
2.

tion before she obtained a grant of pardon for her son.—Bp. Patrick.

Ver. 7. *Deliver him—that we may kill him*—Put him to death, as the law requires, Numb. xxxv. 18, 19. *We will destroy the heir also*—Take away his life, although he be the heir, or the only one remaining of the family. *And so they shall quench my coal which is left*—Deprive me of the little comfort of my life which remains, and ruin the only hope of my family. *Shall leave to my husband neither name nor remainder*—Shall utterly extinguish my husband's memory. The reader will easily observe that there is a great difference between the supposed case of this widow and that of David, however plausible their likeness may appear. For her son, she pretended, was slain in a scuffle with his brother, and his death, therefore, was not a premeditated murder, as was the death of Amnon. It also happened in the field, where there were no witnesses; whether he was killed wilfully; whereas all the king's sons saw Amnon designedly and barbarously murdered. And in the last particular the difference is as great as in either of the others. For David's family was not in danger of being extinguished, if Absalom had been lost also; David having many children, and also many wives by whom he might have more.

Ver. 8. *The king said, Go to thine house, &c.*—Notwithstanding the forementioned dissimilarity, the case was too like his own to suffer David to be unmoved: he soon felt her distress, and told her she might return to her house, and leave the care of her business to him; he would give proper directions about it. But not having yet obtained what she wanted, in seeming solicitude for her son, she added; *O king, the iniquity be on me—and the king and his throne be guiltless.* She means, either, 1, If she had pressed the king to any thing in itself unjust, or in any way had misinformed him, or misrepresented the state of the case, she wished all the guilt of that iniquity, or misrepresentation, might fall upon

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her own head, and upon her family. Or, 2, If, through the king's forgetfulness, or neglect of her just cause, her adversaries should prevail and destroy her son, her desire was, that God would not lay it to the king's charge, but rather to her and her's, so that the king might be exempted thereby. By her words thus taken, she insinuates, that such an omission would bring guilt upon him; and yet most decently so expresses herself as not to seem to blame or threaten him with any punishment from God on that account. This sense seems best to agree with David's answer, which shews that she desired some further assurances of the king's care.

Ver. 11. *Let the king remember the Lord thy God*—In whose presence thou hast made me this promise, to stay the avenger of blood from causing any further destruction in my family. She intended to draw him thus distantly and insensibly, into the obligation of an oath: and her address had the desired effect; for the king, to convince her of the integrity of his intentions, immediately answered, *As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the ground.*

Ver. 12, 13. *Then the woman said*—Having gained this point, she begs leave to say one word more, which being granted, she immediately proceeds to expostulate with the king upon his own conduct, and unkindness to the people of God, in not pardoning his own son, and bringing him back from exile. *Wherefore then*—If thou wouldest not permit the avengers of blood to molest me, or to destroy my son, who are but two persons; how unreasonable is it that thou shouldst proceed in thy endeavours to avenge Amnon's blood upon Absalom, whose death would be grievous to the whole commonwealth of Israel, all whose eyes are upon him as the heir of the crown, and a wise, and valiant, and amiable person, unhappy only in this one act of killing Amnon, which was done upon an high provocation, and whereof thou thyself didst give the occasion by permitting Amnon to go unpunished? *The king doth speak as one that*

5 T

A. M. 5977.  
B. C. 1027.

• Ch. 13. 37.

as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again ° his banished.

p. J. b 24. 13.  
Hebr. 9.  
27.

14 For we <sup>p</sup> must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he <sup>q</sup> devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.

1 Or, because God hath not taken away his life, he hath also devised means, &c.

9 Num. 35. 15, 25, 28.

15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid: and thy hand-

maid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.

A. M. 5977.  
B. C. 1027.

16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.

17 Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be † comfortable: for † as an angel of God, so is my lord the king † to discern good and bad: there-

† Heb. for rest.  
† Ver. 20. Ch. 19. 27.  
† Heb. to hear.

is faulty—By thy word, and promise, and oath, given to me for my son, thou condemnest thyself for not allowing the same equity towards thy own son. It is true, Absalom's case, as we have observed, was widely different from that which she had supposed. But David was too well affected to him, to remark that difference, and was more desirous than she could be, to apply that favourable judgment to his own son, which he had given concerning her's.

Ver. 14. *For we must needs die*—Some by one means, and some by another; death being the common lot of all men, Amnon must have died, if Absalom had not cut him off, and Absalom, if he do not die by the hand of justice, must die by the necessity of nature, and if he be not recalled soon, may die in exile, which would undoubtedly be a great affliction both to thee, O king, and to the people of God. And thou thyself must die, and therefore art obliged to take care of the life of thy successor Absalom, and to endeavour to preserve it instead of taking it away, or exposing it to danger. *For when dead, we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.* Amnon's life is irrecoverable, and, therefore, it is in vain to keep Absalom in banishment on account of it: and if Absalom be cut off also, his life too will be lost, both to thee and to thy people. *For God doth not respect any person*—So far as to exempt him from this common lot of dying: but kings and their sons, in this respect, share the same fate with others. This, however, it must be acknowledged, was very weak reasoning; for by the same way of arguing every crime might be suffered to go unpunished. It must be observed here, that the Hebrew *לֹא יִשְׁמַח בְּיָמָיו לִיִּסָּא נֶפֶשׁ* *lo jissa nephesh*, here rendered, *doth not respect persons*, is translated by Houbigant and many other learned men, according to the ancient versions, *doth not take away the soul*, or life. Thus understood, she argues from the sparing mercy of God, who does not immediately inflict the punishment of death, when men have deserved it. And, probably she meant this to be applied particularly to Absalom, whom God had not cut off, but suffered to live: and therefore she desires David to imitate God, and not to be inexorable to one, to whom God had shewn mercy. *Yet doth he*—Or, rather, *But*, he doth devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him. She means, that God had provided many cities of refuge to which he that slew another unawares might flee; where, though he was banished from his habita-

tion for a time, he was not quite expelled, but might return again after the death of the high-priest. From whence she argues, that kings, being the images of God, nothing could more become them than clemency and mercy; in mitigating the punishment of offenders, though there should be a just cause of anger against them. But this case was still different from that of Absalom; for God was not so merciful as to provide for the safety of wilful murderers. But such specious arguments are good enough when men are willing to be persuaded.

Ver. 15. *Now, therefore, that I am come, &c.*—“But here, apprehending she might have gone too far, and made too free with majesty, in expostulating so plainly upon a point of such importance, she excused this presumption, from the force put upon her by her people; who had so severely threatened her, that, in this extremity, she plainly saw she had no resource, or hope of relief, but in laying her son's case before the king: which she, confiding in his mercy, had, at length, adventured to do.”—Delaney.

Ver. 16. *For the king will hear*—Clemency and kindness are the properties of a good king, and such a king, she insinuates, she knew David to be, who, she was persuaded, would grant her audience and acceptance. *To deliver his handmaid, &c.*—By granting her request concerning her son, in whose life, she intimates, her own was bound up, so that she could not outlive his death; supposing that David's case might be similar, and therefore that this might touch him in a tender part, though it was not proper to say so expressly; and thereby suggesting, that the safety and comfort of the people of Israel depended on Absalom's restoration. *Out of the inheritance of God*—That is, out of that land which God gave to his people, to be their inheritance, and in which alone he hath fixed the place of his presence and worship. Thus she artfully reminds the king how dangerous it was to let Absalom (unto whom she had ventured to apply her case) continue among idolaters, in a state of separation from God, his house, and people.

Ver. 17. *The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable*—Upon reflection, she grew confident that the king's answer would be according to her heart's desire. *For, as an angel of God, is my lord the king*—In wisdom, justice, and goodness. *To discern good and bad*—To distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable petitions and to know

A. M. 2017.  
B. C. 1027. fore the LORD thy God will be with thee.

18 Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.

Ver. 2. 19 And the king said, *Is not* the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, *As* thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and <sup>he</sup> put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid:

A. M. 2017.  
B. C. 1027. 20 To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord *is* wise, <sup>ac-</sup> according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all *things* that are in the earth. Ver. 17.  
Ch. 19. 27.

21 And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.

22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and <sup>†</sup>thanked the king: and Joab said, Heb.  
blessed. To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of <sup>his</sup> servant. Or, thy.

23 So Joab arose <sup>and</sup> went to Ch. 13. 27.

what is good and what evil, and understand every matter that comes before him. *Therefore, the Lord thy God will be with thee*—To direct thee to judge aright, and shew mercy: or, because thou art so wise and gracious to those, who in strict justice deserve punishment, God will own and stand by thee in this thy act of grace: or, God will prosper thee in thy enterprizes.

Ver. 18, 19. *The king said—Hide not from me, &c.*—Observing the uncommon art and dexterity of her address, in the management of this affair, the king immediately began to suspect it was a thing concerted between her and Joab, and asked, *Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?*—Hast thou not said and done all this by his direction? *The woman said—None can turn, &c.*—That is, it is even so: thou hast discovered the truth: and I will not seek by any turnings or windings, this way, or the other, to dissemble the matter, but will plainly confess it. *He put these words into the mouth of thine handmaid*—As to the sense and substance of them, but not as to all the expressions, for these were evidently varied as the king's answer gave occasion.

Ver. 20. *To fetch about this form of speech*—That is, to propose his, and the people's desire, of Absalom's restoration, in this parabolical manner. *To know all things that are in the earth*—Or, rather, *in this land*, in all thy kingdom; all the counsels and devices of thy subjects, and what is fit to be done in answer to their desires. She still persists in expressing her admiration of the king, that she might the more incline him to grant her request.

Ver. 21, 22. *The king said unto Joab*—Joab seems to have stood in some part of the room all the while the woman was addressing the king; who, therefore, now turned himself from her to him as the principal agent in the business, and said, *Behold, now I have done this thing*; that is, the thing which thou hast contrived thus to ask. *Joab fell to the ground on his face*—With the politeness of a courtier he returned thanks to the king, in the most fervent manner, as for the greatest obligation conferred upon himself; though, in

fact he had contrived it all to oblige the king, and give him pleasure. "A refinement of flattery and address," says Delaney, "not easily equalled! The Jews," he adds, "are generally considered as an illiterate, barbarous people; and the charge is so far just, that they despised the learning of other nations; but this by no means infers them either ignorant or barbarous. The single design and address of this device (the above similitude) are sufficient proofs, were there no other, to evince this people to have neither been unpolite, nor uninformed."

*In that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant*—But was not David faulty in granting this request? Did he not, in so doing, act in direct opposition to the laws of God, which strictly command the supreme magistrate to execute justice upon all wilful murderers, without any reservation or exception? Gen. ix. 6; Numb. xxxv. 30. Surely David had no power to dispense with God's laws, or to spare any whom God commanded him to destroy: for the laws of God bound the kings and rulers, as well as the people of Israel, as is most evident from Deut. xvii. 18, 19; and Josh. i. 8, and many other places. And, indeed, we may see David's sin herein in the glass of those tremendous judgments of God which befel him by means of his indulgence to Absalom. For although God's providential dispensations be in themselves no rule whereby to judge of the good or evil actions of men; yet where they accord with God's word, and accomplish his threatenings, as in this case they did, they are to be considered as tokens of God's displeasure. And how justly did God make this man, whom David had so sinfully spared, to become a scourge to him!

Ver. 23. *So Joab went—and brought Absalom to Jerusalem*—"Well pleased, we may be assured, to be at once the messenger of his prince's mercy to the heir apparent of his crown, and the instrument of their reconciliation: which could not fail to secure him a present fund of favour with the father; and an equal fund in reversion with the son."—Delaney. St. Ambrose mentions this as an instance of the wonderful affec-

A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1027. Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

x Gen. 43.  
3. Ch. 3.  
15.

25 ¶ But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

† Heb. And as Absalom there was not a beautiful man in all Israel to praise greatly.  
‡ Isai. 1. 6.

26 And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that

he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it: he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight.

A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1027.

27 ¶ And unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

z Ch. 19. 15.

28 ¶ So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.

a Ver. 21.

29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king;

tion which parents have to their children, though degenerate and wicked; by which we may raise our thoughts to form some, although a very inadequate idea, of the inconceivable love of our heavenly Father, towards the human race, his offspring, though fallen and depraved.

Ver. 24. *The king said, Let him turn to his own house*—Although the king so far forgave Absalom as to recal him from exile; yet he forbade him to see his face. For his affection to him did not so blind his eyes but he still saw it would not be for his honour to let him come into his presence, lest, while he shewed some mercy to him, he should seem to approve of his sin. Likewise, he hoped that by this means Absalom might be brought to a more thorough consideration of the heinousness of his crime, and to repentance for it. Indeed such a discountenance and rebuke as this was necessary, not only to signify the king's abhorrence of his late cruel revenge upon his brother, but “to mortify his pride and repress his popularity; which, it seems, now began to blaze out upon the news of his reconciliation to his father. And this may be the reason why the sacred historian subjoins to this account of the king's discountenance a particular description of Absalom's beauty; which is a natural and common foundation of popularity; and then adds an account of his having three sons, and one fair daughter (whom he named after his unhappy sister, Tamar) which was also another fountain of pride, popularity, and presumption.”—Delaney. *He saw not the king's face*—Which was some humiliation to him; for hereby he saw he had not a full pardon, not being entirely restored to the king's favour. The people also might see by this in part how detestable his crime was in the king's account, and that he would not easily pass by the like in any other person, since he could not endure the sight of a son whose hands were defiled with the blood of his brother.

Ver. 25. *There was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty*—Which proved one occasion of his ruin; for he became proud because he was so much admired; and, forgetting his cruel murder of his brother, he began to rely on the people's favour, and to proceed to the commission of a greater crime, even to seek the life of his father.

Ver. 26. *When he polled his head, &c*—In those days hair was accounted a great ornament, and the longer it was, the more it was esteemed. And therefore it is no wonder that Absalom, who was proud, and courted popularity, should

let his grow to a great length, as this rendered him still more beautiful in the people's eyes. *It was at every year's end that he polled it*—The Hebrew here, מקץ ימים לימים, *mekets jamim lajamim*, does not properly signify, at every year's end, but rather, at the return of a certain season. Houbigant renders the passage, *For there were certain seasons when he polled it, that he might deliver himself from the weight; and when he polled it, the weight was 200 shekels*. This weight of hair, if computed by the Jewish shekel, according to Bochart, amounts to three pounds two ounces of our weight, which certainly is prodigious, considering that only a part of it was cut off, on account of its being grown too long. Some, however, understand the expression, not of the weight, but of the price of his hair. But the remark of Bishop Patrick here seems worthy of notice: That, “when the books of Samuel were revised, after the Babylonish captivity, such weights were mentioned as were then known to them; and, therefore, when the historian speaks of this weight of Absalom's hair, he adds by way of explanation, that it was after the king's weight, i. e. after the weight of the king of Babylon, whose shekel was only one-third of that of the Jews; and thus this large quantity of hair, which has given so much occasion to the enemies of revelation to ridicule the sacred text, is reduced so as not to seem at all enormous. Besides, we should recollect that the hair being in those days reckoned a great ornament, was perfumed with large quantities of fragrant oils, and powdered with gold dust, which would make it more heavy than we could otherwise imagine; and further we should remark, that it is very evident, from the peculiar manner in which it is mentioned in the sacred text, that there must have been something extremely singular, even at that time, in this large quantity of Absalom's hair.”—See Dr. Dodd, and Saurin's 5th Dissert.

Ver. 29. *Absalom sent for Joab*—This vain young man, whose only excellence seems to have been his singular beauty, weary with being so long detained in that confinement and obscurity, so mortifying to his pride, and so unfriendly to his popularity, sent a messenger to Joab, to desire to speak with him, in order to prevail upon him to solicit by his intercession with the king, to be admitted to his presence. *But he would not come to him*—“The reader, little versed in courts, is apt to be surprised to see Joab so zealous to get Absalom recalled from exile, and afterwards so cold and in-

A. M. 2977.  
B. C. 1027.

but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.

† Heb. near  
my place.

30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is † near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto *his* house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?

32 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? *it had been good for me to have been there still: now therefore let me see the king's*

face; and if there be *any* iniquity in me, let him kill me.

33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king <sup>b</sup>kissed Absalom.

A. M. 2960.  
B. C. 1026.

1025.

b Gen. 31.  
4. A. 45. 16.  
Luke 15.  
30.

## CHAP. XV.

*Absalom steals the hearts of the people, ver. 1—6. He conspires against David, ver. 7—12. David flees from Jerusalem, ver. 13—18. He confers with Ittai, and passes over Kidron, ver. 19—23. Sends back Zadok with the ark, ver. 24—29. His prayer on this occasion, ver. 30, 31. He concert's with Hushai, ver. 32—37.*

1024.

a Ch. 12. 11.

b 1 Kings 1.

AND <sup>a</sup>it came to pass after this, <sup>b</sup>that Absalom <sup>b</sup>prepared him <sup>b</sup>chariots and horses, and fifty men <sup>b</sup>to run before him.

different to have him re-established in his father's favour. The truth is, when Joab had greatly gratified the king and gained credit with him, by bringing back Absalom to Jerusalem, he had little reason, as a minister, to be solicitous to bring him near the king's person, and restore him to full favour; because, in that case, he might naturally apprehend that Absalom's interest with his father might impair his own."

Ver. 30. *Go and set it on fire*—Absalom's ambition could but ill endure Joab's coldness and delay, and therefore he ordered this extraordinary step to be taken that he might be set right with his father, a step which shewed him determined to go any lengths, rather than fall short of his ambitious aims. For he that could order his friend's field, and that friend so great a man as Joab, and his near kinsman, to be set on fire, barely that he might be admitted to court, would little scruple to set his country in a flame (if the expression may be allowed) to be raised to a crown. See Delaney. *Absalom's servants set the field on fire*—For he had still those about him who were ready to execute any command, though ever so unjust, as his servants did when he bade them kill Amnon.

Ver. 31. *Joab arose and came to Absalom*—It may seem strange that so furious a man as Joab should not immediately revenge himself by ordering Absalom's fields to be burnt, or in some such way; but he was so wise as to consider, that, being the king's son, Absalom might, some time or other, be reconciled to his father, and do him a prejudice. He therefore concealed his resentment, and only expostulated with him on the injury done him.

Ver. 32. *If there be iniquity in me*—He could not but know that there was iniquity in him, heinous iniquity: but he pretends if the king would not pardon it and admit him into his presence, he had rather die. *Let him kill me*—

For it is better for me to die than be deprived of the sight and favour of my dear father. Thus he insinuates himself into his father's affections, by pretending such respect and love to him. See how easily even wise parents may be imposed upon by their children, when they are blindly fond of them!

Ver. 33. *So Joab came to the king*—Absalom's impetuosity prevailed: these passionate expressions that he was weary of life, while he continued to be debarred his father's presence; nay, that he desired to die so he might but see him, moved Joab to intercede with the king for him, and he was admitted into the royal presence, where he did obeisance, humbling himself before the king with his face to the ground. *And the king kissed Absalom*—In token of reconciliation. Josephus says, the king raised him up from the ground, and promised him an oblivion of what was past; which was a great weakness in David; for the impenitent become only more wicked by the pardon of their offences; as we find Absalom did, who being thus received into the king's favour, soon found means to ingratiate himself with the people, and raise a rebellion against his own father, who had thus graciously pardoned him. But we may here properly ask, with Henry, "Did the bowels of a father prevail to reconcile him to an impenitent son? And shall penitent sinners question the compassion of Him who is the Father of Mercy? If Ephraim bemoan himself, God soon bemoans him, with all the expressions of fatherly tenderness: *He is a dear son, a pleasant child,*" Jer. xxxi. 20.

CHAP. XV. Ver. 1. *Absalom prepared him chariots, &c.*—When he thought he had established himself in his father's good affection, he begun to take great state upon him, set up, as we now speak, a splendid equipage; and was royally attended, as being the king's eldest son, (now Amnon was

A. M. 2980.  
B. C. 1024.

2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy † came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.

3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but || *there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.*

4 Absalom said moreover, ° O that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or

cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: <sup>d</sup>so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

7 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>e</sup>after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.

† Heb. to come.

Or, none will hear thee from the king downward.

Judg. 9. 29.

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023.

Rom. 16. 18.

1023.  
e 1 Sam. 16. 1.

dead), and next heir to the crown. For it seems Chileab, who was elder than he, Ch. iii. 3. was either dead also, or, through some cause, was incapable of the government. Absalom undoubtedly designed, by taking this course, to draw the eyes of the people to himself, who, as they were much in love with his beauty, so were doubtless mightily taken with this fine sight of chariots and horses, especially as it was unusual, not being allowed by the law. David, was however, so indulgent that, it seems, he took no notice of it. *And fifty men to run before him*—An honour this such as his royal father had neither had nor thought of. These, though attendants in appearance, were, in effect, guards.

Ver. 2. *Absalom rose up early*—He accustomed himself to rise betimes in the morning, that he might make a shew of solicitude for the good of the public, and of every private person. *When any man—came to the king for judgment*—The king, it appears, reserved all weighty causes for his own hearing; and appeals were made to him from the other courts. *Absalom called to him*—Preventing him with the offers of his assistance. And, as if he were ready to make particular inquiry into the state of his cause, and intended to take peculiar care of his interest, kindly inquired concerning his city, family, situation in life, and the place of his abode.

Ver. 3. *Absalom said—See thy matters are good and right*—Upon some very slight hearing of any man's cause he approved of it that he might oblige him; flattering all that they had right on their side, so that if their causes should go against them, they might conclude, if Absalom had been judge, it would have been otherwise. *There is no man deputed of the king to hear thee*—None that will do thee justice. The other sons and relations of the king, and the rest of the judges and rulers under him and them are wholly corrupt; or, at least, not careful and diligent as they should be, and my father being grown in years is negligent of public affairs. So Absalom said, or insinuated. And it is always the way of turbulent, aspiring men, to reproach the government they are under. Even David, we see, one of the best of kings, could not escape the worst of censures, and that even from his own son; for what could be worse than that which is here thrown out against him, that he neglected to administer

true and impartial justice and judgment to his people? It is marvellous that David did not observe and nip this growing insurrection in its bud. But Delaney is of opinion that he was dangerously ill at this time, and that therefore Absalom seized this as a fit opportunity to take the steps here mentioned to increase his popularity, and draw the people after him.

Ver. 4—6. *Absalom said—Oh that I were made judge in the land!*—Though he was admitted to come to court, and see the king, he had no office there, as, it seems, the rest of the king's sons had. This he took ill, and endeavoured to bring the people to do so too, by persuading them that, if he were in authority, he would take speedy care to do them justice. *When any man came nigh to do him obeisance*—To fall prostrate before him as the king's son. *He put forth his hand and took him*—That is, prevented him from prostrating himself, and condescended even to salute him with a kiss. *In this manner did Absalom to all Israel*—Robbed his father of the affections of the people, and possessed himself of them; some admiring his beauty and gallantry; others his courtesy and civility; and others being taken with his magnificent promises of the noble things he would do if he were their king.

Ver. 7. *After forty years*—That is, as some say, from the change of the government into a monarchy, which change took place about ten years before David began to reign. So that this fell out about the thirtieth year of his reign. But the Syriac and Arabic, whom Houbigant follows, read, *After four years*; that is, from the time of his father's reconciliation with him. Josephus, Theodoret, the Manuscripts mentioned in the Benedictine edition of Jerome's version, the canon of the Hebrew verity (supposed to be made about the ninth century, and altered by some correcting hand), the reading of the famous Latin Bible of Sextus, the Latin manuscript in Exeter college library, marked C. 2. 13. and the ancient Latin manuscript written in Gothic characters, the variations of which are published in Blanchini's *Vindiciæ*, all have it four; so that Grotius, and, after him, Patrick, were well supported in having pronounced so decisively, that it would admit of no doubt that an error had crept into the text, and that instead of אַרְבָּעִים, *arbagim*, forty, should be read אַרְבַּע, *arbang*, four. See Kennicott's *Dissert*, vol.



A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023.  
1 Sam. 16. h  
Gen. 28.  
20.  
Ch. 13. 38.

8 For thy servant <sup>5</sup>vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

10 ¶ But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound

A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023.

of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.

11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, *that were* called; and they went <sup>k</sup>in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

1 Sam. 9.  
13. & 16.  
3, 5.  
1 Gen. 30. 2.

12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, *even* from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices.

1 Pt. 41. 9.  
& 55. 13.  
13, 14.  
in Josh. 15.  
31.

ii. p. 358, and Houbigant's note. *Let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed to the Lord in Hebron*—To wit, to perform there by some solemn sacrifice. As Delaney is of opinion that a very grievous sickness of David gave Absalom occasion to take the forementioned steps, so he thinks that his father's unexpected recovery, perhaps through God's extraordinary influence, broke Absalom's measures for some time, and made him postpone his wicked purpose. In the mean time, his popularity had all the field he could wish. As all the people of Israel resorted to Jerusalem, thrice in every year, on the three solemn festivals, he had so often an opportunity of paying his court, and insinuating his poison, till the infection spread through the whole body of the realm; and wanted nothing but a fair occasion to display itself in all its malignity; which Absalom sought by going to Hebron.

Ver. 8, 9. *If the Lord shall bring me again to Jerusalem, &c.*—This vow, we see, of Absalom, is conceived exactly in the style of the patriarchal piety; and plainly implies, that however he was tempted by his grandfather to serve the gods of Geshur, yet he continued steady to the true religion, and determined against idolatry. This, we may be sure, David was highly delighted to hear, and therefore gave a ready consent to the performance of his vow, saying, *Go in peace. So he arose and went to Hebron*—This place he chose, as being an eminent city, and, next to Jerusalem, the chief city of the tribe of Judah. It was also the place of his birth, the place where his father had begun his kingdom, which he took for a good omen, and where the seat of government had been several years. Here, likewise, they were wont to sacrifice till the temple was built; it was at a convenient distance from Jerusalem, and, no doubt, he had here secured many friends. He therefore thought it the most commodious place for his purpose, next to Jerusalem.

Ver. 10. *Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes*—Before he left Jerusalem he took care to send his emissaries into all parts; doubtless under colour of inviting persons of distinction to the sacrifice; but in reality to carry the watch-word and signal, before agreed on between them. *As soon as ye shall hear the sound of the trumpet, &c.*—This was the signal which was to be given for the people's taking up arms, their hearing the sound of the trumpet which Absalom took care should be blown in all the tribes at the same time by persons purposely placed in the towns and villages at such a distance from one another, as, that each trumpet could be heard by the person appointed to blow the next. The spies, or emissaries, immediately upon hearing the sound of it, were to proclaim that Absalom was crowned king in

Hebron. Upon this being done, all his partisans, it is likely, shouted, *God save king Absalom.*

Ver. 11. *With Absalom went two hundred men—that were called*—That is, that were invited by him to feast with him on his sacrifice, and were such as he had picked out as fit for his purpose; principal persons of the city, no doubt, and of some reputation with the king and people. These he took with him that they might give a countenance to his undertaking, and cause the people at first to think that he was acting in all this by his father's consent and approbation, as being now aged and infirm, and willing to resign the kingdom to his son. *They went in their simplicity, and knew not any thing*—Of his design, but only went to attend him, and pay him respect as the king's son, who did them the honour to invite them to a holy feast. It is no new thing for good men to be made use of by designing men to put a colour on ill practices.

Ver. 12. *Absalom sent for Ahithophel—David's counsellor*—None are more capable of doing mischief to kings, than those who have been of their privy-council, and know their secrets. It is supposed by the Jews that Ahithophel was incensed against David for his conduct to Bathsheba, who, they think, was his grand-daughter, being the daughter of Eliam, Chap. xi. 3, and Eliam the son of Ahithophel, Chap. xxiii. 34. It, doubtless, must have been matter of great surprise and inexpressible affliction to David, to find the two men, whom of all others he seems to have most loved, and confided in, combining against him, and compassing his death, Absalom and Ahithophel, his son and his counsellor. *While he offered sacrifices*—Or, rather, *after he had offered sacrifices*: for it seems, he sent for him while he sat at dinner. *And the conspiracy was strong*—Ahithophel was too cunning to discover himself till he saw all things favourable and prosperous on the part of Absalom: and they both very well judged that his accession to the conspiracy, in those circumstances, was the likeliest means to ensure its success. *For the people increased continually*—Most of whom, it is probable, intended no harm at first, perhaps not even to divest David of his crown and dignity; much less to take away his life; but only to substitute Absalom as a coadjutor to him, for the executing of the royal authority during David's life, and to be his successor after his death. However, it is evident, they did proceed so far, at last, as to design to kill David for their own greater security. For so Ahithophel advised, and they all consented to it, Chap. xvii. 2, 4; which shews how dangerous it is to go out of the right way; for we do not know, down what horrid precipices

A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023.  
u Ps. 3. 1. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people <sup>n</sup> increased continually with Absalom.

o Ver. 6.  
Judg. 9. 3. ¶ And there came a messenger to David, saying, <sup>o</sup> The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

p Ch. 19. 9.  
Ps. 3.  
title. ¶ And David said unto all his servants that *were* with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us <sup>p</sup> flee; for we shall not *else* escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and <sup>†</sup> bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

† Heb.  
Urrust.

¶ And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants

A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023. † H-b.  
choise.  
q Ps. 3. title. *are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall <sup>†</sup> appoint.*

¶ And <sup>q</sup> the king went forth, and all his household <sup>†</sup> after him. And the king left <sup>r</sup> ten women, *which were* concubines, to keep the house.

¶ And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

¶ And all his servants passed on beside him; <sup>s</sup> and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

¶ Then said the king to <sup>t</sup> Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou

we may fall afterwards. And it may serve as a warning to us, never to begin any thing that is wrong, which may lead us to commit that in the issue, which we abhorred at the first, when we find we cannot be safe in one wickedness, unless we commit a greater.

Ver. 13. *There came a messenger to David*—It is probable, some of the two hundred men who went innocently with Absalom from Jerusalem, sent this messenger, who, however, did not go immediately, on the first appearance of the conspiracy, but after it became manifest through a great concourse of people openly thronging to him.

Ver. 14. *David said—Arise, and let us flee*—As soon as he had received information of what had passed, he saw the danger was instant, and took his measures accordingly. He knew Absalom would lose no time to accomplish his design, and that the nature of it required him to strike home at once. David therefore orders his servants, soldiery, and friends, to depart from Jerusalem immediately. For, though the fort of Zion was strong, and he might have defended himself there for some time; yet he had not laid in provisions for a long siege: and, if he had been once besieged there, Absalom would have got speedy possession of his whole kingdom; whereas, if he marched abroad, he might raise a considerable army for his defence. Besides, the greatest part of Jerusalem could not be well defended against an enemy. And if it could, “he did not care to expose a favourite city, built by himself, and the residence of the tabernacle of God, to all the evils incident to sieges, and almost inseparable from them. Nor, perhaps, did he incline to trust the inhabitants of a place so long exposed to the taint of Absalom’s temptations.” This, some think, appears from the 55th Psalm, which, they suppose, was meditated and poured out in prayer to God, upon the discovery of Absalom’s conspiracy. And from thence it is evident that he had discerned the seeds and workings of a conspiracy in the city, and that Ahithophel was at the bottom of it: and not only so, but that David foresaw his sudden and sad end. Delancy. *For we shall not else escape from Absalom*—He was well acquainted with the

young man’s impetuosity, and the madness of the people, and therefore judged that the only method to be pursued, in order to safety, was to give way to the fury of the flood, and not attempt to stem it in the fulness of its overflowing.

Ver. 16. *The king went forth, and all his household after him*—Or, as the Hebrew ברגליו *beraglayo*, rather means, *on foot*: which the king probably chose to do, that he might humble himself under the hand of God; might encourage his adherents in this hard and comfortless march; and might move compassion in his people towards him. *The king left ten women*—Supposing that their sex and quality, and especially their relation to him, being his concubines, would be a sufficient protection to them, and gain them some respect, or, at least, safety from his son. What became of his wives is not here related; but it is probable they went along with him, to take care of him; as the other women were left to take care of the house.

Ver. 17, 18. *The king went forth, and all the people after him*—That is, all those of Jerusalem who were well affected to him. *And tarried in a place that was far off*—At a good distance from the city, where, it is likely, he put the people, that had come out in a confused state, into good order, and waited to see what other friends would join him. *And all his servants passed on beside him*—His household servants or body-guards, marched probably on both hands of him. *And all the Gittites six hundred men*—These marched in the front of his little army; but who they were it is hard to say; for we read nothing of them before. Some take them to have been proselytes, born in Gath of the Philistines, and think they came with Ittai to David; being attracted by the fame of his piety and happy success. Others take them to have been Jews, who had fled to David in his exile, when he was at Gath, and accompanied him ever after, not only in the time of Saul’s persecution, but after he came to the crown of Israel and Judah.

Ver. 19. *Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, &c.*—He seems to have been the commander of those 600 men before mentioned. And the Jews make him the son of Achish, king

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023.

also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile.

20 Whereas thou camest *but* yesterday, should I this day † make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go <sup>u</sup> whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth *be* with thee.

21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, <sup>x</sup>As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.

22 And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that *were* with him.

of Gath, who, they say, out of religion and friendship came to David. *Return to thy place*—To Jerusalem, where thy place of residence is. *And abide with the king*—With Absalom, king by usurpation. *For thou art a stranger and an exile*—Not much concerned in our affairs, and therefore thou oughtest not to be involved in our troubles. And, as a stranger, thou mayest hope to be civilly treated by Absalom. *Whereas thou camest but yesterday*—That is, very lately; *should I this day make thee go up and down with us?*—Should I unsettle thee again so soon? *Seeing I go whither I may*—Or, I know not whither, having now no certain dwelling-place. *Take back thy brethren*—Thy countrymen the Gittites. *Mercy and truth be with thee*—Since I am now unable to recompense thy kindness and fidelity to me, my hearty prayer to God is, that he would shew to thee his mercy, in blessing thee with all sorts of blessings, and his faithfulness in making good all these promises which he hath made, not to Israelites only, but to all true-hearted proselytes, such as thou art.

Ver. 21. *Ittai answered*—*Surely in what place, &c.*—Admirable and noble fidelity this in a stranger, when a son was a rebel against the father! He is a friend indeed, who loves at all times, and will cleave to us in adversity. Thus should we cleave to the Son of David, so that neither life nor death may separate us from him. Reader! is this the resolution of thy heart? Dost thou belong to Christ, and is it thy disposition never to leave him?

Ver. 22. *Ittai the Gittite passed over*—The brook Kidron, as it follows in the next verse. *And all the little ones that were with him*—This shews that his whole family were come to sojourn in Judea. And being so deeply engaged for David, he durst not leave his little ones to Absalom's mercy.

Ver. 23. *All the country wept*—All about Jerusalem, and the generality of the people by whom they passed, being extremely afflicted to see their king, under whom they had lived

23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook || Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.

24 ¶ And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites *were* with him, <sup>z</sup>bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city.

25 And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he <sup>a</sup>will bring me again, and shew me *both* it, and his habitation:

in great peace and prosperity, reduced to such extremities. It must be considered, that Absalom's friends and partisans were gone to him to Hebron, and the rest of the people thereabouts, were either well-wishers to David, or at least, moved with compassion at the sad and sudden change of so great and good a king, which was sufficient to affect an heart of stone. *All the people passed over*—All that continued faithful to David in those parts. *The king also passed over the brook Kidron*—Or Cedron, which was near Jerusalem. The very same brook which Christ passed over, when he entered upon his sufferings, John xviii. 1. *Toward the way of the wilderness*—Which lay between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Ver. 24. *Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him*—They knew David's great regard for them and their office, notwithstanding his failings; and the arts which Absalom had used to gain the people's affections, had made no impression upon them. They saw that he had little religion in him, and therefore they steadily adhered to David. *Bearing the ark of the covenant of God*—As a pledge of God's presence and assistance. *And they set down the ark of God*—Either in expectation of drawing forth more people to David's party, if not from their loyalty to their lawful king, yet from their piety and reverence to the ark; or, that all the people might pass along, and the ark might come in the rear of them, for their safeguard and encouragement. *Abiathar went up*—From the ark to the city, which was on higher ground; that so he, being high-priest, might use his authority with the people, to persuade them to do their duty; and there he stayed until all those whom he could persuade, were gone forth.

Ver. 25, 26. *The king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark*—This he ordered, 1. Through his care of and reverence for the ark, which, though it might be carried out to a certain place, yet, he might justly think, ought not to be taken about from place to place he knew not whither. And, 2. Lest, if he had carried it about with him every where, he should

A. M. 3961.  
B. C. 1033.

26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, *here am I*, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, *Art not thou a seer?* return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

28 See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come

word from you to certify me.

29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

30 ¶ And David went up by the ascent of *mount Olivet*, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

A. M. 3961.  
B. C. 1033.

Heb. going up, and weeping.  
Ch. 19. 4.  
Esther 6. 12.  
Isai. 20. 2, 4.  
Jer. 14. 3, 4.  
Ps. 136. 6.

seem to trust in that which was but the token of God's presence, more than he did in God himself, who had preserved him in the persecution of Saul, when he had not the ark with him. But was he not exposing the priests to the violence of the usurper, by thus sending them back to Jerusalem; especially as they had just given such evidence of their fidelity to their king? To this it may be answered, that David hoped the sacredness of their character would be a security to them against all violence. *If I find favour in the eyes of the Lord, &c.*—If he shall be pleased to pardon the sins for which he is now justly, although so severely, chastizing me. *He will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation*—Will restore me to the enjoyment of the privileges of his house, and the ordinances of his worship, which I shall consider one of the greatest evidences of the return of his favour, and one of the greatest blessings his goodness can confer upon me, even greater than the being restored to my palace and throne. *But if he say, I have no delight in thee*—I will not receive thee into my favour, nor restore thee to thy throne and city, and to the enjoyment of my ordinances. *Here I am*—Ready to obey him, and to submit to his will and pleasure concerning me. David saw plainly that God, according to his threatening, had raised up this evil to him out of his own house, and was punishing him for his sins, and he receives the chastisement with resignation. "I imagine," says Dr. Delaney, "I now hear him taking up the same lamentation which Alphonsus the Wise, king of Arragon, afterwards did upon a like occasion; 'I wonder not so much at my people's ingratitude to me, as at my own to God.' Hence, in this spirit of humiliation, David would not presume to have the ark, the symbol of the Divine presence, borne before him in that war: that was an honour of which he deemed himself utterly unworthy. And, therefore, referring himself and his affairs to the disposal of the Divine Providence, he remanded Zadok and Abiathar back to the city, with the ark." *Let him do with me as seemeth him good*—I have nothing to object; it is all well that God doth. Thus ought we cheerfully to acquiesce in the will of God whatever befalls us. And that we may not complain of what is, let us see God's hand in all events. And that we may not be afraid of what shall be, let us see all events in God's hand.

Ver. 27. *Art thou not a seer?* Return into the city in peace—"It should seem from hence," says Delaney, "that Zadok was a prophet: however, as a priest, he was a teacher; and as such, bound to stay with his people in the greatest exigencies,

and instruct them in their duty: besides that, by staying to do his duty to his people, he might also do good offices to his prince." Indeed the word *roch*, here rendered *seer*, means also a *seeing, discerning, and observing* man: an interpretation which suits well with the present state of David's mind and affairs. As if he had said, thou art a wise man, fit to make observations on what is passing in Jerusalem, and to give me information thereof. Accordingly David concerted a plan, both with Zadok and Abiathar, of corresponding with him, and sending him intelligence of all his enemies' measures by their sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan.

Ver. 30. *David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up*—To think that one who was the offspring of his own body should thus lift up the heel against him, and reflecting on his own conduct in the matter of Uriah, as the cause of this calamity. *And had his head covered*—Through shame and confusion. *And he went up barefoot*—In testimony of his deep sorrow and humiliation for the sins whereby he had procured this evil to himself; for these were the habits of mourners; and to take an holy revenge upon himself for his former delicacy and luxury. "A more memorable event, surely, was never recorded in history, nor a more moving spectacle exhibited to mortal eyes! A king, venerable for his years and victories; sacred in the characters, both of his piety and prophecy; renowned for prowess, and revered for wisdom! reduced to the condition of a fugitive! to a sudden and extreme necessity of fleeing for his life, from the presence of his own son, his darling and delight; and a whole country loudly lamenting his fate! In this condition, David went up the mount, and when he reached the summit of it, fell down prostrate before God. Josephus tells us, that when David reached the top of the mountain, he took a view of the city, and prayed to God with abundance of tears. The reader will perhaps think it worth his notice, that Josephus should tell us, that David wept and viewed the city in the same spot from which, the evangelist informs us, that our blessed Saviour wept over it."—Delaney. And is this the glorious king of Israel, the beloved of God, the wise, the victorious David, who slew his ten thousands? Strange change indeed! What has produced this sad reverse? Sin alone has wrought all this! These are its baneful effects: he forgot the commandment of the Lord his God, and from hence has flowed all this evil! You that plead an excuse for sin, because David, the man after God's own heart, fell into it; remember, likewise, what bitter and grievous punishments he

A. M. 3061.  
B. C. 1023. 31 ¶ And one told David, saying, <sup>1</sup>Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, <sup>2</sup>O LORD, I pray thee, <sup>3</sup>turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

1 Ps. 3. 1, 2.  
& 55. 12,  
& c.  
2 Ch. 16.  
28. & 17.  
14, 23. 32 ¶ And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God behold, Hushai, the <sup>4</sup>Archite came to meet him <sup>5</sup>with his coat rent, and earth upon his head :

2 Josh. 16.  
2.  
3 Ch. 1. 2. 33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be <sup>6</sup>a burden unto me:

4 Ch. 16. 19. 34 But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, <sup>7</sup>I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

35 And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests?

A. M. 3061.  
B. C. 1023. therefore it shall be, *that* what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, <sup>8</sup>thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

5 Ch. 17. 15.  
16.  
6 Ver. 27. 36 Behold, *they have* there <sup>9</sup>with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

7 Ch. 16. 16.  
1 Chron.  
27. 29.  
8 Ch. 16. 15. 37 So Hushai <sup>10</sup>David's friend came into the city, <sup>11</sup>and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

## CHAP. XVI.

*David is deceived by Ziba, ver. 1—4. And cursed by Shimei, ver. 5—14. Absalom receives Hushai, ver. 15—19. Lies with his father's concubines, ver. 20—23.*

A. M. 3061.  
B. C. 1023. **A**ND <sup>12</sup>when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, <sup>13</sup>Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two

underwent for it. Are you willing to pay such a price for sin? And yet be assured, the inviolable laws of God require you to pay it in one way or other.

Ver. 31. *One told David*—Or *David told*; that is, being informed that Ahithophel was among the conspirators, he mentioned it to his friends, to excite them to join with him in the following prayer against him. *Turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness*—Either infatuate him, that he may give foolish counsel; or let his counsel be contemned and rejected as foolish; or let it miscarry in the execution. Thus David's constant recourse, in all his dangers and difficulties, was unto God by prayer.

Ver. 32. *The top of the mount where he worshipped*—Looking, doubtless, towards Jerusalem, where the ark and tabernacle, which he had made for it, were. *Hushai the Archite came to meet him*—Probably he was from Archi, a city in the tribe of Ephraim, (see Josh. xvi. 2,) and coming to Jerusalem, was made one of David's privy-council because of his wisdom; otherwise, it is not likely that Absalom would so readily have entertained him, and admitted him to his secrets. The coming of Hushai just at this time, seems to have been ordered by God's peculiar providence, in answer to David's prayer mentioned in the preceding verse. *With his coat rent, and earth upon his head*—In token of his great sorrow on David's account.

Ver. 33. *If thou passest on with me, thou shalt be a burden, &c.*—For he was not provided, it seems, with sufficient support for his own family; and Hushai, though famous as a counsellor in the cabinet, being unpractised in the camp, and no soldier, could not be so useful to him in the army as he

might be at court. David therefore, conceives the idea of employing him in endeavouring to defeat or render abortive the counsel of Ahithophel.

Ver. 34. *Say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O King, &c.*—This crafty counsel of David to Hushai, advising him to use such great dissimulation, cannot be justified. It must, of necessity be reckoned among his sins, as being a plain violation of the law of truth, and only intended to deceive. Nevertheless, as this was with David the hour of temptation, and this evil advice was suggested by his present and pressing straits, God was mercifully pleased to pardon and direct it to a good end. *Thou mayest for me defeat, &c.*—That is, by advising different measures, which, considering the great reputation that Hushai had for wisdom, David judged Absalom would be inclined to hearken to, rather than those proposed by Ahithophel.

Ver. 36, 37. *They have there with them their two sons*—Not in Jerusalem, but in a place near it, to which they could easily send upon occasion. *So Hushai came into the city*—Where, it is likely, he waited for the coming of Absalom. And having got thither before him, he so ordered his affairs, that it was not known to Absalom's party that he had been with David to offer him his services. *And Absalom came into Jerusalem*—How soon do royal cities and royal palaces change their masters! But we look for a *kingdom which cannot be moved.*

CHAP. XVI. Ver. 1. *Behold Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, met him*—This crafty man, being persuaded that God would in due time appear for the righteous cause of so good a

A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023. hundred *loaves* of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.

2 And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses *be* for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, <sup>c</sup>that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.

c Ch. 15. 28.  
& 17. 29.

3 And the king said, And where is thy master's son? <sup>d</sup>And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To-day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.

d Ch. 19. 27.

4 <sup>e</sup>Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine *are* all that *pertained* unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, <sup>f</sup>I humbly beseech thee *that* I may

e Prov. 19. 13.

f Heb. I do  
obedience.

find grace in thy sight, my lord, O A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023. king.

5 ¶ And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name *was* 'Shimei, the son of Gera: || he came forth, and cursed 'still as he came.

f Ch. 19. 16.  
1 Kings 2. 8, 44.  
Or, he still  
came  
forth and  
cursed.

6 And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left.

7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou † bloody man, and thou <sup>g</sup>man of Belial:

† Heb. man  
of blood.  
g Deut. 13. 12.

8 The LORD hath <sup>h</sup>returned upon thee all <sup>i</sup>the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand

h Judg. 9. 24, 26, 57.  
1 Kings 2. 32, 33.  
i Ch. 1. 16.  
& 3. 29,  
29, & 4.  
11, 12.

king, and scatter the cloud which was now upon him, takes this occasion to make way for his own future advancement, by making David a handsome present of provisions, which was the more welcome, because it came seasonably. *An hundred of summer fruits*—These, the Seventy suppose, were *dales*, but the more common opinion is, that they were *figs*, as the Chaldee paraphrast supposes them to have been; from whence Dr. Delaney infers, that this flight of David was about the beginning of summer, when the early figs were wont to be gathered, and when a present of them must have been very seasonable and refreshing. *A bottle of wine*—Containing, no doubt, a quantity that was proportionable to the rest of the present. Their bottles, being made of skins, or leather, were, some of them, very large.

Ver. 2. *The asses being for the king's household to ride on*—Or rather, some of his household, for they could not all ride on two asses, unless by turns, relieving each other, which perhaps Ziba intended; for he seems to have been very considerate in adapting his present to the wants of David and those that were with him. It appears, the king, and his wives and children, were all on foot: not because he had not, or could not procure, asses for them at Jerusalem: but because he chose they should go in this manner, as best becoming that state of penitence and humiliation in which they were.

Ver. 3, 4. *He said, to-day shall the house of Israel restore me, &c.*—This was a fiction, but not badly contrived; for the family of David being so divided, and one part enraged against another, it was possible they might destroy one another by mutual wounds; and the people, being tired out by civil wars, might think of restoring the kingdom to the family of

Saul their former sovereign, of which family Mephibosheth was the principal branch. *Then said the king, behold, thine are all that pertained to Mephibosheth*—A rash sentence, and unrighteous to condemn a man unheard upon the single testimony of his accuser and servant. But David's mind was both clouded by his trouble, and biassed by Ziba's great and seasonable kindness. And he thought, probably, Ziba would not dare to accuse his master, except on good grounds, of so great a crime as that of being a *traitor*, which, if false, might be so easily disproved. *Ziba said, that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king*—Thus he hypocritically pretends to value the king's favour more than the gift he had bestowed upon him.

Ver. 5, 6. *When David came to Bahurim*—The next village in his way to the wilderness; that is, when he came to the territory of it, for he did not reach the place itself till afterwards, as is mentioned Ver. 14. *Thence came out a man and cursed still as he came*—Out of an inveterate hatred to David; whom he looked upon as the great enemy of the family of Saul, to which he belonged. *And he cast stones, &c.*—To shew his contempt of David and his servants. *All his mighty men were on his right hand and on his left*—This is observed to shew the prodigious madness of the man. He could not hurt David, who was so strongly guarded; but he might have been immediately killed himself.

Ver. 7, 8. *Come out*—Or rather, *go out*, as the Hebrew properly means: Be gone out of thy kingdom, from which thou deservest to be expelled. *Thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial*—Probably, he says this with a reference to David's adultery with Bathsheba, and the killing of Uriah. *All the blood of the house of Saul*—Either, 1. the blood of

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023.  
† Heb. *behold thee in thy evil.*  
of Absalom thy son: and, † behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man.

9 ¶ Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this <sup>k</sup> dead dog <sup>l</sup> curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.

10 And the king said, <sup>m</sup> What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because <sup>n</sup> the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. <sup>o</sup> Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, <sup>p</sup> my son, which <sup>q</sup> came forth of my bowels,

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023.  
seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him.

12 It may be that the LORD will look on mine † affliction, and that the LORD will <sup>r</sup> requite me good for his cursing this day.

13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and † cast dust.

14 And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there.

15 ¶ And <sup>s</sup> Absalom, and all the

Abner and Ishbosheth; which he imputes to David, as if they had been killed by David's contrivance: or, 2. the death of Saul's seven sons, Chap. xxi. 8. which, though related after this, seems to have taken place before. *Thou art taken*—The same mischief thou didst bring upon others, is now returned upon thy own head. "This surely," says Delaney, "was one of the severest trials of patience, that ever human magnanimity endured. The accusation was notoriously false, and the king could, for that reason, bear it the better; but his servants saw it not in the light of their master's equanimity, but of his enemy's insolence. Abishai, David's nephew, could not bear it; but begged the king's permission to take off the traitor's head that uttered it," saying, *Why should this dead dog (an expression of the utmost contempt,) curse my lord the king?*

Ver. 10. *What have I to do with you?* &c.—In this matter I ask not your advice, nor will I follow it. Your violent counsels are no way pleasing or fit for me at present. *The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David*—God, by bringing me into this distressed condition, hath caused me to appear a proper object of his scorn, hath left him to his own wickedness, and now gives him an opportunity, in the course of his providence, of pouring forth the malignity of his heart, without restraint, or fear of being punished for so doing. We cannot suppose David meant that God, strictly speaking, had either bid Shimei curse him, or had excited him so to do: but merely that, his heart being full of malice and rage, God had now put it into his power to give full vent to these diabolical passions as a punishment to David. Unto this the good king humbly submits, looking upon it as coming from the hand of God, who had delivered him up to this contempt. And in this David's patience and meekness were admirable, for it is not an easy thing to stifle all emotions of revenge when there is an high provocation to it, and no difficulty in taking it. David did not scorn these curses as proceeding from the mouth of a base wretch, not worthy to be regarded, but acknowledged that his sins had merited this chastisement, and that God was just in suffering him to be afflicted with it.

*Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?*—Who shall reproach God's providence for permitting this? Or, who shall restrain him from executing his just judgment against me?

Ver. 11. *Behold my son—seeketh my life*—Which is a much greater mischief than to reproach me with words. *How much more may this Benjamite do it?*—One of that tribe and family, from which God hath taken away the kingdom, and given it to me. *Let him curse*—Do not now hinder him by violence from doing it, nor punish him for it. It is meet I should bear the indignation of the Lord, and submit to his pleasure. *For the Lord hath bidden him*—Not by the word of his precept, or by any powerful influence upon his mind impelling him to it; but by the word of his providence placing me in such circumstances, that he conceives he can curse me with impunity, and by suffering the malignity of his heart to take its natural course, and work without restraint.

Ver. 12. *It may be the Lord will look on mine affliction, &c.*—He means that, although this was a chastisement from God upon him, yet if he bore it as became him, it might become a means of mercy to him. His humble submission, and resignation might call down the divine commiseration upon his patience and penitence.

Ver. 13. *Shimei went along on the hill's side*—David's patience but more inflamed Shimei's insolence. And as David and his servants marched along, Shimei kept pace with them upon the side of an adjacent hill; and still continued cursing, reviling, and throwing dust and stones unchastised. David, however, endured it all, and *when he was reviled, he reviled not again; but committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously.* How far he was in this instance, an emblem of his suffering son, is not hard, to discern, or adventurous to assert. Delaney.

Ver. 15. *Absalom and all the people—came to Jerusalem*—Probably a considerable time before David reached the banks of Jordan to which he was marching. When David quitted Jerusalem, it was upon a persuasion that Absalom

Or, *tears.*  
† Heb. *eye.*  
Gen. 29.  
39. 18am.  
1. 11. Ps.  
25. 18.  
r Rom. 9.  
28.

† Heb. *dust-  
ed him  
with dust.*

s Ch. 15. 37.



A. M. 2951.  
B. C. 1023.

people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Aithophel with him.

16 And it came to pass, when Ch. 15. 37. Hushai the Archite, ' David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, † God save the king, God save the king.

<sup>†</sup>Heb. Let the king live.<sup>u</sup>Ch. 19. 25.  
Prov. 17. 17.

17 And Absalom said unto Hushai, *Is this thy kindness to thy friend?* <sup>u</sup> why wentest thou not with thy friend?

18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.

would make all the haste he could to possess himself of the capital, and, if possible, to surprise his father in it. And as he judged so, it appears, it came to pass.

Ver. 16. *Hushai said unto Absalom, &c.*—Hushai, it appears, mindful of his instructions, lost no time to pay his court, and profess his allegiance to Absalom; but immediately, coming to him, addressed him in the customary form of salutation to kings; or rather, with a seemingly peculiar zeal, he redoubled the salutation; *God save the king*—viz. Absalom, whom he pretends to own for his king and rightful lord, as if he were abundantly satisfied in his title, and well pleased with his accession to the throne. "What arts of dissimulation are they tempted to use," says Henry, "who govern themselves by fleshly wisdom! and how happy are they, who have not known those depths of Satan, but have their conversation in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity!"

Ver. 17. *Is this thy kindness to thy friend?*—Doth this action answer that profession of friendship which thou hast hitherto made to him? He speaks thus only to try him. He does not say, *To my father*, for that question would have reflected a heavier reproach upon himself, who had forsaken not only a friend but his own father, and even forced him away. Or, perhaps, by saying, *Thy friend*, he meant to insinuate, that David was a friend to Hushai, and to strangers, but not to his own son, whom by severity he had provoked to take this course; and, therefore, he doth not vouchsafe to call him his *father*.

Ver. 18. *Hushai said—Nay, but whom the Lord, &c.*—Hushai gave him to understand, that his allegiance was governed by other principles than those of private friendship; that the appointment of God, and the election of his people determined him in the object of his duty: and what should hinder him from serving the son with as much fidelity, as he had served the father? The attentive reader will observe, that this salutation and whole apology are evidently as evasive, and as well calculated to delude, as art could contrive them; for he neither prays personally for Absalom,

19 And again, <sup>x</sup> whom should I serve? *should I not serve* in the presence of his son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.

A. M. 2951.  
B. C. 1023.  
<sup>x</sup> Ch. 15. 31.

20 Then said Absalom, to Aithophel Give counsel among you what we shall do.

21 And Aithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's <sup>y</sup> concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou <sup>z</sup> art abhorred of thy father; then shall <sup>a</sup> the hands of all that are with thee be strong.

<sup>y</sup> Ch. 15. 16.  
& 20. 3.<sup>z</sup> Gen. 34. 30. 15am.  
13. 6.  
<sup>a</sup> Ch. 9. 7.  
Zech. 5. 13.

22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and

nor professes allegiance to him; yet the bait took, and Absalom's self-sufficiency, gross as the delusion was, swallowed it whole. Delaney.

Ver. 21. *Go in unto thy father's concubines*—This counsel he gave partly to revenge the injury done to Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, Chap. xi. 3; the son of Aithophel, Chap. xxiii. 34; and principally for his own and the people's safety, that the breach between David and Absalom might be irreparable. For this, he foresaw, would provoke David in the highest degree, and cut off all hope of reconciliation, which otherwise might have been expected to take place, by some treaty between Absalom and his tender hearted father. But in that case his followers, and especially Aithophel, would have been left to David's mercy. *That thou art abhorred of thy father*—And, therefore, art obliged to prosecute the war with all vigour, and to abandon all thoughts of peace; as knowing that thy father, though he may dissemble, yet will never forgive such an act. *Then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong*—They will fight with greater courage and resolution, when they are freed from the fear of thy being ever reconciled to thy father, and see they are out of all danger of being sacrificed to any future treaty of peace or agreement between you. "An advice," says Delaney, "for the present and in appearance wise; but in reality pernicious. Could not this long-headed, sagacious statesmen foresee, that this action, for which some men would now become more attached to Absalom, must one day make him detestable in their eyes, when they reflected upon the horror of it? A guilt made mortal by the law of God, Lev. xx. 11. and not named even among the Gentiles; a guilt for which they must one day judge him more worthy to lose his crown, than Reuben his birth-right. However, this hellish advice was immediately embraced."

Ver. 22. *So they spread a tent upon the top of the house*—Of the king's palace, the very place from whence David had gazed upon Bathsheba: so that his sin was legible in the very place of his punishment. *And Absalom went in unto his father's concubines*—To one or some of them. *In the sight of*

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023.  
Ch. 12. 11. Absalom went in unto his father's concubines <sup>b</sup> in the sight of all Israel.

23 And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the † oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel <sup>c</sup> both with David and with Absalom.

† Heb. word.

c Ch. 15. 19.

## CHAP. XVII.

*Ahitophel advises Absalom to despatch, ver. 1—4. Hushai advises deliberation, and his advice is received, ver. 5—14. Intelligence is sent to David, ver. 15—21. David passes over Jordan, ver. 22. Ahithophel hangs himself, ver. 23. Absalom pursues David, ver. 24—26. David is supplied with necessaries, ver. 27—29.*

**M**OREOVER Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now

*all Israel*—Who saw him go into the tent, and thence concluded, that he had converse with them as he had designed. “An action of such profligate impiety, and abandoned impudence, as it were to be wished no sun had seen, or history related.” By this we may see the character of Absalom and his party, and how abominably wicked they must have been, whom such a scandalous action tied the faster to him. And we may farther learn how corrupt the body of the people were, and how ripe for that judgment, which was now hastening towards them. Now was David's adultery, (which had been planned, and, it may be, perpetrated in the same place,) judicially chastised, and God's vengeance denounced upon it by his prophet, signally executed, and his wives prostituted *in the sight of the sun*. Chap. xii. 11. The Lord is righteous, and no word of his shall fall to the ground!

Ver. 23. *The counsel of Ahithophel, &c.*—It was deemed as unerring, and was commonly followed with as little doubt of the success, as though the oracle of God had dictated it. This is mentioned as the reason, why counsel, which carried so ill a face, should meet with such general approbation.

CHAP. XVII. Ver. 1. *I will arise and pursue after David*—It seems he was a soldier, as well as a counsellor. Or, at least, he thought his counsel so sure of being successful, that he offered himself to put it in execution. He was probably afraid, also, that if Absalom should command the men himself, natural affection might prevail with him to spare his father, and not take away his life; or, perhaps, even work an agreement between them, and so leave him in danger of being called to account for his rebellion.

Ver. 2, 3. *I will come upon him while he is weary*—Before he has had time to breathe from the fatigues he has just gone through. *And weak handed*—Before he has collected more forces. *I will make him afraid*—Strike a terror into him by this sudden attack, made in the night, when he is ill provided.

choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night:

2 And I will come upon him while he is <sup>a</sup> weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee, and I will <sup>b</sup> smite the king only:

3 And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace.

4 And the saying † pleased Absalom well and all the elders of Israel.

5 Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise † what he saith.

6 And when Hushai was come to

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023.

a Deut. 25.  
18. Ch.  
16. 14.

b Zech. 13.  
7.

† Heb. was right in the eyes of, &c.  
1 Sam. 18.  
30.

† Heb. what is in his mouth.

*I will smite the king only*—And proclaim pardon to all the rest. *And I will bring back all the people*—By this means I shall easily bring over their allegiance to thee. *The man whom thou seekest is as if they all returned*—The killing of David will effectually end the contest, and the whole nation will come in to thee, there being no other to whom they will submit, he being dead. *So all the people shall be in peace*—The single circumstance of taking and killing him will restore peace, and preserve both the people who are with thee, and those that are with David. They shall all be saved, and he alone destroyed. “The attentive reader will easily perceive, that this advice well justifies the character given of Ahithophel in the Scripture; it was, in its several parts, admirably fitted, both to the inclinations and interests of his pupil: he consigned him to his pleasures, and took all the danger to himself; and at the same time he relieved his little remains of humanity (if he had any) from the necessity of imbruing his hands in his father's blood. His incest was, for the present, personal guilt enough; that act of outrage would make Absalom's reconciliation with his father, desperate: and whilst he indulged his evil appetite, Ahithophel, with a chosen band, would pursue and surprise David. Nothing could be more worldly wise, or more hellishly wicked; it was indeed, as the advice of an oracle, but very different from that dictated by the Spirit of God. And yet, horrid as it was, it pleased that vile son and his associates.”—Delaney.

Ver. 4. *The saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel*—That such a wretch as Absalom should aim at his father's throat is not strange. But that the body of the people, to whom David had been so great a blessing, should join with him in it, is amazing. But the finger of God was in it. Let not the best of parents, or the best of princes think it strange, if they are injured by those who should be their support and joy, when they (like David) have provoked God to turn against them.

Ver. 5. *Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai*—A won-

A. M. 2991.  
B. C. 1023. Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do *after* his † saying? if not, speak thou.

† Heb. word.

7 And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath † given *is* not good at this time.

† Heb. counselled.

† Heb. bitter of soul, Judg. 18.

25.  
c Hosea 13. 8.

8 For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they *be* mighty men, and they *be* † chafed in their minds, as <sup>c</sup>a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father *is* a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.

9 Behold, he is hid now in some

pit, or in some *other* place: and it will come to pass, when some of them be † overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.

A. M. 2997.  
B. C. 1049.

† Heb. fallen.

10 And he also *that is* valiant, whose heart *is* as the heart of a lion, shall utterly <sup>d</sup>melt; for all Israel <sup>d</sup>knoweth that thy father *is* a mighty man, and *they* which *be* with him *are* valiant men.

d Joshua 9. 11.

11 Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, <sup>e</sup>from Dan even to Beer-<sup>e</sup>

Judg. 20. 1.

derful effect of Divine Providence, influencing his heart, that he could not rest in Ahithophel's counsel, though it was so evidently wise, and approved by the general consent of his whole party; and that he should desire Hushai's advice, though neither his reputation for wisdom was equal to Ahithophel's, nor had he yet given any one proof of his fidelity to Absalom. But there is no contending with that God who can arm a man against himself, and destroy him by his own mistakes and passions.

Ver. 7, 8. *The counsel of Ahithophel is not good at this time*—Though he generally gives most wise and admirable counsel, yet he seems now to be under a mistake, and not sufficiently to consider all the present circumstances of this business. *Thou knowest thy father and his men*—Hushai, setting himself to oppose all the articles of Ahithophel's advice, some openly, and others covertly, begins with giving a lively and dreadful description of the enemies Absalom had to deal with. *That they be all mighty men*—Of approved courage and strength, and not so easily vanquished, as Ahithophel supposes. At all times they are terrible to the bravest foes, but much more so at this time; when they are *chafed in their minds*—Heb. *bitter of soul*, inflamed with rage; desperate, and therefore resolved to sell their lives at a dear rate. Being driven from their families, they are as so many enraged bears robbed of their whelps in the field. In the first furious efforts of their rage they will not fail to strike a terror into their assailants, and the panic will be easily diffused through the rest of the pursuing army, and will intimidate the bravest of them. *Thy father is a man of war*—A wise as well as brave prince and general, who, knowing of what importance it is to secure his person, and that your chief design is against his life, will, doubtless, use extraordinary care to keep out of your reach, which he may easily do.

Ver. 9, 10. *Behold, he is now hid in some pit*—Having been often accustomed to that course, and well-acquainted with all hiding-places from Saul's time. In one of them, unknown to us, he will lurk with some of his chosen men, and lie in ambush for us; and when they see a fit opportunity, they will suddenly come forth and surprize some of our men, when they least expect it, and probably at first put them

to flight. *When some of them be overthrown*—Namely of Absalom's men sent against David. *At the first*—Implying, that their good success at first would mightily animate David's men to proceed vigorously in the fight, and intimidate Absalom's army, and consequently would be both a presage and an occasion of their total defeat. *Whosoever heareth it will say, &c.*—They who first hear these ill tidings, will propagate them, and strike terror with them into the rest of the army, whose fear will make them think the slaughter greater than it is. *He also that is valiant—shall utterly melt*—For men, even the most valiant, are apt to form conjectures of the final issue by the beginning: and it is a great encouragement to men to fight, when they prosper at the first onset, and a great discouragement when they are worsted. *All Israel knoweth that thy father is a valiant man, &c.*—The known fame of the prodigious valour of thy father and his followers, will easily gain credit to the report of their being victorious, and strike the stoutest of our men with dread, even Ahithophel himself, if he should go with them.

Ver. 11. *Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee*—As Ahithophel proposed all imaginable advantage to the evil cause, he was engaged in, from expedition, upon the principle mentioned by Tacitus, that nothing determines civil discords so happily as despatch; Hushai, on the contrary, laid himself out to protract and to delay. His design was to gain David more time, that he might increase his army and make better preparation for the battle; and that the present heat of the people for Absalom might be cooled, and they might at last bethink themselves of their duty to David, and return to their former allegiance. For delay, as the same Tacitus observes, gives ill men time to repent, and the good to unite: with a view, therefore, to gain this delay, his advice to Absalom was, that he should wait till he had collected a far larger and more complete army. *That all Israel be generally gathered unto thee from Dan even to Beersheba*—An army made up of the bravest men of all the tribes, to which every thing must yield; and thereby to make sure though slow work. *And that thou go to battle in thine own person*—Intimating that his presence would put life and courage into his soldiers, who

A. M. 3961.  
B. C. 1043.  
Gen. 22.  
17.

† Heb. that  
thy face,  
or pre-  
sence, go,  
&c.

sheba, 'as the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude; and †that thou go to battle in thine own person.

12 So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that *are* with him there shall not be left so much as one.

13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there.

14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite *is* better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For <sup>5</sup>the

5 Ch. 15.  
31, 34.

would be ambitious to shew their skill and courage in defending his person, when they knew that all their actions were observed by him, who had the distribution of rewards and punishments in his hands; and insinuating that the glory of the victory belonged to him alone, and that no body should pretend to rob him of it. "And whereas it was urged by Ahithophel, that he would smite the king only, as if all Absalom's end were to be attained by his death, Hushai insinuates, that the death of competitors was as necessary as that of the king, at least, the death of him who was divinely designed for the throne. And, therefore, he adds, that they should come upon David, where he could not be concealed, and whence he could not escape, *nor any one of those that were with him.*"

Ver. 12. *We will light upon him as the dew falleth upon the ground*—Plenteously, suddenly, irresistibly, and on all sides; for so the dew falls. This is very beautiful and expressive. "The dew in Palestine, as in several other climates, falls fast and sudden; and is therefore an apt emblem of an active and expeditious soldiery. And it was, perhaps, for this reason that the Romans called their light armed forces, *rorarii*. The dew falls upon every spot of the earth; not a blade of grass escapes it. A numerous army resembles it in this respect; it is able to search every where." De-laney.

Ver. 13. *If he be gotten into a city, &c.*—If he should take refuge for more security in any one of the cities of Israel, they would have numbers sufficient to pull it down, stone by stone, about his ears. The expression in the original is very remarkable, but hyperbolic, suited to the vain glorious temper of this insolent young man. *Then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river.* The meaning of which threat seems to be this: That they would come before that city with those cranes, or hooks, which the ancients were wont to throw upon the battlements of walls, and with which, by the help of ropes,

VOL. I. N<sup>o</sup>. XXIX.

A. M. 3961.  
B. C. 1043.  
† Heb. com-  
manded.

LORD had †appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.

15 ¶<sup>h</sup> Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled.

16 Now therefore send quickly, and tell David saying, Lodge not this night 'in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that *are* with him.

17 <sup>k</sup> Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz <sup>l</sup>stayed by <sup>m</sup>En-rogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them;

Ch. 15. 25.

Ch. 15. 25.

Ch. 15.

27, 30.

1 Josh. 3. 4.

&c.

m Josh. 15.

7. & 15. 16.

fastened to them, they were wont to pull them down piece meal, into the rivers and trenches, (filled with water,) which encompassed, or adjoined, to them; it being usual to build cities near some river, both for defence and other accommodations.

Ver. 14. *Absalom and all the men of Israel said*—Being infatuated by a divine power, and given up to believe a lie. *The counsel of Hushai—is better, &c.*—His advice was much better suited to Absalom's cruelty, as well as his vanity; and seemingly to the interest of his ambition, as well as the safety of his followers, (who did not care to put any thing to the hazard of a small party,) and therefore it easily prevailed. Such is the wonderful, over-ruling providence of God in more cases than we are aware of! *For the Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel*—It was good politically considered; being the wisest and most effectual course to accomplish the end Absalom had in view. Be it observed here, to the comfort of all that fear God, he turns all men's hearts as the rivers of water. He *stands in the congregation of the mighty*, has an over-ruling hand in all counsels, and a negative voice in all resolves, and laughs at men's projects against his children.

Ver. 16, 17. *Now therefore send quickly*—Lest Absalom's and the people's minds change, and Ahithophel persuade them to pursue you speedily. *Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel*—Or *the fuller's fountain*. Being to carry the intelligence, they had not returned into the city, but found some pretence for tarrying without the walls at this place, probably that they might wash and cleanse themselves from some legal pollution. Indeed, it would have been difficult, if not impossible to have sent them out of the city without their being discovered. *A wench went and told them*—Being sent by Zadok, and pretending, perhaps, to go thither for water, or to wash some clothes. *And they went and told king David*—After a little stop in their way, as is here related.

A. M. 9981.  
B. C. 1022.

and they went and told king David.

18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house <sup>a</sup>in Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down.

19 And <sup>c</sup>the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known.

20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And <sup>b</sup>the woman said unto them, They be gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

21 And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up

out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, <sup>q</sup>Arise, and pass quickly over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

22 Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

23 ¶ And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not <sup>†</sup>followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to <sup>r</sup>his city, and <sup>†</sup>put his household in order, and <sup>†</sup>hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

24 Then David came to <sup>t</sup>Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

A. M. 9981.  
B. C. 1022.q Ver. 14,  
16.

† Heb. done.

r Ch. 14. 19.

† Heb. gave charge concerning his house, 2 Kings 20. 1.

s Matt. 27.

t Gen. 22. 9. Josh. 18. 26. Ch. 2. 8.

p Exodus 1. 19. Josh. 2. 4, 5.

Ver. 18, 19. *Nevertheless a lad saw them*—Who knew them to be favourers of David, and observed that they waited there with design to gain intelligence, and possibly saw the girl speaking privately to them. *But they went away quickly*—Suspecting by the observation which the lad made, and his after conduct, that they were discovered. *And came to a man's house in Bahurim*—Turning out of the public road, as Josephus explains it, they made haste to this village. *Which had a well in his court, whither they went down*—For at that time of the year their wells were in many places dry or had little water in them. *And spread ground corn thereon*—Under pretence of drying it by the sun, which shews that it was summer-time. Thus the woman effectually concealed them.

Ver. 20. *When Absalom's servants*—Who were sent to pursue them—*Came to the woman to the house*—For some had informed them that Jonathan and Ahimaaz had turned that way. *The woman said, They be gone over the brook*—According to Josephus, the woman told them; they made no stay at her house, but, after they had asked for a little water, made haste away: but, if they pursued them speedily, she believed they might overtake them. This, however, was a manifest lie; and, though spoken for no-hurt, but good only; and though, as is probable, it was pardoned by God; yet was it certainly moral evil, as all kinds of lies are, and are condemned by plain passages of Scripture, which inform us *we must not do evil that good may come, nor tell a lie for God's glory*, Rom. iii. 7, 8.

Ver. 22. *David arose*—He instantly obeyed the friendly counsel given him, with such diligence and despatch, that before the next morning he and all his people were safe on the

other side Jordan, which they passed over either at the fords or in boats; and in such a manner, it appears, that none of them perished in the passage. Doubtless David took as much care to retard the passage of his enemies, in case they pursued him, as he had before done to hasten his own.

Ver. 23. *And put his household in order*—Disposed of his property by will. See Isai. xxxviii. 1. *And hanged himself*—Partly because he could not bear to out-live his disgrace, and the rejection of his counsel: and partly because he saw that by this means, David would gain time and strength, and, in all probability, prove victorious; and that then the storm would fall most heavily upon his own head, as the main author and pillar of the rebellion, and the contriver of the pernicious counsels above mentioned. "See here" says Henry, "contempt poured upon the wisdom of man! He that was more renowned for policy than ever any man was, played the fool with himself more than any man ever did. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, when he sees him, that was so great an oracle, dying as a fool dies!*" See, likewise, honour done to the justice of God: *the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands, and sunk in a pit of his own digging*. "When he had contrived, inspired, diffused, and propagated evil, through an innumerable multitude, and loaded his soul with all the horrors of complicated guilt, that hell could devise; treachery, rebellion, incest, parricide! he hurried it to all the vengeance due to it from eternal justice; to prevent all possibility of reparation and repentance, he died in the act of self-murder. So perished the great Machiavel of that age; the very wisest of the very wise!" Delaney.

Ver. 24. *David came to Mahanaim*—A place in the coun-

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1028.

25 ¶ And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa *was* a man's son, whose name *was* ¶ Ithra an Israelite, that went in to <sup>u</sup>† Abigail the daughter of ¶ Nahash, sister to Zeruah Joab's mother.

Or, Jehon, on Ish-machto.  
1 Chron. 2. 16.  
† Heb. Abigail.  
Or, Jesse, 1 Chron. 2. 13, 16.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that

2 Chron. 10. 1.  
2. 13, 20.

Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and <sup>a</sup> Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

2 Chron. 9. 4.

2 Chron. 19. 31.  
29.

1 Kings 2. 7.

Or, cups.

28 Brought beds, and ¶ basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse,

29 And honey, and butter, and

try of Gilead, bordering upon the land of the Ammonites, lately the residence of Ish-bosheth, and anciently the resting-place of Jacob; where God had placed him under the protection of two hosts of angels. The king's distress here, at this time, would naturally lead him to reflect on the distress of his great ancestor in the same place; when, being encompassed with a weak and helpless family of wives and children, as David now was, he received information, that Esau was coming against him with a strong band of men. *And Absalom passed over Jordan*—Not immediately, but as soon as *all the men of Israel*, who are here said to be with him, were gathered together to him, according to Hushai's counsel, which required some time, during which David had an opportunity to strengthen himself, by gathering an army also.

Ver. 25. *Absalom made Amasa captain of the host*—Amasa was another of David's nephews, the son of his sister Abigail. *The daughter of Nahash*—Nahash was one of Jesse's wives, by whom he had this Abigail the mother of Amasa, as he had Zeruah, the mother of Joab, by another wife; so that they were sisters by the father, but not by the mother, and Joab and Amasa were cousins.

Ver. 27. *Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah*—Who, probably, disliked and disowned that barbarous action to David's ambassadors, recorded Chap. x. 4. and therefore, when the agents and instruments of Hanun's tyranny were chastised by David, was left by him, in the regency of the country, with such marks of kindness and friendship, as now engaged him, in his turn, to give the king all possible demonstrations of affection and gratitude in his distress. *Machir of Lodebar*—The friend and protector of Mephibosheth,

sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that *were* with him, to eat: for they said, The people *is* hungry, and weary, and thirsty<sup>a</sup>, in the wilderness.

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1028.

a Ch. 16. 2.

## CHAP. XVIII.

David prepares to engage the rebels, ver. 1—5. The total defeat of Absalom, ver. 6—8. His death and burial, ver. 9—18. The news brought to David, ver. 19—32. His lamentation over Absalom, ver. 33.

AND David numbered the people that *were* with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

2 And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, <sup>a</sup> and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite.

a Ch. 18. 19.

who, as such, must be presumed to have been at first, in some degree, disaffected to David; but was now, not only reconciled, but zealously attached to him; and probably, in a great measure, from the king's noble manner of treating Mephibosheth: *Barzillai the Gileadite*—A man of a very uncommon character, very aged, very wealthy, and very generous! A man, who, with all the bodily infirmities of old age, was yet clear of all those which dishonour and deform the mind, in that season; equally superior to timorous caution, sordid avarice, and unsuited luxury. Delaney.

Ver. 28, 29. *Brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels*—All manner of household-stuff, and various kinds of provision, which they now wanted. *For they said, The people is hungry and weary, &c. in the wilderness*—Having been in the wilderness, where there was a total want or scarcity of provisions and all conveniences, and, therefore, they needed refreshment when they were come out of it: which moved these persons to bring them these things. Thus God sometimes makes up to his people that comfort from strangers, which they are disappointed of in their own families. The circumstances now related, were all so many happy beginnings and omens of David's future success; and pledges of that just and humble confidence, which he had placed in the divine favour and protection.

CHAP. XVIII. Ver. 1—3. *David numbered the people that were with him*—Which had flocked to him thither, so as to make up a small army. And finding himself sufficiently strong to go against the enemy, he resolved not to wait their coming, but to give the assault; and accordingly marched his forces out of the city, dividing them into three parts, and

A. M. 3991.  
B. C. 1022. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also.

b Ch. 21. 17. 3 <sup>b</sup> But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not † care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now *thou art* † worth ten thousand of us: therefore now *it is* better that thou † succour us out of the city.

† Heb. set their heart on us.  
† Heb. as ten thousand of us.  
† Heb. be to succour.  
4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.

5 And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, *Deal gently* for my sake with the young man, *even* with Absalom. <sup>c</sup> And all

setting a captain over each, one of whom, however, Joab, was, doubtless, also general of the whole army. *I will surely go forth with you myself also*—Which he thought would be a great encouragement to them, and cause them to fight the more valiantly. *The people answered, Thou shalt not go with us*—They did not think it advisable that he should hazard his life, on the preservation of which their common cause, in a great measure, depended: signifying, that if they should be routed, and half of them slain, Absalom would not think himself a conqueror as long as David was alive, who might raise new forces and give him battle again. Indeed it was Absalom's great error, and the utter ruin of himself and his cause, to go to battle in his own person, an error into which he was drawn by a divine infatuation, through Hushai's craft. *Now thou art worth ten thousand of us*—Not only for the dignity of thy person, but also for the importance of our common cause, which, if thou art slain, is irrecoverably lost. *It is better that thou succour us out of the city*—By sending us supplies of men and provisions of all sorts, together with counsel and advice, as we shall have occasion; and by securing our retreat if we be defeated.

Ver. 5. *Deal gently for my sake, &c.*—If you conquer (which he expected they would from God's gracious answer to his prayer, in turning Abithophel's counsel into foolishness,) take him prisoner, but do not kill him. Which desire proceeded, from his great indulgence towards his children; from his consciousness that he himself was the meritorious cause of this rebellion, Absalom being given up to it for the punishment of David's sins; from the consideration of Absalom's youth, which commonly makes men foolish, and subject to ill counsels; and from David's own piety, being loath that his son should be cut off in the act of his sin without any space for repentance. But "what means, says Bp. Hall, this ill placed mercy? *Deal gently* with a traitor?

A. M. 3991.  
B. C. 1022. the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

6 ¶ So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the <sup>d</sup> wood of Ephraim;

7 Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand *men*.

8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood † devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

9 ¶ And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak,

Of all traitors with a son? And all this *for my sake*, whose crown, whose blood he hunts after? Even in the holiest parents, nature may be guilty of an injurious tenderness. But was not this done in type of that unmeasurable mercy of the true King of Israel, who prayed for his murderers, Father, forgive them! *Deal gently with them for my sake!*" Yea, when God sends an affliction to correct his children, it is with this charge, *deal gently with them for my sake*: for he knows our frame.

Ver. 8. *The battle was scattered over all the country*—In that neighbourhood; both in the field and in the wood. *The wood devoured more people than the sword*—Some think the wood is said to devour them, because they fell into pits, or stumbled upon stumps of trees, or pressed one another to death, as they came into strait places, or were killed by wild beasts. But the most natural meaning of the words is that there were more slain in the wood, into which Absalom's men fled, than in the open field; that is, more in their flight, which was stopped by the wood, than in the battle.

Ver. 9. *Absalom met the servants of David*—Who, according to David's command, spared him, and gave him an opportunity to escape. But whom they would not arrest, the divine vengeance arrested. *For the mule*, on which he rode, *went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak*—Probably, he was entangled by the hair of his head, which, being long and thick, might easily catch hold of a bough. For, it is likely, he either wore no helmet, or he had thrown it away, as well as his other arms, to hasten his flight. Thus the matter of his pride was made the instrument of his ruin. Some think his neck stuck fast between two boughs, or arms, of this oak, and was so wedged in by the swift motion of his mule, that he was not able to disentangle himself; but yet, that by the help of his hands he so supported himself as not to be strangled.



A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1023.

and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away.

10 And a certain man saw *it*, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.

11 And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest *him*, and why didst not thou smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten *shekels* of silver, and a girdle.

† Heb. weight upon mine hand.

e Ver. 5.

† Heb. Beware whose eye be of, &amp;c.

12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should † receive a thousand *shekels* of silver in mine hand, *yet* would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, † Beware that none *touch* the young man Absalom.

Ver. 13. *I should have wrought falsehood against my own life*—Not only have been false and disobedient to the king, but should have betrayed my own life, and therefore not have been true to myself. *For there is no matter hid from the king*—This, as all other things, would certainly have come to the king's ear. *Thou thyself wouldst have set thyself against me*—Thou wouldst have been my adversary and accuser, both because it would have been thy duty to be so, and to vindicate thyself from any blame in the matter. He knew the disposition of Joab so well, that he was sure that general would have been as forward as any one both to inform the king of what had been done, and to have had the person punished who did it, for disobeying his sovereign.

Ver. 14, 15. *I may not tarry thus with thee*—I must not lose time in contending with thee, till I let the occasion slip. *And thrust them through the heart of Absalom*—Not through the part properly so called, (for then he would have died immediately, and there would have been no need for his soldiers to fall upon him as they afterwards did, Ver. 15,) but through the midst of his body, which did not kill him out-right, but some life still remained in him. *Ten young men that bare Joab's armour*—Who waited upon his person as general of the army. *Smote Absalom and slew him*—By Joab's command, who probably judged that there could be no safety to the king, nor peace to the kingdom, nor security to himself, and David's friends and other loyal subjects, or to any good men, if Absalom was suffered to live. For he thought that some unquiet people, who were deeply engaged in this rebellion, would soon take occasion to move new disturbances to set him on the throne, which Absalom would be very ready to encourage. Therefore, knowing that he had been guilty of several crimes, which the law of God made capital, especially of committing incest with his father's concubines,

13 Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldst have set thyself against *me*.

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1023.

14 Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus † with thee. And he took † three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he *was* yet alive in the † midst of the oak.

† Heb. before thee.

† Heb. heart.

15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.

16 And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood,

and raising an unnatural rebellion against him, with a design to rob him both of his kingdom and his life; Joab did, not as David commanded, but as, he imagined, he ought to have commanded. "Thus fell," says Delaney, "this cruel, th's murderous, this incestuous parricide! and with him, twenty thousand of his rebel adherents." So much mischief may one restless, interested man do in his country! and such ruin may his ambition bring upon it! We do not, however, intend, by these observations, to plead Joab's justification in the act of direct disobedience to his sovereign's orders, but leave the reader to form his own judgment of the matter.

Ver. 16. *Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned*—He knew Absalom's men had been drawn unthinkingly into this rebellion, and would return to their duty, now they had none to head them. *For Joab held back the people*—Who otherwise, being highly incensed against the rebels, would have hotly pursued, and made still greater slaughter among them. In this Joab acted like a wise and merciful man, who wished to stop the farther effusion of Israelitish blood.

Ver. 17. *They took Absalom and cast him into a great pit*—They would not bring his body to be disposed of by his father's order, lest it should excite his grief to excess. *And laid a very great heap of stones upon him*—As a lasting monument of his sin and shame, and of the righteous judgment of God upon him. Thus the Israelites treated the dead body of Achan, and those of the king of Ai, and the five kings of the Amorites. See Josh. vii. 26, and viii. 29, and x. 27. Absalom was, in a sort, first hanged, which was an accursed death, and then thrust through with darts and swords; and after all, in a manner stoned, which was a proper punishment of a rebellious son, Deut. xxi. 21—23.

A.M. 2981-  
B.C. 1028.  
7 Job. 7. 26.

and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

5 Gen. 14. 17.

h Ch. 14. 27.

18 ¶ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day Absalom's place.

† Heb. judged him from the hand, &c.

19 ¶ Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies.

† Heb. be a man of tidings.

20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead.

21 Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of

Adricomius, in his description of the Holy Land, according to Bp. Patrick, says, that this heap remained to his days; and that all travellers, as they went by it, were wont to throw a stone to add to the heap, in detestation of his rebellion against his father. *And all Israel fled every one to his tent*—To their houses and dwellings, to avoid the shame and punishment of their rebellion.

Ver. 18. *Now Absalom—had reared up for himself a pillar*—To preserve his name; whereas it had been more for his honour, if his name had been buried in perpetual oblivion. But this was the effect of that pride and vain glory, which were the chief causes of his ruin. *Which is in the king's dale*—A place so called, near Jerusalem. *For he said, I have no son*—He had had three sons, Ch. xiv. 27, but it appears by this, they were all now dead, or if any one of them was alive, he thought him unfit and unworthy to keep up his name and honour; and it was a remarkable dispensation of divine providence, that he, who struck at his father's life, should be punished with the death of all his sons. *It is called unto this day, &c.*—That is, unto the time when this book was compiled. Indeed to this day there is a monument, shewn to travellers, called *Absalom's Pillar*; but it is evidently of modern structure. In the time of Josephus, it was nothing more than a single marble pillar. *Absalom's place*—Heb. *Absalom's hand*, that is, his work; made, though not by his hand, yet for him and his glory, and by his ap-

A.M. 2981-  
B.C. 1028.

† Heb. be asked may.

† Or, convenient.

† Kings 9. 17.

Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?

23 But howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush.

24 And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

pointment. But this work of vanity soon became a memorial of reproach. "Strange power of guilt," says Delaney, "which can, in one moment, turn all the devices of vanity, all the memorials of excellence, all the securities of fame, into monuments of infamy."

Ver. 19, 20. *Let me now run*—Ahimaaz wished to be made the messenger of this good success to the king; but Joab, who loved him, and knew how disagreeable the account of Absalom's death would be to David, refused to let him be the bearer of such unwelcome news. *Thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead*—Thou shalt not be a messenger of evil tidings; they will be unwelcome to the king, and procure no good to thee.

Ver. 22. *Wherefore wilt thou run, my son?*—So he terms him, both with respect to his younger years, and to that true and tender affection which he had for him. *Seeing thou hast no tidings ready*—Art not acquainted with the particulars of the fight, of which I have not time to inform thee.

Ver. 24. *David sat between the two gates*—It is probable the gates of cities then were, as they now generally are, large and thick, and that, for greater security, they had two gates, one more outward, and the other inward. Here the king sat, that he might hear tidings as soon as they came to the city.

Ver. 25. *If he be alone, there are tidings in his mouth*—He is sent with some special message, which was a very pro-

A.M. 2951.  
B. C. 1022.

27 And the watchman said, † Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, † All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath † delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, † Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.

30 And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, Cushy came; and Cushy said, † Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged

† Heb. Tidings is brought.

bable conjecture, and that he brought good news; for if he had run, or fled from the enemy, many others would have followed him.

Ver. 27—29. *He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings*—He is true to my interest, and loves me well, and, therefore, would not afflict me with evil tidings. *Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered, &c.*—Like a truly religious man, he ascribes the victory, which they had obtained, unto the Lord; who still shewed his mercy unto David, and continued to be his God, and benefactor. *Is the young man Absalom safe?*—David is so much a father that he forgets he is a king; and, therefore, cannot rejoice in the news of victory till he knows whether his son be safe; for whom his heart trembled, almost as much as Eli's, in a like case, for the ark of God. *Ahimaaz answered, when Joab sent the king's servant*—That is, Cushy, who appears by this to have been one belonging to the court; *I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was*—He dissembled his knowledge of Absalom's death; and, perhaps, in this said true, that he did not know the particular, manner of it; though it appears plainly from Ver. 20, that he knew he was dead. The king, doubtless, apprehended the worst; and he was thus, in some degree, prepared for the afflictive information Cushy was to give him.

Ver. 32, 33. *The enemies of my lord the king—be as that young man is*—A decent way this of informing him, that Absalom was dead. *And the king was much moved*—So that

thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

A.M. 2951.  
B. C. 1022.

32 And the king said unto Cushy, *Is the young man Absalom safe?* And Cushy answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.

33 ¶ And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, <sup>k</sup> O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

k Ch. 19. 4.

## CHAP. XIX.

*Joab prevails on David to refrain, ver. 1—8. He is brought back to his kingdom by the men of Judah, ver. 9—15. Pardons Shimei, ver. 16—23. Restores to Mephibosheth his estate, ver. 24—30. Barzillai is dismissed, and his son taken into David's service, ver. 31—40. The Israelites expostulate with the men of Judah, ver. 41—43.*

AND it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.

2 And the † victory that day was

† Heb. salvation, or deliverance.

we do not find he made any enquiry concerning the manner of his death, or any of the particulars of the victory. *And went up to the chamber over the gate*—That he might, in private, give vent to his distress; yet he could not refrain from tears and lamentations, even till he got thither; but was heard crying out as he went, *O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom: would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!*—Words most passionate, and dictated by his excessive love to Absalom, and grief for his death; which made him vent himself in expressions which were very inconsiderate, especially in wishing he had died for him. "The king's command to spare Absalom," says Delaney, "was an extraordinary instance of mercy, equalled only in him, who, dying, prayed for his murderers; yet it is to be accounted for from his fatherly fondness, and the benignity of his nature. But there is something astonishing in this excess of grief for such a reprobate; and I confess it is to me utterly unaccountable from any other principle, than the sad and shocking reflection, of his having died with all his sins upon his head, and gone down quick to perdition." Certainly a deep sense of Absalom's eternal state, as dying in his sins, together with the consideration, that David himself, by his sins, had been the occasion of his death, might be the principal cause of the excessive sorrow which he felt, and thus expressed.

CHAP. XIX. Ver. 2. *The victory was turned into mourn-*

A.M. 2961.  
B. C. 1023. **turned** into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son.

a Ver. 28. **3** And the people gat them by stealth that day <sup>a</sup> into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.

b Ch. 15. 20. **4** But the king <sup>b</sup> covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice,

c Ch. 15. 22. **c** O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!

**5** And Joab came into the house of the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines;

† Heb. By loving, &c. **6** † In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For

thou hast declared this day, † that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well.

**7** Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak † comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befel thee from thy youth until now.

**8** Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

**9** ¶ And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of

A.M. 2961.  
B. C. 1023.  
† Heb. that princes or servants are not to thee.

† Heb. to the heart of thy servants, Gen. 34. 8.

*ing to all the people*—They had so great a regard to their prince, that when they heard of his distress, they were afflicted with him; and instead of triumphing, they also made lamentations.

*Ver. 3. The people gat them by stealth into the city*—Not openly and triumphantly, as conquerors use to do; but secretly, as if they thought themselves a kind of criminals, who had contravened the king's command, and were, on that score, in disgrace with him, and, therefore, were afraid and ashamed, lest he should see them and look upon them with an evil eye, as persons that had had a hand in killing his beloved son. *As people steal away when they flee in battle*—As if they had lost the day and not been victorious.

*Ver. 4. The king covered his face*—As a deep mourner, and as one that neither desired to see nor to be seen by any others.

*Ver. 5, 6. Joab said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants*—By disappointing their just hopes of praises and rewards, and requiring them with contempt and tacit rebukes; and thus making them hang down their heads, as if they had committed such a crime, that they were ashamed to look men in the face. *Which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons, &c.*—Who, in all probability, would all have been slain, if Absalom had gained the victory. *In that thou lovest thine enemies*—Thy rebellious son, and those associated with him, to effect thy destruction. *And hatest thy friends*—Who have risked their lives in thy defence, but in whose preservation thou seemest to take no pleasure, only grieving for the death of a rebel. *If Absalom had lived, and we had all died, then it would have pleased thee well*—Joab seems to speak this in reference to the exclamation of the king, *Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom*; for had this

been the case, as the king wished, Joab and the rest of David's faithful commanders, would in course have perished through the power of Absalom, who would then have had none to oppose him. Joab's words, however, are not to be understood as exactly true, but as spoken hyperbolically: but David's carriage gave too much colour to such a suggestion; and such sharpness of speech was in a manner necessary to awaken the king out of his lethargy, and to preserve him from the impendent mischiefs.

*Ver. 7. Now, therefore, arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants*—Shew thyself to thy people, acknowledge their good services, and congratulate their success. *For I swear by the Lord*—He confirms his threat with the most solemn oath. *If thou go not forth, &c.*—If thou do not instantly quit thy apartment, appear in public, and treat thy people as they deserve: *There will not tarry one with thee this night, &c.*—Thy subjects will desert thee as one man. This, he signifies, would be far worse than all the calamities that had hitherto befallen him. David appears to have answered nothing to these harsh words of Joab; but, however offended he might be by such rough treatment, he thought fit to dissemble his resentment for the present. He, therefore, immediately left his chamber, and went to the gate, the seat of public justice, where he gave audience to the people, who immediately resorted thither in crowds to him, and were received and treated by him, as kindly as his present distress would allow.

*Ver. 9. All the people were at strife throughout all the tribes*—Either, 1. striving who should be most forward to bring back the king, and blaming one another's slackness in the business: or, 2. censuring and quarrelling one with another, as the authors and abettors of this shameful rebel-

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1023. Israel, saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is <sup>d</sup>fled out of the land for Absalom.

d Ch. 15. 14. 10 And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why <sup>†</sup> speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?

† Heb. are ye silent? 11 ¶ And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, *even* to his house.

e Ch. 5. 1. 12 Ye *are* my brethren, ye *are* my bones and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?

A. M. 2961.  
B. C. 1023. 13 <sup>f</sup> And say ye to Amasa, *Art* thou not of my bone, and of my flesh?

f Ch. 17. 25.  
g Ruth. 1. 17. <sup>g</sup> God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab.

h Judg. 20. 1. 14 And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, <sup>h</sup> even as *the heart of one man*; so that they sent *this word* unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants.

15 So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to <sup>i</sup> Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

k Ch. 16. 5.  
l Kings 2. 8. 16 ¶ And <sup>k</sup> Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which *was* of Bahurim, hastened and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.

17 And *there were* a thousand

lion, and discoursing privately and publicly of David's high merits, which God, being now reconciled to him, brings afresh to their memories. *Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word, &c.*—The people of Israel speak thus to their elders, as appears by comparing this verse with the next. Seeing their designs, for raising Absalom to the throne, disappointed, they now repented of that undertaking, and were willing to testify this by their forwardness to bring David back, and re-establish him.

Ver. 11, 12. *Speak unto the elders of Judah*—Absalom had begun his conspiracy in Jerusalem itself, and perfected it in Hebron, both cities of Judah; and the people of that tribe had been the first to join him in his rebellion, and to aid and abet his designs; conscious of this, and that, as David was of their tribe, and had long shewn them peculiar kindness, their guilt was the greater, they probably despaired of pardon, and, therefore, were backward to promote the king's restoration. *Seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king*—That is, their wishes and desires to bring him back to his throne and palace in Jerusalem. *Ye are my bone and my flesh*—Ye are related to me by consanguinity, and therefore, I cannot be severe with you, nor need you fear lest I should revenge myself of you. *Wherefore, then, are ye the last to bring the king back?*—This delay doth not suit with the relation you have, and the affection you owe to me.

Ver. 13. *Say to Amasa, Art not thou of my bone, &c.*—That is, nearly related to me, being my sister's son. *God do so to me and more also, &c.*—He solemnly promises to prefer him to the highest command in the kingdom; for he now thought it a fit time to depress Joab, who was grown insufferably insolent and imperious, and who, through his credit with the army, had protected himself in the com-

mission of the greatest crimes. He had slain Abner most perfidiously in cold blood, and killed Absalom contrary to the king's express command, and now lately had insulted him in his sorrow. Having, therefore, now an opportunity of transferring the command to another person, who had as great an interest in the people's favour as Joab, he gladly embraces it, that so he might both chastise Joab for his faults, and rescue himself from the bondage in which that general had hitherto held him. Some, however, have thought, that considering Joab's very faithful services to David, in all the changes of his fortune, and that his violent measures proceeded in part from a regard to him, as judging them necessary for his safety and tranquillity, David's conduct in this instance, in making Amasa captain of the host in Joab's room, is not an amiable trait in his character, and was not a prudent step, at this time, especially considering Joab's violent temper: and, it must be acknowledged, it brought on the murder of Amasa.

Ver. 14, 15. *He bowed the heart of all the men of Judah*—This prudent and friendly message and free offer of pardon to them, and this kind treatment of the captain of the hostile host, and all his rebel adherents, had all the effect David could hope for: it touched their hearts and melted them into loyalty and affection. *They sent this word unto the king, Return thou, &c.*—They immediately deputed the heads of their tribe to wait upon him, and invite him to return. *So the king returned*—He immediately complied with their request, and began his progress toward Jordan. *And Judah came to Gilgal*—David had not gone far before the principal persons of the whole tribe met him in a body, to conduct him over the river.

Ver. 16, 17. *Shimei hastened and came down—to meet king David*—As Shimei had so insulted and abused David, he

A. M. 2911.  
B. C. 1023.

men of Benjamin with him, and  
 1 Ziba the servant of the house of  
 1 Ch. 9. 2, Saul, and his fifteen sons and his  
 10, & 16, twenty servants with him; and they  
 1, 2. went over Jordan before the king.

18 ¶ And there went over a ferry  
 boat to carry over the king's house-  
 hold, and to do † what he thought  
 † Heb. the good in his eyes. good.  
 And Shimei the son of Gera  
 fell down before the king, as he was  
 come over Jordan;

19 And said unto the king, <sup>m</sup> Let  
 not my lord impute iniquity unto  
 me, neither do thou remember <sup>n</sup> that  
 which thy servant did perversely the  
 day that my lord the king went out  
 of Jerusalem, that the king should  
 take it to his heart.

20 For thy servant doth know that  
 I have sinned: therefore, behold, I  
 am come the first this day of all <sup>p</sup> the

very justly concluded, that he could have no hopes of pardon, but in consequence of his being one of the first to go and bring back the king. *There were a thousand men of Benjamin with him*—Whom he brought, partly to shew his interest in the people, and the service he was capable of rendering the king; and partly that they might be intercessors on his behalf, and as witnesses of David's clemency or severity, that in him they might see what the rest of them might expect. *Ziba*—Who, being conscious of his former abuse of David, and of his master Mephibosheth, which he knew the king would understand, designed to sweeten David's spirit towards him, by his forwardness in meeting him. *They went over Jordan before the king*—They were so desirous to express their zeal, that they went further than the men of Judah, even to the other side of Jordan where the king was, and then returning, passed over before him.

Ver. 18—20. *There went over a ferry-boat*—Prepared, it is likely, by the men of Judah. Josephus says, it was a bridge, composed, perhaps, of many boats joined together. *Shimei fell down before the king*—That he might confess his guilt and perverseness, and implore forgiveness. *Neither do thou remember that which thy servant did*—So as to resent it deeply, and take revenge. *Behold, I am come the first of all the house of Joseph*—Shimei knew, that a Benjamite, of the house of Saul, came but ill recommended to David under that character; and, therefore, he would not denominate himself from Benjamin, but from Joseph, his beloved brother.

Ver. 21—23. *Abishai said, Shall not Shimei be put to death?*—Abishai had before highly resented Shimei's vile treatment of David, and thought this a fit season for taking revenge. *What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruah?*—It seems Joab joined with his brother, and together they

house of Joseph to go down to meet  
 my lord the king.

21 But Abishai the son of Ze-  
 ruiah answered and said, Shall not  
 Shimei be put to death for this, be-  
 cause he <sup>q</sup> cursed the LORD's anoint-  
 ed? <sup>q</sup> Exod. 22.  
 25.

22 And David said, <sup>r</sup> What have  
 I to do with you, ye sons of Ze-  
 ruiah, that ye should this day be ad-  
 versaries unto me? <sup>s</sup> shall there any  
 man be put to death this day in Is-  
 rael? for do not I know that I *am*  
 this day king over Israel? <sup>s</sup> 1 Sam. 11.  
 13.

23 Therefore <sup>t</sup> the king said unto  
 Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And  
 the king sware unto him. <sup>t</sup> 1 Kings 2.  
 8. 37, 46.

24 ¶ And <sup>u</sup> Mephibosheth the son  
 of Saul came down to meet the king,  
 and had neither dressed his feet, nor  
 trimmed his beard, nor washed his

thought to govern all the king's motions as they pleased. But he bids them, in a disdainful manner, stand aside, and not intermeddle in this matter. *That ye should this day be adversaries unto me?*—Should hinder me from following my own inclinations, and set my people against me. For, by taking their advice, David might have alienated the hearts of all Israel from him, and made them fear the like punishment for their revolt. *Shall any man be put to death this day in Israel?*—In a time of universal joy, shall any family have cause for lamentation? It was undoubtedly David's interest, at this time, to appease the people, and reconcile them to himself, and not give them any new distaste by acts of severity; which would have made others jealous, that he would watch an opportunity to be revenged on them. *Do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?*—And, therefore, have power to punish or to pardon as I please. Is not my kingdom, which was in a manner wholly lost, just now restored and assured to me? And when God hath been so merciful to me in forgiving my sin, shall I shew myself revengeful to Shimei? Shall I sully the glory of this day with an act of such severity? Or, shall I alienate the hearts of my people from me, now they are returned to me? "He knew himself a king," says Delaney, "not of one party, but of a whole people; and, therefore, wisely resolved, that his fatherly affection should extend to them all. He knew himself a sovereign, and he knew that mercy and forgiveness were the noblest privileges of sovereignty." He, therefore, turned to Shimei, pronounced his pardon, and confirmed it with an oath, that he should not die.

Ver. 24. *Mephibosheth the son of Saul*—That is, the grandson, 2 Sam. iv. 4. *Had neither dressed his feet*—Neither, washed them, which in those hot climates was usual and very refreshing; nor cut the nails of his toes, but let

A.M. 2981.  
B.C. 1042.

clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace.

25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, <sup>z Ch. 16.17.</sup> Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?

26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame.

27 And <sup>y Ch. 16.3.</sup> he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; <sup>z Ch. 16.17.</sup> but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore *what is good* in thine eyes.

28 For all of my father's house were but <sup>† Heb. men of death, 1 Sam. 26. 16.</sup> † dead men before my lord the king: <sup>a Ch. 9.7, 10, 13.</sup> yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at

thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king?

29 And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land.

30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.

31 ¶ And <sup>b 1 Kings 2. 7.</sup> Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan.

32 ¶ Now Barzillai was a very aged man, *even* fourscore years old: and <sup>c Ch. 17.27.</sup> he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man.

33 And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and

them grow, as he did his beard, which he had not trimmed nor taken any care of, but suffered to become very long and disorderly. *Nor washed his clothes*—His linen clothes. He had wholly neglected himself, as persons were wont to do in a time of public sorrow. *From the day the king departed*—This long continued mourning argued him to be really afflicted for the king's exile, and was evidence sufficient of the falsehood of Ziba's relation concerning him, Chap. xvi. 3.

Ver. 25, 26. *When he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king*—He had probably continued near Jerusalem during the king's absence, and it seems, could not go to a distance from it to meet him, as others did, for want of conveniences for his journey: for Ziba had gotten possession of all his lands and goods, and it is not likely that he, who would not provide him an ass to ride on, to accompany the king at his departure, would now be forward to furnish him with one to meet the king, to whom he knew he would complain of him. *My servant deceived me*—He had ordered an ass to be made ready for him, to carry him to David; instead of which Ziba saddled it for himself, and went with that false story, mentioned Chap. xvi. 3. *My Lord the king is as an angel of God*—To discern between truth and falsehood, between facts and calumnies. *Do, therefore, what is good in thine eyes*—I submit myself entirely to thy judgement.

Ver. 28. *All my father's house were but dead men before my lord*—Before thy tribunal: we were all at thy mercy; not my estate only, but my life also was in thy power, if thou hadst dealt with rigour, and as earthly kings use to do with their predecessors' and enemies' children. *What right*

*have I yet to cry?*—For the vindication of mine honour, and the restitution of my estate.

Ver. 29. *Thou and Ziba divide the land*—The land shall be divided between thee and him, according to my first order, Ch. ix. 10; he and his sons managing it, and supporting themselves out of it, as they did before, and giving the rest of the profits thereof to thee. It is easy to perceive, from this answer of David, that he saw Mephibosheth's innocence, and the error of his former credulity, and therefore could not bear to hear of it. But he had now no time to discuss the matter more fully: and therefore, all that he could do for the present, was to restore him to his estate, and leave both him and his accuser in their former condition, till he could enquire further. However Ziba might have been faulty towards Mephibosheth, he had been signally faithful and useful to David; and to condemn him unheard, as he had Mephibosheth, was to run the risk of a second rash decision; a decision that might be now as unseasonable as rash, whilst any rebellion subsisted in his dominions.

Ver. 30. *Mephibosheth said—Yea, let him take all*—Nothing could be more generously spoken, or signify greater affection, than that he was content to be without an estate, now the king was restored to his kingdom.

Ver. 31–33. *Barzillai came down from Rogelim*—Rogelim was a place in mount Gilead, and Barzillai came down from thence to do the king honour and see him safe over Jordan. *He had provided the king sustenance*—Barzillai had a very generous heart, which moved him to supply the wants of David and all his family and attendants as long as



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I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem.

34 And Barzillai said unto the king, † How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?

‡ Ps. 90. 10. 35 I am this day <sup>d</sup> fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?

36 Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?

37 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Kings 2. 7. Jer. 41. 17. But behold thy servant <sup>e</sup> Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem

he stayed at Mahanaim, which was a considerable time. *I will feed thee with me*—Entertain thee at my own table as a singular friend.

Ver. 34. *Barzillai said, how long have I to live? &c.*—In a spirit of true wisdom, and becoming moderation, he declined accepting the king's generous offer. The pleasures of a court had no charms for him in that advanced age, being then fourscore years old; his senses and appetites were long since palled, and both music and banquets had lost all their relish. He therefore begged the king to give him leave to wait upon him over the river, and then return to his own city, there to die in peace, and be laid in the grave of his father and his mother.

Ver. 36—38. *Why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?*—Since he had but done his duty to his Sovereign, he did not expect to be so highly rewarded for it. *That I may die in my own city*—That my bones may, with little ado, be carried to the place of their rest. The grave is ready for me; let me go and get ready for it, go and die in my house. *But behold thy servant Chimham*—That he might not seem rude in refusing the king's gracious offer, he desires him to transfer his kindness to his son, and bestow upon him what he pleased. *The king answered, Chimham shall go over with me*—He readily consented to take the young man with him, promised to provide for him, and assured Barzillai he would do every thing else he desired.

Ver. 40. *All the people of Judah*—That is the elders and great men of Judah. *Also half the people of Israel*—Where-

good unto thee.

38 And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt † require of me, that will I do for thee.

39 And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king † kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place.

40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and † Chimham went on with him; and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

41 ¶ And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away, and <sup>e</sup> have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan?

42 And all the men of Judah an-

as the men of Judah came entirely and unanimously to the king, the Israelites, of the other tribes, came in but slowly, and by halves, as being no less guilty of rebellion than the tribe of Judah; but not encouraged to come in by such a gracious message as they were. And this is here mentioned as the occasion both of the contention here following, and of the sedition, Chap. xx.

Ver. 41. *All the men of Israel*—That is, those that were present. It appears that David, to gratify his own tribe, had marched on, not expecting the coming of all the great men of Israel, who were making themselves ready to wait upon him. And therefore, when they were come together, and found that the tribe of Judah were unexpectedly beforehand with them, they resented the slight put upon them; and being joined and supported in their resentment by the rest of their brethren who had reconducted the king in conjunction with Judah, they all with one voice, warmly expostulated with the king upon it. *Why have the men of Judah stolen thee away?*—That is, why did they hasten the matter so, and not expect our concurrence and assistance, who were as zealous as themselves to bring the king back? *And all David's men with him*—All his officers, guards, and soldiers. This is mentioned as an aggravation of their fault, that they not only brought the king over Jordan, but all his men too, without asking their advice.

Ver. 42. *The king is near of kin to us*—Of the same tribe with us, and therefore both oweth the more respect to us, and might expect more respect from us. *Hath he given us*

A. M. 2981.  
B. C. 1023.

† Heb. choose.

† Gen. 31. 34.

† Heb. Chimham.

† Ver. 16.

A. M. 2061.  
B. C. 1023. answered the men of Israel, Because  
a Verse 19. the king is <sup>b</sup> near of kin to us: where-  
fore then be ye angry for this mat-  
ter? have we eaten at all of the  
king's *cost*? or hath he given us any  
gift?

43 And the men of Israel answer-  
ed the men of Judah, and said, We  
have ten parts in the king, and we  
have also more *right* in David than  
ye: why then did ye † despise us,  
that our advice should not be first  
had in bringing back our king? And  
† Heb. set  
us at  
right. the words of the men of Judah were  
fiercer than the words of the men of  
Israel.  
† See Judg.  
8. 1. & 19.  
L.

CHAP. XX.

*A new rebellion raised by Sheba, ver. 1, 2. David  
confines his ten concubines for life, ver. 3. Joab  
murders Amasa, ver. 4—12. Pursues Sheba to*

*any gift?*—We have neither sought nor gained any advantage  
to ourselves hereby, but only discharged our duty and tes-  
tified our affection to the king, and used all expedition in  
bringing him back, which you also should have done, and  
not have come in by halves, and so coldly as you have done.

Ver. 43. *We have ten parts in the king*—Or kingdom  
rather, and consequently there was the greater reason why  
we should be consulted upon a point of so much importance.  
They say but *ten*, though strictly there were eleven; either  
because they counted Joseph, which comprehended both  
Ephraim and Manasseh under it, for one tribe; or because  
Simeon, whose lot lay within the tribe of Judah, was joined  
with Judah in this action. *And we have more right in  
David*—As in general we have more right in the king and  
kingdom; so particularly we have more right in David than  
you, because you were the beginners, and the most zealous  
promoters of this rebellion: And if it had been otherwise, as  
he is king we justly claim a greater interest in him than you,  
in as much as we are the far greatest part of his subjects.  
This was a natural contest, between greater power and  
nearer relation; both claim a preference, which both cannot  
have; and which those of nearer relation should have yielded,  
both in point of prudence and affection for their friend, which  
the men of Judah did not. In all disputes it is natural for  
the party injured, to be more angry; and therefore they  
who are in the wrong often assume that character, by sup-  
plying from passion, whatever is wanting to them in point  
of reason and argument, as the tribe of Judah did now; for  
the text informs us, *that the words of the men of Judah were  
fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.* That is, more  
vehement: instead of mollifying the Israelites with gentle  
words they answered them with greater fierceness: or they  
had the advantage of the men of Israel in their argument.  
As David did not think fit to interpose, the Israelites judged

*Abel, ver. 13—15. He is delivered up, ver. 16* A. M. 2061.  
B. C. 1023.  
*—22. David's great officers, ver. 23—26.*

AND there happened to be there  
a man of Belial, whose name  
was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Ben-  
jamite: and he blew a trumpet, and  
said, <sup>a</sup> We have no part in David,  
neither have we inheritance in the  
son of Jesse: <sup>b</sup> every man to his  
tents, O Israel.  
cir. 1022.  
a Ch. 19. 43.  
b 1 Kings  
19. 6.  
2 Chron:  
10. 16.

2 So every man of Israel went up  
from after David, and followed Sheba  
the son of Bichri: but the men of  
Judah clave unto their king, from  
Jordan even to Jerusalem.

3 ¶ And David came to his  
house at Jerusalem; and the king  
took the ten women *his* <sup>c</sup> concubines,  
whom he had left to keep the house,  
and put them in † ward, and fed  
c Ch. 15. 16.  
& 16. 21,  
26.  
† Heb. an  
house of  
ward.

that he was partial, and favoured Judah, and thence arose a  
new rebellion.

CHAP. XX. Ver. 1. *There happened to be there, &c.*—  
His presence was casual in itself, though ordered by God's  
providence. *A man of Belial*—A wicked and lawless per-  
son, one who attempted to shake off the yoke of civil au-  
thority. *A Benjamite*—And therefore grieved at the trans-  
lation of the kingdom from Saul and that tribe, to David and  
the tribe of Judah. *We have no part in David*—The tribe  
of Judah have monopolized the king to themselves, and will  
not allow us any share in him; let them therefore enjoy him  
alone, and let us seek out a new king. *The son of Jesse*—  
An expression of contempt, implying that he was no more to  
be owned as their king, but as a private person, as the son  
of Jesse. *To his tents*—Let us all desist from that unthank-  
ful office, of bringing the king back, and go each to our  
homes, that we may consider, and then meet together to  
choose a new king.

Ver. 2. *So every man of Israel went up from after David*  
—Instead of going home, the generality of those Israelites  
who were present followed their seditious incendiary. *But  
the men of Judah clave to their king*—None of them stirred  
from him, but conducted him from Jordan to Jerusalem.  
Nor is it to be supposed that all the men of Israel forsook  
him; but only a very great number of them.

Ver. 3. *But went not in unto them*—He looked upon them  
as become impure to him, having been defiled by his son.  
*They were shut up to the day of their death, living in widow-  
hood*—Being royal wives, it was not proper they should be  
married to any one else, and therefore David did not give them  
a bill of divorce, but shut them up close that no man might  
have converse with them. And indeed it would not have  
been prudent to have let them be so much as seen abroad, as

A. M. 2982.  
B. C. 1022.† Heb.  
bound.  
† Heb. in  
widow-  
hood of  
life.

them, but went not in unto them. So they were † shut up unto the day of their death, † living in widowhood.

d Ch. 19. 5. d  
† Heb. Call.

4 ¶ Then said the king to Amasa, † Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present.

5 So Amasa went to assemble *the men of Judah*: but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.

6 And David said to Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than *did* Absalom: take thou <sup>e</sup> thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and † escape us.

e Ch. 11. 11.  
1 Kings  
1. 23.† Heb. de.  
liver  
himself  
from our  
eyes.f Ch. 8. 18.  
1 Kings  
1. 28.

7 And there went out after him Joab's men, and the † Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem,

that would have renewed the remembrance of Absalom's crime.

Ver. 4, 5. *Assemble me the men of Judah*—David here made good his promise to Amasa, which was a great encouragement to others in the tribe of Judah, to adhere to him. And by this means also the seditious Israelites might be the sooner brought to reason, when they saw their old general in the field against them. *He tarried longer than the set time*—Finding some difficulty in the business, either because the people, being wearied out by the late war, were not forward to engage in another; or because the soldiers had more affection to Joab, than to their new general.

Ver. 6. *Then David said to Abishai*—Not to Joab; lest by this means he should recover his place, and Amasa be discontented, and David's fidelity in making good his promise to Amasa be questioned. *Now shall Sheba do us more harm than Absalom*—If he have time to gather an army; the people being highly incensed by the provocation which the men of Judah had given them. *Take thy lord's servants*—The guards that attended David, and the standing forces which were always kept in readiness. *There went out after him Joab's men*—A body of men whom he particularly commanded, with whom Joab also might go in some character, watching an opportunity to do what he designed.

Ver. 8. *Amasa went before them*—As their commander in chief. Having gathered some forces, and given due orders for the rest to follow him, he returned to Jerusalem, and by the king's command went after those mentioned Ver. 7, and being come up to them at the place where they waited for him, he put himself at the head of Joab's men, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and such as he had brought along with him,

to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

A. M. 2990.  
B. C. 1022.

8 When they *were* at the great stone which *is* in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.

9 And Joab said to Amasa, *Art thou in health, my brother?* <sup>e</sup> And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him.

e Matt. 26.  
49. Luke  
22. 47.

10 But Amasa took no heed to the sword that *was* in Joab's hand: so <sup>h</sup> he smote him therewith <sup>i</sup> in the fifth *rib*, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and † struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.

h 1 Kings  
3. 5.  
i Ch. 2. 22.† Heb.  
doubled  
not his  
stroke.

and marched before them as their general. *Joab's garment was girded unto him*—After the manner of travellers and soldiers: for he had now no armour on, but only such a garment as soldiers wore, closely girt to him. *Upon it a girdle with a sword*—A belt, in which a sword hung by his side.—*As he went forth*—To meet and salute Amasa, who was coming towards him to do him honour, *it fell out*—Having, probably, been designedly so hung by Joab, that upon some particular motion of his body, it might drop out of the sheath, and he might take it up without awaking Amasa's suspicion.

Ver. 9. *Joab took Amasa by the beard*—As the manner of ancient times was when they saluted one another, and, it appears, is still a custom among some of the eastern people, who take one another by the chin or the beard, when they would give an hearty salute. Thevenot says, it is often done among the Turks, although, at the same time he assures us, it is a great affront to take one by the beard on any other account than to kiss him.

Ver. 10. *Amasa took no heed to the sword*—Which falling out, as it seemed, casually, he supposed that Joab intended only to put into its scabbard, and therefore, took no care to defend himself against the stroke. *So Joab and Abishai pursued after Sheba*—He boldly and immediately resumed his former place and marched at the head of the army. It may appear strange that Amasa's soldiers did not attempt to revenge his death; but it must be observed that not many of them were yet come up, as the following verses shew, and Joab's interest and authority with the military men was very great, especially with David's guards, who were here present, and who had neither confidence in or affection

A. M. 3992.  
B. C. 1022.

11 And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, He that favoureth Joab, and he that *is* for David, *let him go* after Joab.

12 And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

14 ¶ And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto <sup>k</sup> Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him.

k 9 Kings  
15. 20.  
2 Chron.  
16. 4.

for Amasa, as having been the general of the rebellious army; and as they probably thought, not fit to be put into a place of such great trust.

Ver. 11—13. *One of Joab's men stood by him*—By the command of his master, who knew that this would occasion disorder among Amasa's soldiers, and therefore left a man there on purpose to deliver the following message: *He that favoureth Joab*—He that would have Joab to be general, rather than such a perfidious rebel as Amasa. *And he that is for David*—He that wisheth David good success against Sheba, and against all rebels. He cunningly joins David and Joab together, as if their interests were inseparable. *When the man saw that all the people stood still*—Wondering at the spectacle, and inquiring into the occasion of it. *He removed Amasa out of the highway*—Perceiving that it both incensed them against Joab, and hindered the king's service. *And cast a cloth upon him*—But the covering of blood with a cloth cannot stop its cry to God for vengeance. *All the people went on after Joab*—They that were behind did not know that Amasa was killed, and so marched on without any scruple.

Ver. 14. *He went through all the tribes*—That is, Sheba, who marched from tribe to tribe to stir them up to sedition. *Unto Abel, and to Beth-maachah*—Or rather, *unto Abel-bethmaachah*, as this place is called in the Hebrew text of the next verse, to distinguish it from other Abels, and to signify that this was that Abel which was in the northern border of Canaan, towards that part of Syria called Maachah, 2 Sam. x. 8. In this city Sheba at last fixed himself, and resolved to defend it, being unable, it is likely, to raise such an army as to keep the field. *All the Berites*—The inhabitants of the city and territory of Beroth of Benjamin, Joshua xviii. 25; who, being of the same tribe, if not of the same city with

15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they <sup>1</sup>cast up a bank against the city, and || it stood in the trench: and all the people that *were* with Joab †battered the wall, to throw it down.

16 ¶ Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.

17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, *Art thou Joab?* And he answered, *I am he.* Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.

18 Then she spake, saying, || They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel

A. M. 3992.  
B. C. 1022.9 Kings  
22. 19.  
Or, it  
stood  
against  
the out-  
most  
wall.  
† Heb.  
marred  
to throw  
down.Or, They  
plainly  
spake in  
the begin-  
ning, say-  
ing Surely  
they  
will ask  
of Abel,  
and so  
make an  
end:  
Deut.  
20. 11.

Sheba, adhered to him, and followed him through all the tribes of Israel.

Ver. 15. *They came and besieged him*—Joab and his army pursued him thither. *And cast up a bank*—They raised a very large mound of earth, equal, probably, to the height of the walls, from whence they might either batter the walls, or throw darts, or shoot at those that defended them. *It stood in the trench*—This bank or mound was carried on so far, that it now stood in or near to the trench and foot of the wall; so that the city was in great danger of being taken.

Ver. 16. *Then cried a wise woman*—A woman of great understanding, who also could speak well. Many such there were in Israel, as appears by the woman of Tekoah, by Abigail, and the mother of Lemuel. It seems none of all the men of Abel offered to treat with Joab; no, not when they were reduced to extremity: but one wise woman saved the city. Souls know no difference of sex; many a manly heart is lodged in a female breast. Nor is the treasure of wisdom the less valuable, for being lodged in the weaker vessel.

Ver. 17, 18. *He answered, I do hear*—He did not despise her because she was a woman; but, as became a wise man, gave her a favourable audience, and attended to what she said. *They shall surely ask counsel at Abel*—She begins with praising the city of Abel, as famous, even to a proverb, time out of mind, for wisdom, and judging rightly of things. As if she had said, This city which thou art about to destroy, is no mean and contemptible one; but so honourable and considerable for its wisdom, that when any differences arose among any of the neighbours, they used proverbially to say, *We will ask the opinion and advice of the men of Abel about it, and we will stand to their arbitration; and so all parties were satisfied, and disputes ended.*

A. M. 2992.  
B. C. 1022.

at Abel: and so they ended the matter.

19 I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?

20 And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy.

21 The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri † by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

22 Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and

in 1 Sam. 28. 19.  
Ch. 21. 2.

† Heb. by his name.

a Eccles. 9. 14, 15.

Ver. 19. *I am one of them that are peaceable, &c.*—She speaks in the name of the whole city, which was of a peaceable spirit, and had been faithful to David in the time of the late revolt. *Thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel*—A great city which had many towns depending upon it. Great cities were commonly called *mothers*; as lesser towns, or villages subject to them, were called their *daughters*. *Why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?*—By depopulating a city of that country which God hath peculiarly chosen for his people. The destruction which thou art about to bring upon us, is an injury to Israel, and to the God of Israel.

Ver. 21. *A man of mount Ephraim*—He is said before, Ver. 1, to be of the tribe of Benjamin. Either, therefore, he lived in mount Ephraim, or a place in Benjamin is here called so, probably because it was upon the borders of Ephraim; or for some notable action or event of the Ephraimites in that place. *His head shall be thrown to thee*—Which she undertook, because she knew the present temper of the citizens, and soldiers too. And it is not unlikely, that this woman might be a governess in that city. For, though this office was commonly performed by men, yet women were sometimes employed in the government; as we see in Deborah, who judged Israel, Judg. iv. 4.

Ver. 22. *The woman went unto the people in her wisdom*—Prudently treated with them about it, representing to them the certainty and nearness of their ruin, if they did

they † retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

23 ¶ Now ° Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites:

24 And Adoram was P over the tribute: and q Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was || recorder:

25 And Sheva was scribe: and r Zadok and Abiathar were the priests:

26 s And Ira also the Jairite was || a chief ruler about David.

CHAP. XXI.

*A famine, caused by Saul's killing the Gibeonites, ver. 1—3. Seven of his family put to death, ver. 4—9. Care taken of their dead bodies, and of the bones of Saul, ver. 10—14. Battles with the Philistines, ver. 15—22.*

THEN there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David † enquired of

not speedily comply with her desires, and certain deliverance if they did. They immediately complied, and cut off the head of Sheba. *He blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city*—Raised the siege and went home. It appears by this, that it was usual to discharge them, as well as call them together, by the sound of the trumpet.

Ver. 23, 24. *Joab was over all the host*—The king continued him in the chief command of the army, because the good success of this, and of the former expedition under his conduct, had so fixed his interest with the soldiers, and others of David's fastest friends, that he could not be displaced without danger. *Adoram was over the tribute*—That is, he was the treasurer, or receiver of the king's revenue. *Jehoshaphat was recorder*—See on Ch. viii. 16.

CHAP. XXI. Ver. 1. *Then there was a famine, &c.*—The things related here, and Ch. 24, are, by the best interpreters, conceived to have been done long before Absalom's rebellion. And this opinion is not without sufficient grounds. For, first, This particle, *then*, is here explained, *in the days*, that is, during the reign of David: which general words seem to be added as an intimation that these things were not done next after the foregoing passages, for then the sacred writer would have said, *after these things*, as it is in many other places. Secondly, Here are divers particulars which cannot, with probability, be ascribed to the last years of David's reign: such as, that Saul's sin against the Gibeonites

A. M. 2992.  
B. C. 1022.  
† Heb. were scattered.

o Ch. 8. 19, 16.

p 1 Kings 4. 6.  
q Ch. 8. 17.  
1 Kings 4. 3.

r Or, remembrance.  
r Ch. 8. 17.  
1 Kings 4. 4.

s Ch. 23. 39.

|| Or, a prince, Gen. 41. 45.  
Exod. 2. 16.  
Ch. 8. 15.

cir. 1021.

† Heb. sought the succ, &c. See Numbers 27. 21.

A. M. 2993  
B. C. 1021.

the LORD. And the LORD answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.*

Joshua 9:  
4, 12-17.

2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites *were* not of the children of Israel, but <sup>a</sup>of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)

should so long remain unpunished; that David should not remove the bones of Saul and Jonathan to their proper place till that time; that the Philistines should wage war with David again and again, Ver. 15, &c. so long after he had fully subdued them, Ch. viii. 1.; that David in his old age should attempt to fight with a Philistine giant, or that his people should suffer him to do so; that David should then have so vehement a desire to number his people, Ch. xxiv. 1, which, being an act of youthful vanity, seems not at all to agree with his old age, nor with that state of deep humiliation in which he then was. And the reason why these matters are put here out of their proper order, is plainly this; because David's sin being once related, it was very proper that his punishments should immediately succeed: this being very frequent in Scripture-story, to put those things together which belong to one matter, though they happened at several different times.

*David enquired of the Lord*—It is possible that David, for the first, and even second year, might have ascribed this calamity to natural causes; but in the third year, being well convinced that the visitation was judicial, he applied himself to the sacred oracle of God, to learn the cause of this extraordinary and continued calamity. And God soon informed him that this punishment was on account of the blood shed by Saul and his family. *Because he slew the Gibeonites*—The history of the Gibeonites is well known: they were a remnant of the Amorites, but by an artful contrivance, related Josh. ix. 9, obtained a league for their lives and properties from the children of Israel. And, forasmuch as Joshua and the elders had confirmed it by an oath, they thought themselves bound to keep it, only tying them down to the servitude of supplying the tabernacle with wood and water for the public sacrifices, and the service of those who attended upon them. This unhappy people, notwithstanding it is probable that they had renounced their idolatry, and performed the other conditions of their covenant, Saul sought all occasions to destroy; and did so to such a degree of guilt, as drew down the divine judgment upon the land. But upon what occasion, or in what manner Saul destroyed them, is not mentioned in the Scriptures, except those that may be supposed to have been slain with the priests in the city of Nob, as being hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the tabernacle. But undoubtedly there was some more

VOL. I. N<sup>o</sup>. XXIX.A. M. 2993.  
B. C. 1021

3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless <sup>b</sup>the <sup>b</sup>inheritance of the LORD? Ch. 20, 19.

4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, || We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, *that will I do for you.*

Or, it is not silver nor gold that we have to do with Saul or his house; neither pertains it to us to kill, &c.

5 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that

general destruction of them for which this punishment was inflicted, although the Scripture is silent about it.

Ver. 2. *In his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah*—When Joshua and the princes made a league with the Gibeonites, the people were greatly offended with them, as appears, Joshua, Ch. ix. Whatever the pretences of this resentment might be, the true reason seems sufficiently apparent; they were, by this league, deprived of the lands and spoils of the Gibeonites. Did these reasons cease in the days of Saul? Or rather, did they not still subsist, and with more force, in proportion as the people of Israel and their wants increased, in a narrow land? But however this may be, why did Saul slay them? The text plainly saith, that he did it in his *zeal for the children of Israel and Judah*. But the question still returns; How could the destroying these poor people manifest his zeal for Israel and Judah? There is seemingly but one imaginable way how this could be done. The Gibeonites had one city in the tribe of Judah, and three in Benjamin; and when they were destroyed out of these cities, who could pretend any right to them but Israel (that is Benjamin) and Judah? So that Saul destroyed the Gibeonites, as the most obliging thing he could do for his people. See Delaney.

Ver. 3. *David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you?* Josephus supposes, that when God acquainted David what was the occasion of the famine, he likewise declared that it should be removed if he made the satisfaction which the Gibeonites themselves should require. *That ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord*—That, atonement being made, and God's anger being turned away, his inheritance may be blessed, and plenty restored again to Israel.

Ver. 4. *We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, &c.*—Neither silver nor gold was a just equivalent for the loss they had sustained by Saul and his bloody house. *Neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel*—Except of Saul's family, as it here follows. The marginal reading, however, seems preferable, *Neither\* pertains it to us to kill any man, &c.*—They were in such a state of servitude as did not allow them to take the only proper retribution, blood for blood. This appears to be the meaning, because David immediately replies, *What you shall say that will I do.*

Ver. 5, 6. *They answered*—*The man that consumed us, &c.*—They desired no reparation of private damages, or revenge

5 z

6

A. M. 2053.  
B. C. 1021.

|| devised against us *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

6 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD <sup>c</sup>in Gibeah of Saul, <sup>d</sup>|| *whom* the LORD did choose.

And the king said, I will give *them*.  
7 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of <sup>e</sup>the LORD's oath that *was* between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

8 But the king took the two sons

of 'Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul; Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of || Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she <sup>f</sup>brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill <sup>g</sup>before the LORD: and they fell *all* seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first *days*, in the beginning of barley harvest.

10 ¶ And <sup>h</sup>Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread

A. M. 2055.  
B. C. 1019.  
f Ch. 3. 7.Or, Michal's sister.  
Heb. bare to Adriel.  
1 Sam. 16. 19.1019.  
g Ch. 6. 17.h Ver. 9.  
Ch. 3. 7.

c 1 Sam. 10. 26. &amp;

11. 4.  
d 1 Sam. 10. 24.

Or, chosen of the LORD.

e 1 Sam. 16. 3. & 20. 8.  
13. 12. & 23. 18.

of injuries; all they required was that a public sacrifice should be made to justice, and to the divine vengeance inflicted upon the land. *Let seven of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up before the Lord*—As a satisfaction to his honour for an injustice and cruelty committed in defiance of a solemn oath given in his holy name. But it may be enquired, if Saul was thus wicked, in destroying a people contrary to a solemn oath, ratified in the name of God, why should his sons and grandsons be punished for it? To this it may be answered, with great reason, and upon a good foundation, that they were not punished because Saul was guilty, but because they themselves were guilty, and had been the executioners of his unjust decrees. We have reason to conclude that his sons, and his grandsons were among his captains of hundreds, and captains of thousands, as that was the practice of those days: And, if so, undoubtedly they were employed in executing his cruel and unjust commands in regard to the Gibeonites, especially as the purpose of destroying them seems to have been to take their possessions; for we can scarcely suppose Saul to have been so solicitous to increase the fortunes of any, as those of his sons and grandsons. And this supposition the text before us seems to prove as it not only intitles *Saul bloody*, but his house too: *Saul and his bloody house*. And it is likely that some of these still possessed some of the possessions of the Gibeonites, and that they defended and commended this action of Saul, whenever there was any question about it: And, therefore, they very justly and deservedly suffered for it. See Delaney. *In Gibeah of Saul*—To make the punishment more remarkable and shameful, this being the city where Saul lived both before and after he was king. *Whom the Lord did choose*—This aggravated his guilt that he had broken the oath of that God, by whom he had been so highly favoured.

*And the king said I will give them*—Having doubtless consulted God in the matter; who as he had before declared Saul's bloody house to be the cause of this judgment, so now commanded that justice should be done upon it, and that the remaining branches of it should be cut off; as sufficiently appears from hence, that God was well pleased with the action; which he would not have been, if David had done it without his command; for then it had been a sinful action

of David's, and contrary to a double law of God. Deut. xxi. 23. xxiv. 16.

But here another question arises; supposing Saul's sons and grandsons engaged in the fact, and therefore justly punished for it, how came it, or, for what reason was it that the whole people of Israel were afflicted with famine on that account? Undoubtedly because they were partakers too in Saul's guilt, and had been abetting, aiding, and assisting in it; or, at least had not opposed it, as they ought to have done. It is said expressly, that Saul sought to slay the Gibeonites *in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah*—Is it not absurd to think, that any thing was done in zeal for them which they did not approve of? Or is there much reason to doubt, whether they did not lend their hand to it? Is there the least colour to believe, that they in any degree remonstrated against, or opposed, this proceeding of their prince? as they had a right, nay, were obliged by all the laws of justice to do, as a nation bound to make good the public faith they had given, and sworn to preserve. And if this was the case, were they not guilty as well as Saul, and were they not with justice punished?

Ver. 7, 8. *The king spared, &c.*—For the Gibeonites desiring only such a number, it was at David's choice whom to spare. *The son of Jonathan*—This is added, to distinguish him from the other *Mephibosheth*, Ver. 8. *Because of the Lord's oath, &c.*—This was a just reason for not delivering him up. *The five sons of Michal*—*whom she brought up for Adriel*—In the original it is, *whom she bare to Adriel*. And as Michal was not the wife of Adriel, but her elder sister Merab, it is probable that Michal's name has here crept into the text by the mistake of some transcriber for Merab's. Or else it should stand as the margin of our bible has it, *Michal's sister*.

Ver. 10. *Rizpah*,—took sackcloth—or rather *hair cloth*, of which tents were commonly made. *And spread it for her*—As a tent to dwell in: being informed that their bodies were not to be taken away speedily, as the course of the law was in ordinary cases, but were to continue there until God was intreated, and removed the present judgment. *On the rock*—In some convenient place in a rock, near adjoining. *Until water*—Until they were taken down: which was not to



A. M. 2964,  
B. C. 1019,  
1 Deut. 21.  
23. it for her upon the rock, <sup>i</sup> from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

11 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

1 Sam. 31.  
11-12. <sup>k</sup> And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the <sup>l</sup>Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:

13 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.

14 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the

country of Benjamin in <sup>m</sup>Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that <sup>n</sup>God was intreated for the land.

15 ¶ Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint.

16 And Ishbi-benob, which <sup>o</sup>was of the sons of ¶the giant, the weight of whose †spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David.

17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, <sup>o</sup>Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the †light of Israel.

18 ¶ And it came to pass after

be done till God had given rain as a sign of his favour, and a mean to remove the famine, which was caused by the want of it. Thus she let the world know, that her sons died not as stubborn and rebellious sons, whose eye had despised their mother: but for their father's crime, and that of the nation in violating the public faith, in which crime if they had participated, it had only been in common with others; and therefore her mind could not be alienated from them.

Ver. 11. *It was told David what Rizpah—had done—* And he heard it with so much approbation, that he thought fit to imitate her piety, being by her example provoked to do what hitherto he had neglected, to bestow an honourable interment on the remains of Saul and Jonathan, and, with them, upon those that were now put to death, that the honour done to them therein, might be some comfort to this disconsolate widow.

Ver. 13, 14. *He brought up the bones of Saul, &c.—* From under the tree where they were buried in Jabesh, 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. *They gathered the bones of them that were hanged—* Having first burned off the flesh which remained upon them: or, perhaps, this was done some time after they were taken down, when nothing but bones remained; and then they had all seven an honourable interment. *The bones of Saul and Jonathan—* together with those now mentioned. *And after that—* After those things were done which were before related; that is, after they were hanged up; for by that God was pacified, and not by the burial. *God was intreated—* When satisfaction was given to the Gibeonites, God restored plenty to the country.

Ver. 15, 16. *The Philistines had yet war again with Israel—* After, or besides the other wars with the Philistines mentioned in this book, they yet again disturbed David's repose. *David waxed faint—* Being no longer in the vigour of youth, but probably in declining years, though not in old age. *Ishbi-benob—of the sons of the giant—* Either of Goliath, who by way of eminency, is called the giant, or rather, as the Hebrew word, *נפח*, *rapha* signifies, any giant. The words should rather be translated, *Of the race of the giants*, that is, of the Anakims, who fled into this country, particularly to Gath, when Joshua expelled them from Canaan, Josh. xi. 22. *Whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass—* This is to be understood of the head of his spear, which weighed half as much as that of Goliath, 1 Sam. xvii. 7. *He being girded with a new sword—* One made on purpose for him, larger and heavier than those commonly used. *Thought to have slain David—* Thought he had a fair opportunity to do it.

Ver. 17. *That thou quench not the light of Israel—* Lest thou be slain, and thereby thy people lose their glory and happiness, and even be utterly ruined. Good kings are, in Scripture, justly called the light of their people, because the beauty and glory, the conduct and direction, the comfort and safety, and welfare of a people depend greatly upon them. A noble image this of a king!

Ver. 18. *After this—* After the battle last mentioned. *There was again a battle at Gob—* Or in Gezer, as in 1 Chron. xx. 4. whereby it seems Gob and Gezer were neighbouring places, and the battle was fought in the confines of both.

A. M. 2866.  
B. C. 1018.

this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Chron. 11. 29.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, Sippat.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, Rappa.

19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, a Beth-lehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

<sup>1</sup> Or, Jair.  
<sup>1</sup> Chron. 20. 5.

20 And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant.

<sup>1</sup> Chron. 20. 6.

21 And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah the brother of David slew him.

<sup>1</sup> Or, Rappa.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, reproche.  
1 Sam. 17. 10, 25, 26.  
<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 16. 9  
<sup>1</sup> Or, Shammah.  
<sup>1</sup> Chron. 20. 8.

22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

CHAP. XXII.

*This Chapter is inserted among the Psalms, with some little variation. It is here as it was composed for his own closet; there, as it was delivered to the chief musician for public service. The inspired writer having largely related David's deliverances in this and the foregoing book,*

Sibbechai the Hushathite—One of David's worthies, 1 Chron. xi. 29. Slew Saph—One of the same race of Rephaims, descended from the Anakims.

Ver. 19. Elhanan—a Beth-lehemite—Another of David's worthy and valiant commanders. Slew the brother of Goliath—The relative word, brother, is not in the Hebrew text, but is properly supplied out of the parallel place, 1 Chron. xx. 5. where it is expressed. The staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam—For thickness; that is, like the large roller on which the cloth is fastened in weaving.

Ver. 20. There was yet a battle in Gath—That is, in the territory of that city; which circumstance intimates, that this, and consequently the other battles here described, were fought before David had taken Gath out of the hands of the Philistines, which he did many years before this, Ch. viii. 1. compared with 1 Chron. xviii. 1; and therefore, not in the last days of David, as some conceive, from the mention of them in this place. A man of great stature—Or, a man of

thought fit to record this sacred poem, as a memorial of all that had been before related.

A. M. 2986.  
B. C. 1018.  
1018.

AND David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:

<sup>a</sup> Exod. 15. 1.  
<sup>a</sup> Judg. 5. 1.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. 15. title. & Ps. 31. 19.

2 And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;

<sup>c</sup> Deut. 32. 4. Ps. 19. 2. & c. & 31. 3. & 71. 3. & 91. 2. & 141. 2.

3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

<sup>d</sup> Hebr. 9. 13.  
<sup>e</sup> Gen. 15. 1.

4 I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

<sup>f</sup> Luke 1. 69.  
<sup>g</sup> Prov. 18. 10.  
<sup>h</sup> Ps. 9. 9. & 14. 6. & 59. 16. & 71. 7. Jer. 16. 19.

5 When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

<sup>1</sup> Or, pang.  
<sup>1</sup> Heb. Bctial.

6 The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

<sup>1</sup> Or, corru.  
<sup>1</sup> Ps. 116. 2.

7 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 116. 4. & 130. 1.  
<sup>1</sup> Jonah 2. 9.  
<sup>1</sup> Exod. 3. 7. Ps. 21. 6. 15, 17.

8 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

<sup>m</sup> Judges 5. 4. Ps. 77. 19. & 97. 4.  
<sup>n</sup> Job 30. 11.

Medin or Madon, as the Seventy render it; so called from the place of his birth, as Goliath is said to be of Gath for the same reason. Who had on every hand six fingers, &c.—Tavernier, in his relation of the Grand Seignior's seraglio, p. 95; says, that the eldest son of the emperor of Java, who reigned in the year 1648, when he was in that island, had six fingers on each hand, and as many toes on each foot, all of equal length. These four fell by the hand of David—That is, by his conduct and counsel, or concurrence. Indeed he contributed by his hand to the death of one of them, whilst maintaining a fight with him, he gave Abishai the easier opportunity of killing him. But what is done by the inferior commanders, is commonly ascribed to the general, both in sacred and profane authors.

CHAP. XXII. We shall defer making any remarks on this divine Ode, till we come to its proper place in Psalm xviii.

9 There went up a smoke † out of his nostrils, and ° fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

10 He <sup>p</sup> bowed the heavens also, and came down; and <sup>q</sup> darkness was under his feet.

11 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen <sup>r</sup> upon the wings of the wind.

12 And he made <sup>s</sup> darkness pavilions round about him, † dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

13 Through the brightness before him were <sup>t</sup> coals of fire kindled.

14 The LORD <sup>u</sup> thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.

15 And he sent out <sup>x</sup> arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

16 And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the <sup>y</sup> rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his || nostrils.

17 <sup>z</sup> He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of || many waters;

18 <sup>a</sup> He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.

19 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

20 <sup>b</sup> He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he <sup>c</sup> delighted in me.

21 <sup>d</sup> The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the <sup>e</sup> cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

22 For I have <sup>f</sup> kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all his <sup>g</sup> judgments were

before me: and *as for* his statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 I was also <sup>h</sup> upright † before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 Therefore <sup>i</sup> the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness † in his eye-sight.

26 With <sup>k</sup> the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

27 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and <sup>l</sup> with the froward thou wilt || shew thyself unsavoury.

28 And the <sup>m</sup> afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon <sup>n</sup> the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.

29 For thou art my || lamp; O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness.

30 For by thee I have || run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

31 *As for* God, ° his way is perfect; <sup>o</sup> the word of the LORD is || tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.

32 For <sup>p</sup> who is God, save the LORD? and who is a rock, save our God?

33 God is my <sup>q</sup> strength and power: and he † maketh my way <sup>r</sup> perfect.

34 He † maketh my feet <sup>s</sup> like hinds' feet: and <sup>t</sup> setteth me upon my high places.

35 <sup>y</sup> He teacheth my hands † to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

36 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath † made me great.

37 Thou hast <sup>z</sup> enlarged my steps under me; so that my † feet did not slip.

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1018.

38 I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.

39 And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen <sup>a</sup> under my feet.

40 For thou hast <sup>b</sup> girded me with strength to battle: <sup>c</sup> them that rose up against me hast thou <sup>†</sup> subdued under me.

41 Thou hast also given me the <sup>d</sup> necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.

42 They looked, but *there was* none to save; *even* <sup>e</sup> unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

43 Then did I beat them as small <sup>f</sup> as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them <sup>g</sup> as the mire of the street, and spread them abroad.

44 <sup>h</sup> Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me *to be* <sup>i</sup> head of the heathen: <sup>k</sup> a people *which* I knew not shall serve me.

45 <sup>†</sup> Strangers shall <sup>||</sup> <sup>†</sup> submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

46 Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid <sup>l</sup> out of their close places.

47 The LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and exalted *be* the God of the <sup>m</sup> rock of my salvation.

48 *It is* God that <sup>†</sup> avengeth me, and that <sup>n</sup> bringeth down the people under me,

49 And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up <sup>o</sup> on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the <sup>o</sup> violent man.

50 Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among <sup>p</sup> the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.

51 <sup>q</sup> *He is* the tower of salvation for his king: and sheweth mercy to his <sup>r</sup> anointed, unto David, and <sup>s</sup> to his seed for evermore.

## CHAP. XXIII.

*The last words of David, ver. 1—7. An account of his mighty men, the first three, ver. 8—12. Two of the next three, ver. 13—23. And the thirty, ver. 24—39.*

**N**OW these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, <sup>a</sup> and the man *who was* raised up on high, <sup>b</sup> the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

2 <sup>c</sup> The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said, <sup>d</sup> the Rock of Israel spake to me, <sup>||</sup> He that ruleth over men *must be* just, ruling <sup>e</sup> in the fear of God.

4 And <sup>f</sup> *he shall be* as the light

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1018.† Heb. giveth vengeance for me.  
1 Sam. 23.  
39. Ch. 15.  
19. 31.  
a Ps. 144. 2.

o Ps. 140. 1.

p Rom. 15. 9.

q Ps. 144. 10.

r Ps. 89. 29.  
a Ch. 7. 12.  
s Ps. 59. 29.a Ch. 7. 8.  
b Ps. 78. 70.  
c 59. 47.  
d 1 Sam. 14. 13. Ps. 59. 90.

e 2 Pet. 1. 21.

d Dent. 32. 4. 31. Ch. 92. 9. 37.  
Or. Be thou ruler. 5c.  
Ps. 110. 2.  
e Exod. 18. 21. 2 Chr. 19. 7. 9.f Judges 5. 31. 1's. 69. 36. Prov. 4. 19.  
Hos. 6. 6.  
Ps. 110. 2.

CHAP. XXIII. Ver. 1. *These be the last words of David*—Not simply the last that he spoke, but the last which he spake by the Spirit of God, assisting and directing him in an extraordinary manner. When we find death approaching, we should endeavour both to honour God, and to profit others with our last words. Let those who have had experience of God's goodness, and the pleasantness of the ways of wisdom, when they come to finish their course, leave a record of those experiences, and bear their testimony to the truth of God's promises. *The man who was raised up on high*—Advanced from an obscure estate, to the kingdom. Whom God singled out from all the families of Israel, and anointed to be king. *The sweet Psalmist*—He who was

eminent among the people of God, for composing sweet and holy songs to the praise of God, and for the use of his church in after ages. These seem not to be the words of David, but of the sacred penman of this book.

Ver. 2, 3. *His word was in my tongue*—The following words, and consequently the other words and psalms composed and uttered by me upon the like solemn occasions, are not to be looked upon as human inventions, but both the matter and the words of them were suggested by God's Spirit, the great teacher of the church. *The rock of Israel*—He who is the strength, and defence, and protector of his people; which he manifests by directing kings and rulers so to manage their power, as may directly conduce to their comfort

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1019.

of the morning, *when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.*

5 Although my house *be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*

6 But the sons of Belial shall be

Ch. 7. 15.  
P. 89. 29.  
Isa. 55. 3.

and benefit. *He that ruleth over men*—Here are the two principal parts of a king's duty, answerable to the tables of God's law, justice towards men, and piety towards God, both which he is to maintain and promote among his people.

Ver. 4. *He shall be as the light of the morning*—These words are a farther description of the king's duty, which is not only to rule with justice and piety, but also with sweetness, and gentleness, and condescension to the infirmities of his people; to render his government as acceptable to them, as is the sun-shine in a clear morning, or the tender grass which springs out of the earth by the warm beams of the sun after the rain.

Ver. 5. *Although my house be not so with God*—Although God knows, that neither I, nor my children have lived and ruled as we should have done, so justly, and in the fear of the Lord; and, therefore have not enjoyed that uninterrupted prosperity which we might have enjoyed. *Covenant*—Notwithstanding all our transgressions whereby we have broken covenant with God, yet God, to whom all my sins were known, was graciously pleased to make a sure covenant, to continue the kingdom to me, and to my seed for ever, Ch. vii. 16, until the coming of the Messiah, who is to be my son and successor, and whose kingdom shall have no end. *Ordered in all things*—Ordained in all points by God's eternal counsel; and disposed by his wise and powerful providence, which will over-rule all things, even the sins of my house so far, that although he punish them for their sins, yet he will not utterly root them out, nor break his covenant made with me and mine. *Sure*—Or, *preserved*, by God's power and faithfulness in the midst of all oppositions. *For this is all my salvation*—That is, my salvation consists in, and depends, on this covenant; even both my own eternal salvation, and the preservation of the kingdom to me and mine. *Although he make it not, &c.*—Although God, as yet, hath not made my house or family to grow; that is, to increase, or to flourish with worldly glory as I expected; yet this is my comfort, that God will inviolably keep this covenant. But this refers also to the covenant of grace made with all believers. This is indeed an *everlasting covenant*, from everlasting, in the contrivance of it, and to everlasting, in the continuance and consequence of it. It is *ordered*, well ordered *in all things*; admirably well, to advance the glory of God, and the honour of the Mediator, together with the holiness and happiness of believers. It is *sure*, and therefore *sure*, because well-ordered: the promised mercies are sure, on the performance of the conditions. It is *all our salvation*: nothing but this will save us, and this is sufficient.

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1059.

all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:

7 But the man *that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.*

8 ¶ These *be the names of the mighty men whom David had: ¶ The Tachmonite that sat in the seat,*

Heb. Au-  
ed.  
Or, Je-  
shebba-  
sh & the  
Tach-  
monite,  
head of  
the three.

Therefore it should be *all our desire*. Let me have an interest in this covenant, and I have enough, I desire no more.

Ver. 6, 7. *But the sons of Belial*—Having in the foregoing verses, described the nature and stability of that kingdom which God had, by a sure covenant, settled upon him and his seed; and especially upon the Messiah, who was to be one of his posterity; he now describes the nature and miserable condition of all the enemies of this holy and blessed kingdom. *Shall be all as thorns*—Which men do not use to handle, but thrust them away. And so will God thrust away from himself, and from his people and kingdom, all those, who shall either secretly or openly set themselves against it. *That shall touch them must be fenced*—He must arm himself *with some iron weapon*, whereby he may cut them down; or, *with the staff of a spear*, or some such thing, whereby he may thrust them away from himself, that they do him no hurt. *They shall be utterly burnt*—Or, if men do not cut them down or thrust them away, they will burn and consume them. *The place*—Or, *in their place*, where they grow or stand.

Ver. 8. *These be the names of the mighty men whom David had*—Who helped to raise David to his dignity, and to preserve him in it, being continually with him in all his wars. There is a list of them also, 1 Chron. xi. different from this in several particulars. But Abarbanel thinks this creates no difficulty, if we do but observe, that there he distinguishes them into three classes. Those that had always been with him: those that came to him at Ziklag, a little before he was made king of Judah; and those that came to him in Hebron, after he was made king of all Israel. It was proper that the memories of all these should be preserved. But here, in this book, the writer intended only to mention the most excellent of his heroes, who were always with him in his wars; and for whose sake he composed the preceding song of praise to God. Add to this, that this catalogue, though placed here, was taken long before many of the preceding events, as is manifest from hence, that Asahel and Uriah are named in it. It must be observed also, that it was very common for one person to have divers names, and that as some of the worthies died, and others arose in their stead, a great alteration must of course take place in the latter catalogue from the former. We may learn from hence, how much religion tends to inspire men with true courage. David, both by his writings and example, greatly promoted piety among the grandes of his kingdom. And when they became famous for piety, they became famous for bravery.

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1018.1 Chron.  
11. 11. &  
27. 2.Heb.  
stain.1 Chron.  
11. 12. &  
27. 4.

chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: || *he lift up his spear* against eight hundred, † whom he slew at one time.

9 And after him was <sup>h</sup> Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, *one* of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines *that* were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away:

10 He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.

11 Chron.  
11. 27.1 Chron.  
11. 13, 14.

11 And after him was <sup>i</sup> Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. <sup>k</sup> And the Philistines were gathered together || into a troop, where was a piece of

Or. for  
foraging.

ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines.

A. M. 2956.  
B. C. 1018.

12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.

13 And <sup>l</sup> || three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in <sup>m</sup> the harvest time unto <sup>n</sup> the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in <sup>o</sup> the valley of Rephaim.

1 Chron.  
11. 15.Or, the  
three cap-  
tains over  
the thirty.  
1 Sam. 22. 1.

Ch. 5. 18.

14 And David was then in <sup>o</sup> an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem.

1 Sam. 27.  
4.

15 And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate!

16 And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Phi-

*The Tachmonite that sat in the seat*—He sat in the counsel of war, next to Joab, being, it is thought, his lieutenant general. *Chief among the captains*—The principal commander after Joab. *The same was Adino*—This was his proper name, and he probably was of the family of the Eznites. *He lift up his spear*—These words are properly supplied out of 1 Chron. xi. 11, where they are expressed. *Against eight hundred*—In the above mentioned place of 1 Chron. it is only *three hundred*. *Whom he slew at one time*—In one battle which, though it be strange, cannot be incredible, supposing him to be a person of extraordinary strength and activity, and his enemies to be discouraged and fleeing away.

Ver. 9, 10. *The men of Israel were gone away*—Had fled from before the Philistines, as it is explained, 1 Chron. xi. 13, being dismayed at the sight of them. *And his hand clave unto the sword*—Being all besmeared with blood. *The Lord wrought a great victory that day*—Like that of Shamgar and of Samson; God inspiring him with wonderful courage, and striking a terror into the Philistines. *The people returned after him only to spoil*—They that had fled, rallied again, when they saw the wonders he did; and followed after him, not to fight, but only to partake of the spoil.

Ver. 11. *After him was Shammah*—Who, although not expressly mentioned in the parallel place, 1 Chron. xi. 14; yet is plainly implied to have been engaged in this great action. For it is said, that *they set themselves*, &c. that is, Shammah and Eleazar; who joined in this enterprise. But this place, in Samuel, teaches us that Shammah had the chief hand in it, and therefore it is ascribed to him. *Ground full of lentiles*—In 1 Chron. xi. 13, it is full of *barley*: in which there is no difficulty, one part of the field having probably

been sown with lentiles and the other with barley. *The people fled from the Philistines*—Fearing to defend the place.

Ver. 12. *He defended it*—So that the Philistines could neither burn the corn, nor carry it away, nor tread it down. *The Lord wrought a great victory*—By his hand. How great soever the bravery of the instruments is, the praise of the achievement is to be given to God. These fought, but God wrought the victory. It must be observed that this Shammah, although one of the three most mighty men, is not particularly named in the book of Chronicles; it being the manner of the Scriptures, as the Jews observe, to notice that briefly in one place, which hath been explained at large in another; as this action of Shammah is here in this book.

Ver. 13, 14. *Three of the thirty chief*—Mentioned afterwards: three captains over the thirty. *Came to David in the harvest time*—Or rather, as the Hebrew is, at harvest. That is, saith Abarbinel, the Philistines came to destroy the fruits of the earth, that they might famish the Israelites: whereupon David raised an army to protect and defend them in reaping of their harvest, when they went about it. *Unto the cave of Adullam*—Where he had hid himself under the persecution of Saul; and where he now fortified himself against the Philistines; who, in the beginning of his reign, came with great forces against him. *And David was then in the hold*—Viz. the cave of Adullam, a place very strong by its natural situation! *The garrison of the Philistines was in Bethlehem*—They had possessed themselves of this place and put a garrison in it.

Ver. 15, 16. *David longed and said, oh!* &c.—Being hot and thirsty, he expresses how acceptable a draught of that water would be to him; but was far from desiring, or expecting that any of his men should hazard their lives to procure it. *He would not drink thereof*—Lest by grati-

A. M. 2946.  
B. C. 1018.

listines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD.

17 And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: *is not this* <sup>p</sup>the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And <sup>q</sup>Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, <sup>†</sup>and slew *them*, and had the name among three.

19 Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the *first* three.

20 And Benaiah the son of Je-

hoiada, the son of a valiant man, <sup>A. M. 2946.  
B. C. 1018.</sup> of <sup>r</sup>Kabzeel, <sup>†</sup>who had done many acts, <sup>†</sup>he slew two <sup>†</sup>lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow:

21 And he slew an Egyptian, <sup>†</sup>a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and slew him with his own spear.

22 These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men.

23 He was <sup>||</sup>more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the *first* three. And David set him <sup>†</sup>over his <sup>||</sup>guard.

24 <sup>u</sup>Asahel the brother of Joab <sup>†</sup>was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

25 <sup>v</sup>Shammah the Harodite, Eli-ka the Harodite,

fyng himself upon such terms, he should seem either to set too high a price upon the satisfaction of his appetite, or too low a price upon the lives of his soldiers. *He poured it out unto the Lord.*—As a kind of drink-offering, and acknowledgment of God's goodness in preserving the lives of his captains in so dangerous an enterprize; and to shew, that he esteemed it as a sacred thing, which it was not fit for him to drink.

Ver. 17. *He said, Far be it from me*—He looked upon it no longer as water, but as the blood of those men, who fetched it with the peril of their lives, and the blood of every thing belonged to the Lord, and therefore he poured it out before him. If the generosity of David's worthies was great, David's generosity was no less so: Such actions as these dignify human nature, and manifest an excellence and grandeur, which one should not otherwise think it capable of. *These things did these three*—They all joined in this hazardous exploit. But now follows what they did singly.

Ver. 18, 19. *Abishai—was chief among three*—The chief of those three mighty men before mentioned. See Chron. xi. 20. *Had the name among the three*—That is, was most eminent and famous. *Was he not most honourable?*—Worthy to be the leader of them for his superior valour and virtue? *He attained not unto the first three*—He fell short of them in strength and valour.

Ver. 20. *Who had done many acts*—As Abishai also had done, who had succoured David, when a giant thought to have killed him. But their greatest acts only are here men-

tioned. *He slew two lion-like men of Moab*—The Hebrew word <sup>לַיָּאֵל</sup>, *Ariel*, signifies a *lion of God*, that is, a great lion. And it was the name among the Moabites for a very valiant man. Such a one at this day is called *Assedollabi*, a *lion of God*, among the Arabians. *He slew a lion in the midst of a pit*—By going down into which he had put himself under a necessity of killing or being killed. *In time of snow*—This is mentioned to magnify the action, because then lions are fiercer both for want of prey, and from the sharpness of their appetite in cold seasons.

Ver. 21, 22. *An Egyptian, a goodly man*—A person of great stature, 1 Chron. xi. 23. *He plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand*—This shews him to have been both fearless and a person of great skill and dexterity, in managing a combat either with man or beast. *And had the name among three mighty men*—That is among the three in the second rank, for it is said in the following verse that he did not attain or come up to the first three. Who the third was of this second rank of mighty men, is not mentioned.

Ver. 25. *Shammah the Harodite*—In 1 Chron. xi. 27, he is called, *Shammoth the Harorite*, the same names of persons or places being differently pronounced according to the different dialects of divers places or ages. They that compare this catalogue, with that in 1 Chron. xi, will observe more names mentioned there than are found here. For the author of it reckons up and records the *names* of all the chief commanders in the army, though they were not in themselves heroic persons. But here, the sacred writer only numbers



A. M. 2998.  
B. C. 1018.

26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkish the Tekoite,

27 Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite,

28 Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite,

29 Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin,

30 Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the || brooks of <sup>y</sup> Gaash,Or, val-  
leys,  
Deut. 1.  
24.  
y Judg. 5.9.

31 Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,

32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan,

33 Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite,

34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

A. M. 2997.  
B. C. 1017.

35 Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,

36 Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,

37 Zelek the Ammonite, Nahari the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah,

38 <sup>a</sup> Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an <sup>a</sup> ch. 20. 28. Ithrite,39 <sup>a</sup> Uriah the Hittite: thirty and <sup>a</sup> ch. 11. 3. seven in all.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*David numbers the people, ver. 1—9. His repentance and punishment, ver. 10—15. The plague stayed, ver. 16, 17. He erects an altar and sacrificeth, ver. 18—25.* 1017.**A**ND <sup>a</sup> again the anger of the <sup>a</sup> ch. 21. 1. LORD was kindled against Israel, and || he moved David against them to say, <sup>b</sup> Go, number Israel and Judah.Satan,  
1 Chron.  
21. 1.  
Jam. 1.  
15.  
b 1 Chron.  
27. 24.

2 For the king said to Joab the

those who were of themselves great heroes, not noticing the great commanders in the army who were not so.

Ver. 26—39. *Helez the Paltite, &c.*—None of the memorable acts of these or of the following worthies, are recorded; therefore, all that can be said of them is, that when God determined to raise a king to a great height of power and glory, he raised up several great men to co-operate with and assist that king in his designs and undertakings. *Thirty and seven in all*—Here are only thirty-six named. Either therefore one must be supplied, whose name is not expressed among the three worthies of the second rank; or Joab is comprehended in the number, as being the general and head of them all.

CHAP. XXIV. Ver. 1. *And again*—After the former tokens of his anger, such as the three years famine, mentioned Ch. 21. *The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel*—for their sins, and on account of the following action of David. The anger of the Lord, it must be well observed, was not the cause of David's sin, nor of the sins of the people; for God cannot be the author of sin; but David's sin and the sins of Israel were the cause of God's anger. *And he moved David against them*—The reader must observe that, as there is no nominative case before the verb here, in the original, to express *who* moved David, the most strict rendering of the clause would be, *There was who moved David against them, &c.*—By our version, the reader is led to suppose that *the Lord*, mentioned in the foregoing part of the sentence, moved David to commit this sin of numbering the people. But this is not only quite contrary to the nature

and attributes of God, but to what we are expressly told, 1 Chron. xxi. 1, where we learn that it was *Satan*, and not the Lord, that moved David to do this. Here then we have a very remarkable instance, which cannot be too much regarded, to warn us against building any particular doctrine, or belief, on certain particular, detached expressions or passages of Scripture, not in harmony with the general tenor of God's Oracles; especially such doctrines as are entirely opposite to the essential nature, or attributes of God. For had not this fact, of David's numbering the people been related, through the care of divine providence, by another sacred writer, who entirely clears God from having any concern in moving David to sin, it might have been concluded from the passage before us, that God impelled David to this act; and, consequently, that it is consistent with the nature and government of God to excite the human mind to sinful acts: than which there can scarce be any thing more impious imagined. And therefore we may plainly see from hence, that we are not to form our notions from particular passages or expressions of the Holy Scriptures, but from the general tenor of them.

Ver. 2. *From Dan even to Beersheba*—From one end of the country to the other. For Dan was the utmost bound of it in the North, and Beersheba in the South. *That I may know the number of the people*—This expression shews David's sin in this matter, that he numbered them, not by direction from God, but out of mere curiosity, and pride, and vain-glory; accompanied with a confidence in the numbers of his people. All which sins were so manifest, that not only God saw them, but even Joab and the captains of the host.

A. M. 2987.  
B. C. 1017. captain of the host, which *was* with him, || Go now through all the tribes of Israel, <sup>e</sup> from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that <sup>d</sup> I may know the number of the people.

4 Jer. 17.3. 3 And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?

4 Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel.

e Deut. 9.  
24. Josh.  
15. 9, 16. 5 ¶ And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in <sup>e</sup> Aroer, on the right side of the city that *lieth* in the midst

A. M. 2987.  
B. C. 1017. of the || river of Gad, and toward <sup>f</sup> Jazer:

6 Then they came to Gilead, and to the || land of Tahtim-hodshi; and they came to <sup>g</sup> Dan-jaan, and about to <sup>h</sup> Zidon,

7 And came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, *even* to Beersheba.

8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: <sup>i</sup> and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah *were* five hundred thousand men.

10 ¶ And <sup>k</sup> David's heart smote <sup>l</sup>

Ver. 3, 4. *And Joab said—Now the Lord thy God add unto the people, &c.*—Thus we see that this action of David was thought a very wrong step, even by Joab himself, who remonstrated against it, as apprehensive of the bad consequences that might attend it: and therefore Joab counted not Levi and Benjamin, 1 Chron. xxi. 6, because the king's word was abominable to him. Probably we do not understand all the circumstances of this affair; but Joab's sense of it, who was no scrupulous man, shews that David's conduct in it was extremely imprudent, and might subject his people to very great inconveniences. *Against Joab, and against the captains of the host*—Who joined, it seems, with Joab to divert the king from his purpose; in which, however, he was fixed and immovable.

Ver. 5—7. *They passed over Jordan*—They went first into the eastern part of the country, and so by the northern coasts to the west, and then to the south. *And pitched in Aroer*—These words seem to import, that they pitched their tents in the field, and thither summoned the neighbouring towns to come unto them: which was very troublesome, and at last proved intolerably grievous. *And to the land of Tahtim-hodshi*—It is in vain to seek after this land, which is not mentioned in the book of Joshua, but, it is likely, was near to Gilead; and had been lately recovered, some think, from other people, and was now inhabited by the Israelites. *And they came to—about Zidon*—Not to the city of Zidon, for that was not in their power; but to the coast about it. *And came to the strong hold of Tyre*—To the territory near it. *And to all the cities of the Hivites, &c.*—Who lived in those north-west parts of the country. *Even to Beersheba*—On the south-side.

Ver. 8, 9. *When they had gone through all the land*—But not numbered all the people, for the work grew so tedious that they omitted Levi and Benjamin. *Joab gave up the number of the people*—There are two returns left us of this numbering; (one here and the other 1 Chron. xxi.) which differ considerably from one another; especially in relation to the men of Israel; which in the first, are returned but 800,000, but in the last 1,100,000. “But I think,” says Delaney, “a careful attendance to both the texts, and to the nature of the thing, will easily reconcile them. The matter appears to me thus: Joab, who resolved, from the beginning, not to number the whole of the people, but who at the same time, wished to shew his own tribe in the best light, and make their number as considerable as he could, numbered every man amongst them, from twenty years old and upwards, and so returned them to be 500,000: but in Israel he only made a return of such men as were exercised, and approved in arms: and therefore the number of persons above twenty years old is less in his return here, than in Chronicles. In a word, here the whole of Judah is returned, and only the men of approved valour is Israel. In 1 Chron. xxi. 5, the whole of Israel is expressly returned; but the particle *all* is not prefixed to those of Judah; and therefore possibly the men of tried valour in that tribe are only included in that return: and if so, the returns must of necessity be very different.” Perhaps, however, some mistake has been made in one of the texts by the copyists. In which case Houbigant prefers the smaller number.

Ver. 10. *David's heart smote him*—His conscience discerned his sin, and he was heartily sorry for it. That heart, which was so lately dilated with vanity, now shrunk into

A. M. 2987.  
B. C. 1017. him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, <sup>1</sup> I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have <sup>m</sup> done very foolishly.

1 Ch. 12. 13.  
m 1 Sam. 13. 13.

<sup>n</sup> 11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet <sup>n</sup> Gad, David's <sup>o</sup> seer, saying,

n 1 Sam. 22. 5.

o 1 Sam. 9. 9.  
1 Chron. 20. 29.

<sup>12</sup> Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

<sup>13</sup> So Gad came to David, and

contrition and penitence. *O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant—Or, the punishment of mine iniquity.* Since he condemned himself and begged pardon, he hoped the punishment deserved might be remitted. But he was deceived; because not only himself but his people also had offended.

Ver. 11—13. *For when David was up in the morning—* The words thus translated give the reader to apprehend that David's penitence was caused by Gad's threat, which certainly was not the case. He was made sensible of his sin and made sorry for it before Gad came to it. They should here be rendered, *And when David was up, &c.—David's seer—* Gad is so called because he was David's domestic prophet, by whom he consulted God in difficult cases, and received his directions and commands. *I offer thee three things—* To shew him and the world, that the vengeance he now came to denounce, was no casual calamity, nor the effects of any natural cause, he gave him his choice of the three evils; one of which must be immediately inflicted upon him. *Shall seven years of famine come unto thee—* In 1 Chron. xxi. 12, it is only *three years of famine*, which is the reading of the 70; a reading, says Houbigant, which I prefer in this place, because the three years of famine answer to the three months flight before his enemies, and the three days pestilence. It is easy to suppose here, as in Ver. 9, that a slight mistake has been made by the writer in transcribing the text. If this be not satisfactory to the reader, he may suppose with Poole and others, that in Chronicles, the sacred writer speaks exactly of those years of famine only which came for David's sin: but that here he speaks comprehensively, including those three years of famine sent for Saul's sin, Chap. xxi. And this sin of David's being committed in the year next after them, was in a manner a year of famine; either because it was a sabbatical year, wherein they might not sow nor reap: or rather because not being able to sow in the third year, because of the excessive drought, they were not capable of reaping this fourth year. And three years more being added to these four, make up the seven here mentioned. So the meaning of the words is this, As thou hast already had four years of famine, shall three years more come? *Now advise—* That is,

told him, and said unto him, Shall <sup>p</sup> seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

<sup>14</sup> And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; <sup>q</sup> for his mercies are **||** great: and <sup>r</sup> let me not fall into the hand of man.

<sup>15</sup> ¶ So <sup>s</sup> the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and

A. M. 2987.  
B. C. 1017.  
p 1 Chron. 21. 12.

q Ps. 102. 6, 13, 14.  
& 119. 156.  
r Or, many.  
1 Isaiah 47. 6. Zech. 1. 15.  
s 1 Chron. 21. 14, & 27. 31.

consider. The divine wisdom appears in the nature of the offer here made to David; he had sinned by placing his heart on human means of safety and security, instead of placing it on the divine protection. A trial was therefore made of him by this offer, how his heart now stood, and whether it would not fly to human means for safety. He had numbered his people, that he might rest in confidence by knowing the strength of his kingdom. Had not, therefore, his heart smote him, as mentioned Ver. 10, and had he not seen the sin and folly of seeking safety in human strength, independent of the Almighty, he would, in all likelihood, have chosen to have tried his fortune with his enemies in war, as depending on the known strength, courage, and number of his people. Or he would have chosen famine, as depending on his great riches, for obtaining a sufficient supply of food from other countries, though the famine should come into his land. But by humbly and confidently leaving it to God, to inflict either of those punishments which come more immediately from his own hand, and one of which, viz. the pestilence, he knew no human power or means could any ways guard against, and from which all his mighty men of war, or his own valour and wisdom, could not defend him, but he would lie equally exposed as the meanest subject;—by such a submission or choice as this, David gave a public testimony, that he was again convinced that all human means or strength avails nothing, unless we have the help and protection of the Almighty; that all our confidence is vain, unless that which is placed in the Lord.

Ver. 14. *Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord—* Let us receive punishment from his immediate stroke, that is, by famine or pestilence, but chiefly by the latter. For though the sword and the famine be also from God's hand, yet there is also the hand of man, or other creatures in them. The reason of this choice was partly his confidence in God's great goodness: partly, because the other judgments, especially the sword, would have been more dishonourable, not only to David, but also to God, and his people: and partly, because he, having sinned himself, thought it just to choose a plague, to which he was as obnoxious as his people; whereas, he had better defences for himself against the sword and famine than

A. M. 2967.  
B. C. 1017. there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men.

t Exod. 12.  
23.  
1 Chron.  
21. 15.  
u Gen. 6. 6.  
1 Sam.  
15. 11.  
Joel 2. 12. 16 <sup>t</sup> And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, <sup>u</sup> the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing place of <sup>x</sup> Araunah the Jebusite.

z 1 Chron.  
21. 15.  
Ornan:  
Ver. 18.  
2 Chron.  
3. 1.  
y 1 Chron.  
21. 17. 17 And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, <sup>y</sup> I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

18 ¶ And Gad came that day to

they had. *And let me not fall, &c.*—True, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! Fearful indeed for those who have, by their impotence, shut themselves out from his mercy. But a penitent dares cast himself into God's hand, knowing that *his mercies are great.*

Ver. 15. *So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel*—The event immediately answered to the choice; a plague instantly ensued. *From the morning even to the time appointed*—From that morning, in which Gad came to David, to the third day, the time appointed by God for the continuance of the plague. But not to the conclusion of that day, for we learn from the next verse, that God, moved by the repentance of the king and his subjects, commanded the destroying angel to stay his hand, which plainly indicates that he had not fully accomplished the commission at first given him. *There died of the people—seventy thousand*—“A calamity,” says Delaney, “which has no parallel in the whole compass of history.” It seems that the Hebrew nation were not only guilty, at this time, of many other sins, but were very culpable in regard to the numbering of the people, as well as David. They gloried, it is probable, in, and relied upon their numbers, and their own strength, instead of trusting in God and in his promises, for protection against, and victory over their enemies. And therefore, it was with reason that they fell in this sad manner, to shew them that all flesh is grass, and that their own strength and numbers availed nothing without God.

Ver. 16. *The angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem*—Which he had begun to smite, and in which he was proceeding to make a far greater slaughter. This angel appeared in the shape of a man, with a sword drawn in his hand, to convince the people more fully that this was no natural plague, but one inflicted by the immediate hand of God. *The Lord repented him of the evil*—That is, he in part re-

A. M. 2967.  
B. C. 1017. David, and said unto him, <sup>z</sup> Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of <sup>†</sup> Araunah the Jebusite.

19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.

20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? <sup>a</sup> And David said, To buy <sup>n</sup> the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that <sup>b</sup> the plague may be stayed from the people.

22 And Araunah said unto David,

called his sentence of the plague's continuance for three whole days; and this he did upon David's prayers and sacrifices, as appears from Ver. 25, though these be mentioned afterwards. This was on mount Moriah: in the very same place where Abraham, by a countermand from heaven, was stayed from slaying his son, this angel, by a like countermand, was stayed from destroying Jerusalem. It is for the sake of the great sacrifice, that our forfeited lives are preserved from the destroying angel.

Ver. 17. *These sheep, what have they done?*—What? They have done many things amiss. Their rebellions and other vices had been many, and it was for their own sins, as well as for David's, that this heavy judgment now befel them. The king, however, as became a penitent, is severe on his own faults, while he extenuates their's. *Let thine hand be against me*—Herein David shews his piety and fatherly care of his people, and that he was a type of Christ. *And against my father's house*—My nearest relations. These, probably, had either put David upon, or encouraged him in this action. And, besides, it was but fit that his family, who partook of his honour and happiness, should also partake in his sufferings, rather than those who were less related to him.

Ver. 18. *Gad came that day to David*—By the express command of God, Ver. 19, 1 Chron. xxi. 18, 19, and said unto him, *Go up*—to mount Moriah. *Rear an altar in the threshing-floor of Araunah*—Which place God appointed for this work, in gracious condescension to, and compliance with, David's fear of going to Gibeon, which is expressed 1 Chron. xxi. 29, 30; because this was the place where God, by his angel, appeared in a threatening posture, where therefore it was meet he should be appeased; and, because God would hereby signify the translation of the tabernacle from Gibeon hither, and the erection of the temple here, 2 Chron. iii. 1.

Ver. 21, 22. *Wherefore is my lord, the king, come?*—

A. M. 2997.  
B. C. 1017.

Let my lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: <sup>c</sup> behold, *here be oxen* for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and *other* instruments of the oxen for wood.

c 1 Kings  
19. 21.

23 All these *things* did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God <sup>d</sup> accept thee.

d Ezek. 20.  
40.

24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee

Wherefore doth the king do me this honour, and give himself the trouble of coming to me? *Behold, here be the oxen!*—Which were employed by him in his present work of threshing. *And instruments of the oxen*—Their yokes, and the instruments which they drew after them, to beat and press out the corn.

Ver. 23. *All these things did Araunah, as a king*—That is, with a royal bounty—*give unto the king*—He not only offered, but actually gave them; he resigned his right and property in them to David; though David, by his refusal, returned it to Araunah again. The words in the Hebrew are, *these things gave Araunah the king unto the king*. From whence some infer that, before the taking of Jerusalem, he was the king of the Jebusites: or a man of the greatest authority among them, like a king; or was descended from the blood royal of the Jebusites. But neither the Greek, nor the Syriac, nor the Arabick copies have the word *king*, nor had the Vulgate it till the edition published by Sextus; nor was it in the Chaldee Paraphrast in the time of Kimchi, who cites it thus: *Araunah gave to the king what the king asked of him*. *The Lord thy God accept thee*—He was a Jebusite by nation, but a sincere and hearty proselyte; which made him so liberal in his offers to God's service, and the common good of God's people.

Ver. 24. *Neither will I offer that which doth cost me nothing*—For this would be both dishonourable to God, as if I thought him not worthy of a costly sacrifice, and a disparagement to myself as if I were unable or unwilling to offer a sacrifice of my own goods. *David bought the threshing-floor, &c. for fifty shekels of silver*—In 1 Chron. xxi. 25, he is said to *give for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight*. Probably, here he speaks of the price paid for the *threshing-floor, oxen, and instruments*; and there for the whole place adjoining, on which the temple and its courts were built, which certainly was very much larger than this threshing-floor, and, probably, had Araunah's house, if not some other buildings, upon it.

Ver. 25. *David offered—burnt offerings and peace offerings*—Burnt offerings were in effect prayers to God, that he

at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So <sup>e</sup> David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

A. M. 2997.  
B. C. 1017.

25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. <sup>f</sup> So <sup>g</sup> the LORD was intreated for the land, and <sup>h</sup> the plague was stayed from Israel.

e 1 Chron.  
21. 24, 25.

f Co. 31. 14.

g Verse 21.

would remove this plague: And peace-offerings were acknowledgments of God's goodness, who had already given David hopes of this mercy. Delaney supposes that the ninety-first Psalm was written by David in commemoration of his deliverance from this calamity.

As the history of David is the principal subject of the two books of Samuel, and as *his* is a very distinguished character, we shall here, in the conclusion of our Notes on these books, present our readers with a short sketch of it, drawn by a masterly hand, but as we think in rather too glowing colours. "David's is a character which stands single, in the accounts of the world equally eminent and unrivalled. For not to insist on his great personal accomplishments, such as beauty, stature, strength, swiftness, and eloquence; his character is sufficiently distinguished by the noblest qualities, endowments, and events. Exalted from an humble shepherd to a mighty monarch, without any tincture of pride, disdain, or envy! Quite otherwise: remarkably humble in exaltation; or rather, humbled by it! Exalted unenvied! Exalted himself, and equally exalting the state he ruled: raising it from contempt, poverty, and oppression, to wealth, dignity, and sway! A man experienced in every vicissitude of fortune and life, and equal to them all! Thoroughly tried in adversity, and tempted by success! yet still superior! Cruelly and unjustly persecuted, yet not provoked to revenge! In the saddest and suddenest reverse of fortune, depressed by nothing but the remembrance of guilt; and, in consequence of that, unhumiliated by any thing but God!

"To sum up all; a true believer, and zealous adorer of God; teacher of his law and worship, and inspirer of his praise! A glorious example, a perpetual and inexhaustible fountain, of true piety! A consummate and unequalled hero, a skilful and a fortunate captain! A steady patriot, a wise ruler, a faithful, a generous, and a magnanimous friend! And, what is yet rarer, a no less generous and magnanimous enemy! A true penitent, a divine musician, a sublime poet, and an inspired prophet. By birth a peasant, by merit a prince! In youth, a hero; in manhood, a monarch; in age, a saint!" Delaney.











